



Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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General Information System (GIS) Message

Section 1

Transmittal:	24DC037 Upstate and New York City
Date:	July 3, 2024
To:	Subscribers
Suggested Distribution:	Commissioners Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Directors Temporary Assistance (TA) Directors Welfare Management Systems (WMS) Coordinators Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Coordinators
From:	Valerie Figueroa, Deputy Commissioner, Employment and Income Support Programs
Subject:	NYC Guidance Regarding the Restaurant Meals Program (RMP) Pilot
Effective Date:	Immediately
Contact Information:	SNAP Bureau: (518) 473-1469 or SNAPBureau@otda.ny.gov or NYSRMP@otda.ny.gov
Attachments:	N/A

Section 2

The purpose of this GIS is to announce the expansion of the Restaurant Meals Program (RMP) Pilot into New York City (NYC) and to provide interim guidance on implementation and systems implications.

The RMP began as a pilot program in Monroe County in December 2023 and is now expanding to the NYC metro area. Program information and a list of participating restaurants is posted on the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) website at <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/rmp/>.

This GIS also provides updated guidance on how **all** SNAP households, in both Rest of State (ROS) and in New York City, can access RMP eligibility indicators in the new Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) portal, ebtEDGE, following the EBT system conversion.

BACKGROUND

Governor Hochul signed legislation directing the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) to establish the RMP. The RMP allows certain households, who may not have access to what they need to properly store and prepare food or who may not be able to prepare meals themselves, to use their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to purchase prepared meals at participating restaurants at a discounted rate. OTDA submitted a proposal to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and received approval to implement the RMP consistent with the applicable federal requirements.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to purchase prepared meals at restaurants participating in the RMP, **all members** of the SNAP household must meet one of the following criteria:

- elderly (age 60 or older); or
- disabled (receives disability or blindness payments or receives disability retirement benefits from a governmental agency because of a disability considered permanent); or
- homeless; or
- a spouse of a SNAP recipient who is eligible for the RMP.

There is no separate application process for SNAP households to participate in the RMP. Household eligibility was automatically determined for all households receiving SNAP through a Mass Rebudgeting (MRB) on 1/20/24. After the initial MRB and going forward, WMS automatically evaluates cases for RMP eligibility whenever the budget is updated, and a case action processed as described below.

RESTAURANT PARTICIPATION

Through targeted outreach, a selection of restaurants expressed interest and applied for approval to become an authorized SNAP retailer and participate in the RMP. All participating restaurants in NYC and ROS are listed at [Restaurant Meals Program – Participating Restaurants | OTDA \(ny.gov\)](#). As new restaurants are onboarded, they will be added to the website. Not all NYC boroughs have participating restaurants at this time, but more will continue to be onboarded as the program grows.

NYC SYSTEMS UPDATES

All households in New York City received an RMP eligibility determination through a MRB in January 2024. The mass update populated an “X” in the “RMP” field in the Welfare Management System (WMS) for SNAP households that meet the following criteria:

- Households that are homeless, regardless of household size or composition. All homeless households with the following Shelter Types are eligible to participate:
 - 06 Hotel/Motel Temporary
 - 13 Residential Programs For Victims Of Domestic Violence (Less than 3 Meals Per Day)
 - 14 Residential Programs For Victims Of Domestic Violence (3 Meals Per Day)
 - 23 Undomiciled
 - 30 Scatter Site Homeless Housing – Non-Tier I/Non-Tier II (Less Than 3 Meals Per Day)
 - 33 Homeless Shelter -Tier I or Tier II (Less Than 3 meals Per Day)
 - 34 Homeless Shelter-Tier II (Three Meals Per Day)
 - 35 Homeless Shelter-Non Tier I Non Tier II
- Households where **everyone** is elderly and/or disabled as identified by a value of N or X in the “A/D” field.
- Households of two or more people where the only individual not aged and/or disabled is the spouse or partner (potentially the payee) of an individual identified as aged and/or disabled. The non-disabled household member is identified with relationship codes:
 - 01 Applicant/Payee
 - 02 Legal Spouse
 - 03 Non-Legal Union (No Child in Common)
 - 30 Non-Legal Union with Child in Common

