



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
600 Washington Street • Boston, MA 02111


DEVAL L. PATRICK
Governor

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
Lieutenant Governor

JUDYANN BIGBY, M.D.
Secretary

JULIA E. KEHOE
Commissioner

Field Operations Memo 2008-25
April 25, 2008

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff
From:  John Augeri, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations
Re: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNA)

Overview

In an effort to improve the nutritional status of working families and to increase the amount of services available to them, the Department has developed the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNA) program. SNA is a work incentive benefit provided to families in receipt of Non-Public Assistance (NPA) food stamps who meet SNA program requirements. A benefit of \$7.00 a month will be issued in addition to the regular food stamp benefits for each month the family meets the eligibility criteria of the SNA program, or until the SNA program is terminated (see 106 CMR 705.250).

Effective May 01, 2008 approximately 14,000 households will begin receiving the SNA benefit. BEACON will automatically issue SNA benefits retroactive to October 2007 for each month the household was actively receiving NPA food stamps and met SNA program requirements.

Purpose of Memo

This memo describes:

- the eligibility criteria for the SNA benefit; and
- how to respond to questions about the program.

Note: The SNA process is completely automated in BEACON and will require no worker action other than answering client inquiries about the program or replacing lost or inactive Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the SNA benefit, a household must:

- currently have an active NPA food stamp case;
- have a dependent child under the age of 18 living in the household;
- have no member of the household receiving TAFDC benefits; and
- be working 30 hours per week, with the exception of single parents and/or caretakers with a child under the age of six who are required to work 20 hours per week. Two-parent households are required to work a combined 55 hours per week with one parent working at least 30 hours per week (see 106 CMR 705.250).

The household will receive a monthly notice (see Attachment A) about its continued eligibility for the SNA benefit. Case information about the SNA benefit will be available in the Benefit History window of BEACON.

Households that receive SNA benefits in May will receive retroactive benefits for each month the SNA requirements were met for the period between October 2007 and April 2008. A special notice (see Attachment B) will be sent to households that receive retroactive benefits.

Note: Cases that are closed at the time of the monthly SNA issuance will not receive the SNA benefit, even if the case subsequently reopens retroactively.

EBT Cards

Active households that have not received any TAFDC, EAEDC or FS benefits (zero benefit households) in the past three months will automatically be issued new EBT cards and PINs centrally in a separate mailing. Lost or misplaced EBT cards should be replaced in accordance with the procedures outlined in Field Operations Memo 2006-30.

Client Inquiries

The following sample Q & A's have been developed to help AU Managers answer questions about the SNA benefit.

Q. Why am I receiving this benefit?

A. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNA) benefit is a work incentive benefit that you will receive in addition to your regular food stamp benefits. You are receiving the SNA benefit because you meet the requirements of the program.

**Client
Inquiries(cont.)**

Q. How long will I receive SNA benefits?

A. You will continue to receive the benefit as long as you are eligible for food stamp benefits and meet the eligibility requirements of the SNA program, or until the program ends.

Q. I have an active food stamp case, but because my income is too high, I do not receive a food stamp benefit. Will I still receive SNA?

A. Yes, you will receive SNA benefits as long as your food stamp case remains active and you continue to meet the SNA program requirements.

Q. I threw away my EBT card when I received the letter telling me I would receive no benefits. What should I do?

A. You may either come to the office to request a replacement card or DTA can replace the card and PIN through the mail.

Q. I receive TAFDC and food stamps. My friend received an extra payment of food stamps this month called SNA. Why didn't I receive this benefit?

A. If you receive TAFDC, you are not eligible for SNA benefits.

Q. Will receiving the SNA benefit affect my food stamp benefits?

A. No, you will receive SNA benefits in addition to your regular food stamp benefits.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478.

200 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Important Notice - Read Carefully
Este Mensaje Es Importante - Lea Cuidadosamente

Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance

Mary Jones
101 Main Street.
Malden, MA 02148

999-99-9999
Malden TAO - DTA

05/09/2008

Dear Mary Jones:

You have been found eligible this month for an additional benefit called Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNA). The SNA benefit of \$7.00 was deposited in your EBT account which you can access in the same manner as your food stamp benefit. Your food stamp benefit will not be affected by receipt of the SNA benefit.

You are eligible for the SNA benefit because an adult in your household is working enough hours per week to qualify for the benefit and your family is not receiving Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC).

The regulation used in reaching this decision is 106 CMR 705.250.

Since you have not received any DTA benefits in the last 3 months, you will receive a new EBT card shortly. Be sure to watch your mail for this card. If you do not receive it within a week of this letter, please call your worker.

If you have any questions about your case, you should call 617-999-9999 and ask for your worker Mary Smith.

You may also call Recipient Services at 1-800-445-6604, if you have trouble reading or understanding this notice.

To ask about free legal services, call: Greater Boston Legal Services at 1-800-323-3205.

200 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Important Notice - Read Carefully
Este Mensaje Es Importante - Lea Cuidadosamente

Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance

Mary Jones
101 Main Street.
Malden, MA 02148

999-99-9999
Malden TAO - DTA

05/09/2008

Dear Mary Jones:

You received an additional benefit called Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNA) this month. An additional amount of \$28.00 is being deposited into your EBT account, because you were eligible for 4 month(s) between October, 2007 and April, 2008. Your food stamp benefit will not be affected by the receipt of the SNA benefit.

You are eligible for SNA because an adult in your household is working enough hours per week to qualify for the benefit and your family is not receiving Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC).

The regulation used in reaching this decision is 106 CMR 705.250.

If you do not have an EBT card to access your benefits, call your worker.

If you have any questions about your case, you should call 617-999-9999 and ask for your worker Mary Smith.

You may also call Recipient Services at 1-800-445-6604, if you have trouble reading or understanding this notice.

To ask about free legal services, call: Greater Boston Legal Services at 1-800-323-3205.