



Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

DANIEL W. TIETZ
Commissioner

BARBARA C. GUINN
Executive Deputy Commissioner

General Information System (GIS) Message

Section 1

Transmittal:	23 TA/DC022 Upstate and New York City
Date:	March 21, 2023
To:	Subscribers
Suggested Distribution:	SNAP Directors; TA Directors; CAP Coordinators; Staff Development Coordinators; TOP Coordinators
From:	Valerie Figueroa, Deputy Commissioner, Employment and Income Support Programs
Subject:	COVID-19 TA and SNAP Interview Adjustment and Telephonic Signature Waiver Extensions
Effective Date:	Immediately
Contact Information:	SNAP Policy Bureau at (518) 473 -1469 or otda.sm.cees.snap@otda.ny.gov ; TA Policy Bureau at (518) 474-9344 or tabureau@otda.ny.gov
Attachments:	None

Section 2

In response to the outbreak of COVID-19 and the declaration of a state disaster emergency (Executive Order 202, March 7, 2020), the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) released a series of policy documents which advised social services districts (districts) of immediate measures that could simplify and streamline program administration and protect the health and safety of clients and staff.

Additionally, Title VI, Section 4603(a)(1)(B) of the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021, and Other Extensions Act (Public Law No. 116-159), the Continuing Resolution (CR), passed by Congress and signed into law by the President on October 1, 2020, reinstated the lapsed Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) interview adjustment and waivers originally authorized under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and waivers issued under 7 CFR 272.3(c)(1)(i). The CR reinstated and extended the availability of these waivers through June 30, 2021. On April 30, 2021, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) further extended the availability of these waivers until December 31, 2021, through issuance of a policy memo to all states, with certain limitations on the continuation of waivers when the state emergency or disaster declaration is no longer in effect. The waivers were again made available by USDA in a December 8, 2021, policy memo giving states the option to extend them beyond January 1, 2022, but no later than the end of the month subsequent to the month in which the public health emergency declaration related to the COVID-19 pandemic is lifted by the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

The purpose of this GIS is to inform social services districts (districts) about the continuing availability of the following waivers and to remind the districts about the guidance governing their application.

Temporary Assistance (TA)

The following waivers are available through close of business May 31, 2023:

- Extending domestic violence waivers;
- Enabling districts with local procedures or other processes that require frequent contact with individuals experiencing homelessness and residing in emergency housing to conduct these contacts via phone, with reduced frequency, as appropriate for the population; and,
- Allowing temporary modifications to previously approved Case Supervisor Review (CSR) plans.

These measures are outlined in greater detail in [GIS 20 TA/DC016](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC028](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC041](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC043](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC057](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC072](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC078](#), [20-LCM-08](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC113](#), [GIS 21 TA/DC047](#), [GIS 22 TA/DC103](#), and [GIS 22 TA/DC113](#).

District participation in the TA waivers listed above is not mandated. Districts may choose which, if any, waivers they want to participate in and the time period during which they want to utilize them. Districts who choose not to participate in one or more of the above waivers through May 31, 2023, must send an email to OTDA at: tabureau@otda.ny.gov and indicate which waiver provisions they are opting out of and/or the shorter time period for which they will be utilizing the waiver(s). If a district has already chosen to opt out of certain provisions and their preferences have not changed, an additional email is not necessary at this time.

In accordance with [22-ADM-10](#), as a result of a regulatory amendments, districts may conduct all TA eligibility and recertification interviews by telephone or other digital means, as opposed to in person at the applicant or recipient's (A/R) request. Districts must continue drug/alcohol screenings for PA A/Rs using the [LDSS 4571](#), "Alcohol and Substance Abuse Screening Referral Form", in accordance with current policy. These screenings may now be conducted by telephone or other digital means, at the request of the A/R. DV screenings conducted by means of telephone or other digital means, must be documented using the universal [LDSS-4583](#), "Domestic Violence Screening Form". As is current policy, completion of the form by the A/R remains voluntary and the answers must be kept confidential. Districts are reminded that the [LDSS-4583](#) "Domestic Violence Screening Form" cannot be filed in the A/R's PA case record. Instead, the form must be forwarded to the DV Liaison for confidential filing if any part of it has been completed. If performing the screening by telephone or other digital means, it must be noted in the signature section that the screening was performed in such manner and the form must be dated by the worker conducting the screening. Please refer to [22-ADM-10](#) for more detailed information.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) extended temporary adjustments to the interview requirements for SNAP households at certification, recertification and for expedited processing, and the requirements for recording telephonic signatures for SNAP applications filed over the telephone or submitted without a signature. New York is providing the option for districts to participate in interview adjustments and telephonic signature waivers **through May 31, 2023**.

Interview Adjustments

The SNAP interview adjustment waivers described in [GIS 20 TA/DC022](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC026](#), [GIS TA/DC096](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC101](#), [GIS 21 TA/DC016](#), [GIS 21 TA/DC047](#), [GIS 21 TA/DC066](#), [GIS 21 TA/DC085](#), [GIS 22TA DC026](#) and [GIS 22 TA/DC113](#), **which were previously made available to districts through February 28, 2023 are now available effective immediately through May 31, 2023**. Consistent with previous guidance, districts are not prohibited from conducting interviews, they are just not required. Districts can apply the interview adjustment based on the month of application. For initial applications, the interview adjustment may be used for any household that applies by May 31, 2023. For recertification applications, districts can use the interview adjustment for any household who is due for recertification, the last month of the household's current certification period is on or

before May 31, 2023, and the recertification application is received by May 31, 2023.

Telephonic Signatures

The temporary adjustment to the requirements for recording telephonic signatures for SNAP applications filed over the telephone or submitted without a signature **will continue through May 31, 2023**. Districts choosing to implement telephonic applications must adhere to the guidelines as outlined in [GIS 20 TA/DC049](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC055](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC066](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC075](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC090](#), [GIS 20 TA/DC113](#), [GIS 21 TA/DC016](#), [GIS 21 TA/DC047](#), [GIS 21 TA/DC066](#), [GIS 21 TA/DC085](#), [GIS 22 TA/DC026](#), [GIS 22 TA/DC038](#), [GIS 22TA/DC094](#), and [GIS 22 TA/DC103](#), and must use the OTDA program-specific script (attachments 1 and 2 [GIS 20 TA/DC049](#)). Districts must notify OTDA of their intention to implement this option. While this SNAP adjustment is in effect, TA, or Medicaid (MA) on TA case applications may also be accepted over the telephone. Districts choosing to implement telephone applications for MA on a TA case must note the case record that the applicant assents to and allows a verbal signature for Medicaid.