



Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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General Information System (GIS) Message

Section 1

Transmittal:	22 TA/DC051 Upstate and New York City
Date:	May 31, 2022
To:	Subscribers
Suggested Distribution:	Commissioners, HEAP Coordinators, TA Directors, SNAP Directors, Staff Development Coordinators
From:	Valerie Figueroa, Deputy Commissioner Employment and Income Support Programs
Subject:	Transmitting HEAP Forms to Vendors
Effective Date:	Immediately
Contact Information:	HEAP Bureau (518) 473-0332 or NYSHEAP@otda.ny.gov

Section 2

The purpose of this General Information System (GIS) message is to provide social services districts (districts) with guidance regarding transmitting Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) forms that include Personally Identifiable Information (PII) to HEAP vendors.

PII includes any information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as name, address, social security number, date of birth, mother's maiden name, or any other identifiable information that is linked or may be linkable to an individual.

It is the district's legal obligation to ensure the security and privacy of HEAP recipients and applicants. If a district wishes to communicate with a vendor by email containing PII, the email must be encrypted. The district must work with their information technology (IT) and legal professionals and establish the technical method and the applicable written district policy for sending HEAP and other protected information via encrypted email. The district must also ensure that staff are well-trained and reminded of policies and procedures involving encryption of emails containing PII.

Local district management and staff are required to ensure that access to confidential, personal, private, and/or sensitive data is strictly limited to authorized individuals for authorized purposes only. Should an incident of unauthorized access or disclosure of PII occur, please be aware you must report the allegation or suspicion of an incident using the process outlined in [18-LCM-10-T](#). Incidents involving the unauthorized access or disclosure of the Protected Information in any state or district applications, systems, networks and/or databases generally must be reported immediately, but in no event more than one (1) business day following the notification to district management of the allegation or suspicion of an incident. The incident must be reported by district management to OTDA Division of Legal Affairs, at otdalegalsi@otda.ny.gov or (518) 474-9502 and the Office of Information Technology Services Health

and Human Services Portfolio Information Security Office, at its.dl.ciso.iss.hhs@its.ny.gov. When reporting an incident, please be prepared to provide a central point of contact, telephone number, and details as to the nature, location, date, time, and individuals involved in the security incident. For more information concerning incident reporting and district obligations please refer to [18-LCM-10-T](#).

Districts seeking additional information should contact their HEAP Bureau liaison.