



Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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General Information System (GIS) Message

Section 1

Transmittal:	23DC079 Upstate and New York City
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To:	Subscribers
Suggested Distribution:	Commissioners, TA Directors, SNAP Directors, HEAP Coordinators, Staff Development Coordinators
From:	Valerie Figueroa, Deputy Commissioner Employment and Income Support Programs
Subject:	Treatment of Child Care Workforce and Direct Support Professionals Bonus Payments for Temporary Assistance (TA), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) and the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)
Effective Date:	Immediately
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Section 2

The purpose of this General Information Systems (GIS) Message is to provide guidance to Social Services Districts (districts) regarding the treatment of bonus and incentive payments made available through the New York State (NYS) Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) as outlined below.

The NYS OCFS 2023-2024 Executive Budget includes \$500 million in federally funded stabilization grants, which must be used for child care workforce retention initiatives. These initiatives may include bonus payments or wage increases to child care workers, as well as funds to support recruitment efforts for OCFS licensed, registered and enrolled legally exempt group providers as well as certain programs overseen by New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

To address workforce shortages, the NYS OPWDD made available over \$1.5 billion in one-time American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to support recruitment efforts, retention incentives and vaccination bonuses for direct support professionals who provide support for people with developmental disabilities. OPWDD will issue a payment of \$1,000 per full time Direct Support Professional (DSP) or Family Care Provider who worked at least a 90-day period during the period of March 17, 2020, to September 1, 2021, and continues to be employed by the provider agency/employer. OPWDD will also issue an additional bonus of \$500 to each of these workers who are vaccinated against COVID-19. OPWDD will issue a Longevity Bonus to DSPs and Family Care Providers covering the period of April 1, 2020, through March 31, 2021, and a Retention Bonus to prospective and available DSPs and Family Care Providers covering the period of time between April 1, 2021 and March 21, 2022.

Temporary Assistance

These bonus and incentive payments received by eligible individuals must be excluded as income and a resource when determining eligibility for initial and ongoing TA. In addition, the bonus and incentive payments must be excluded as an available resource to meet an emergency need when determining eligibility for emergency assistance under Emergency Assistance to Needy Families with Children (EAF) and Emergency Safety Net Assistance (ESNA).

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Federal rules limit what income can be excluded for SNAP eligibility purposes. Payments received in addition to regular wages or salary (e.g., bonuses) may either be considered lump sum payments or income, depending on how the payment is received. For payments to be excluded as income for SNAP purposes, they must be received as a single, non-recurring, lump sum payment. If bonus payments are issued in regular, recurring intervals, they would be considered income for SNAP purposes.

Changes in income or other household circumstances may need to be reported by SNAP households during their certification period. SNAP households with Earned Income must report when their monthly income increases beyond 130% of the FPL. Please refer to [LDSS-4908 – SNAP Change Reporting Desk Aid \(ny.gov\)](#) for SNAP change reporting requirements.

While non-recurring lump-sum payments are excluded as income, they are considered to be resources, but, because NYS has implemented broad-based categorical eligibility, most SNAP households are not subject to a resource eligibility test.

Home Energy Assistance Program

These bonus and incentive payments received by eligible individuals must be excluded as income and a resource when determining eligibility for HEAP. In addition, the bonus and incentive payments must be excluded as an available resource to meet an emergency need when determining eligibility for Emergency benefits or the Heating Equipment Repair and Replacement component.