



# Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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## General Information System (GIS) Message

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### Section 1

<b>Transmittal:</b>	23 TA/DC037 Upstate and New York City
<b>Date:</b>	May 10, 2023
<b>To:</b>	Subscribers
<b>Suggested Distribution:</b>	SNAP Directors; TA Directors; CAP Coordinators; Staff Development Coordinators; TOP Coordinators
<b>From:</b>	Valerie Figueroa, Deputy Commissioner, Employment and Income Support Programs
<b>Subject:</b>	COVID-19 TA and SNAP Interview Adjustment and Telephonic Signature Waivers Expire June 30, 2023
<b>Effective Date:</b>	Immediately
<b>Contact Information:</b>	SNAP Policy Bureau at (518) 473 -1469 or <a href="mailto:otda.sm.cees.snap@otda.ny.gov">otda.sm.cees.snap@otda.ny.gov</a> ; TA Policy Bureau at (518) 474-9344 or <a href="mailto:tabureau@otda.ny.gov">tabureau@otda.ny.gov</a>
<b>Attachments:</b>	None

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### Section 2

The purpose of this GIS is to advise social services districts (districts) that due to the lifting of the federal public health emergency on May 11, 2023, interview adjustments, telephonic signature and other COVID-19 related waivers will **expire June 30, 2023**.

#### Background

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 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, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) 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-FNS 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.

### Temporary Assistance (TA)

The following waivers will expire close of business June 30, 2023:

- Extending domestic violence (DV) 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.

In accordance with [22-ADM-10](#), as a result of 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.

### Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Since March of 2020, USDA-FNS has authorized temporary adjustments to the interview requirements for SNAP households at certification, recertification and for expedited processing, as well as the requirements for recording telephonic signatures for SNAP applications filed over the telephone or submitted without a signature. New York provides the option for districts to participate in interview adjustments and telephonic signature waivers **until June 30, 2023**, when the waivers are set to expire.

### 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](#), [GIS 22 TA/DC113](#), and [GIS 23 TA/DC022](#) **which were previously made available to districts through May 31, 2023 will now expire June 30, 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 June 30, 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 June 30, 2023, and the recertification application is received by June 30, 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 expire June 30, 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](#), [GIS 22 TA/DC103](#), and [GIS 23 TA/DC022](#), 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.

### COVID Unwinding Waivers

USDA-FNS has made certain SNAP temporary administrative waivers available to states to support unwinding from the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. OTDA will provide information about the availability of any flexibilities beyond June 30, 2023 separately.