Additionally, for the purpose of RMP, only the following case types may be determined eligible to participate:

- 11 Family Assistance (FA)
- 12 Safety Net Non-Cash Assistance (SNNC)
- 16 Safety Net Cash Assistance (SNCA)
- 17 Safety Net Non-Cash Assistance (SNFP)
- 31 Non-Public Assistance Food Stamps (NPA-FS)

Following the MRB, WMS will automatically evaluate cases for RMP eligibility whenever the budget is updated, and a case action processed. The system will automatically populate or remove the “X” in the “RMP” field, based on whether the household is eligible to participate. Upon the release of this directive, Client Notification System (CNS) notice language will be activated for all households in New York City determined eligible for RMP. Going forward, when an “X” is present in the RMP field, eligibility language will be included in all CNS notices to the household. This language explains that the household may participate in the RMP. Conversely, when a household who previously participated in the RMP no longer meets the criteria to participate due to a change in circumstances, and the “X” in the “RMP” field is removed, the CNS notice will include language explaining that the household is not eligible for the RMP. The CNS language that a household is not eligible for the RMP is only included in the notice when the “X” in the “RMP” field is removed.

Checking RMP Eligibility Status

In NYC only

Workers can check a household’s RMP eligibility status on the WIDICH-WMS ID card Individual Screen. To view this screen, the worker should go to WMS screen “CBIC Menu” and select 07 - “Individual PA/FS Payee Inquiry Screen” which includes the RMP IND field.

In both NYC and ROS

Workers can also use ebtEDGE to check a client’s eligibility for the RMP. Once logged into ebtEDGE, select the “Client” button to locate the household’s account. If the household is eligible for the RMP, the “Restaurant Meals” field will display a “Yes”. If the household is not eligible for the RMP, the “Restaurant” field will display an “No”.

All SNAP households Statewide can check their own RMP eligibility status by visiting <https://www.ebtEDGE.com/> and create or log into their account. If the household is creating a new ebtEDGE account, they will need their EBT card number, PIN, and an email address. Once logged into the home page, in the “Account Information” section, the cardholder will see a thumbs up icon with “Account is Restaurant Meal Program Eligible” if the household is eligible for the RMP. If the household is not eligible for the RMP, the “Account is Restaurant Meal Program Eligible” message will not be present in the “Account Information” section.

Note: Clients can also see the eligibility message for RMP on the ebtEDGE Mobile App.

Section 3

Households using SNAP benefits to purchase meals at participating restaurants receive a 10% discount on the cost of their meal. When purchasing prepared meals at participating restaurants, households will be responsible for covering the entire, discounted cost of their meals. Therefore, households should be encouraged to check their food benefit balance by calling 1-888-328-6399 or visiting <https://www.ebtEDGE.com/> to ensure that they have sufficient funds in their SNAP EBT account prior to purchasing a meal at a participating restaurant. Households should also be encouraged to check their RMP eligibility status in their ebtEDGE account to confirm that their EBT card is enabled to work at participating restaurants.

If a household meets the criteria to participate in the RMP and attempts to purchase a prepared meal but does not have sufficient funds to cover the entire, discounted cost of their meal, the household will be responsible for covering any remaining balance with funds other than SNAP benefits.

If a household does not meet the criteria to participate in the RMP and attempts to use their SNAP benefits to purchase a prepared meal at a participating restaurant, the transaction will be declined, the household will not be eligible for the RMP discounted rate and will be responsible for covering the full cost of their meal with funds other than SNAP benefits.

OTDA provides Frequently Asked Questions and maintains a current list of participating restaurants which can be found at <https://otda.ny.gov/rmp>.

Any questions and concerns regarding restaurant enrollment should be directed to NYSRMP@otda.ny.gov.