



# Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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## General Information System (GIS) Message

### Section 1

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<b>Date:</b>	July 16, 2024
<b>To:</b>	Subscribers
<b>Suggested Distribution:</b>	Commissioners, TA Directors, HEAP Coordinators, SNAP Directors, Employment Coordinators, Fair Hearing Officers, Staff Development Coordinators, WMS Coordinators
<b>From:</b>	Valerie Figueroa, Deputy Commissioner Employment and Income Support Programs
<b>Subject:</b>	Extension and Redesignation of Syria for Temporary Protected Status
<b>Effective Date:</b>	Immediately
<b>Contact Information:</b>	Temporary Assistance Bureau at 518-474-9344 or <a href="mailto:tabureau@otda.ny.gov">tabureau@otda.ny.gov</a>

### Section 2

The purpose of this GIS message is to inform social services districts (districts) that the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recently extended and redesignated Syria for Temporary Protected Status (TPS).

TPS can be extended to a country with conditions that fall into one or more of the three statutory bases for designation: ongoing armed conflict, environmental disasters, or extraordinary and temporary conditions. The TPS extension and redesignation for Syria went into effect on April 1, 2024, due to ongoing armed conflict and extraordinary and temporary conditions in Syria that prevent Syrian nationals, and those of no nationality who last habitually resided in Syria, from returning to Syria safely. If Syria's TPS designation is terminated in the future, the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) will issue guidance to districts regarding the change.

It is important to note that TPS is not automatically granted to non-citizens. To receive TPS, non-citizens must apply for it by submitting the necessary documentation to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). USCIS is responsible for making the TPS eligibility determination. For information from USCIS regarding TPS, districts may visit <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status>, or call the USCIS TPS Hotline at 202-272-1533. Districts may refer non-citizens who may need assistance with acquiring TPS to the New York State Office for New Americans (ONA), which is an entity that provides services to non-citizens in New York State. Districts may provide non-citizens with the ONA Hotline: 1-800-566-7636.

Districts are reminded that per [GIS 16 TA/DC053](#), OTDA recognizes non-citizens with TPS as Permanently Residing Under Color of Law (PRUCOL) for the purposes of Safety Net Assistance (SNA) eligibility. If otherwise eligible, non-citizens with TPS can receive SNA. When determining eligibility,

these non-citizens will be coded Welfare Management System (WMS) Citizenship (CIT) Code "O". Further guidance can be found in [GIS 18 TA/DC042](#) and on the [LDSS-4579](#) "Non-Citizen Eligibility Desk Aid". Non-citizens granted TPS are ineligible for Family Assistance (FA), Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits unless they are also in some other qualifying non-citizen status.

Districts are additionally reminded that per [GIS 23 TA/DC039](#), OTDA recognizes non-citizens who have applied for TPS as PRUCOL for the purposes of SNA. If otherwise eligible, non-citizens who have applied for TPS can receive SNA. When determining eligibility, these non-citizens will be coded WMS CIT Code "W". Further guidance can be found in [GIS 23DC080](#).

The following is a list of USCIS documents that may be presented to districts by Syrian nationals, and those of no nationality who last habitually resided in Syria, to verify they have applied for TPS or were granted TPS:

- Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document (EAD) with a category code of C19 or A12;
- Form I-797, Notice of Action, that shows the approval of an EAD with a category code of A12;
- Form I-797, Notice of Action, indicating the USCIS receipt or approval of Form I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status;
- Postal Return Receipt addressed to USCIS or a copy of a cashed check to USCIS, and the copy of the completed Form I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status;
- Any other authoritative USCIS document indicating a pending TPS application or TPS granted.

As a reminder, in accordance with [13-ADM-07](#), when determining Temporary Assistance (TA) eligibility, districts must use the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) system to verify non-citizens' immigration documentation. Benefits must not be delayed, denied, reduced, or terminated pending verification of non-citizens' documentation through the SAVE system. If all other eligibility factors have been established and the non-citizens are otherwise eligible, benefits must be granted while awaiting responses from the SAVE system.

In the future, it is possible that DHS could extend the TPS designation for Syria again. If this were to occur, DHS may issue a blanket automatic extension of the expiring EADs for TPS beneficiaries from Syria, in order to allow time for EADs with new validity dates to be issued. Due to the complexity of the rules regarding TPS document extensions, if the "EAD Expiration Date" field of the initial SAVE response does not indicate that the non-citizen's TPS has been extended beyond the date on their document, the district must initiate a second step additional SAVE verification. If the results of the second step additional verification do not indicate an extension has been granted, the district must call SAVE Customer Service at 877-469-2563 to confirm whether the non-citizen still has TPS. All three steps must be taken prior to the district taking any negative action on the TA application/case. These actions must also be noted in the non-citizen's case record.

Districts may refer to the [LDSS-4579](#) "Non-Citizen Eligibility Desk Aid" for SNA eligibility information pertaining to non-citizens with TPS. [GIS 16 TA/DC053](#) and [GIS 18 TA/DC042](#) also include guidance on determining SNA eligibility for non-citizens with TPS. For any TA related questions, please contact the OTDA TA Bureau at: 518-474-9344, or by email: [tabureau@otda.ny.gov](mailto:tabureau@otda.ny.gov).