

Where to go for help		
Question	Access Point	Telephone Number or Website
How can I find out about my DTA benefits 24 hours a day, seven days a week?	My Account Page DTA Automated Hotline	www.mass.gov/vg/selfservice 1-877-382-2363
Where should I go if I have questions about: ♦ a notice I got in the mail ♦ if my application is approved ♦ when I will get my next benefits?	My Account Page DTA Automated Hotline DTA Recipient Services (live agent)	www.mass.gov/vg/selfservice 1-877-382-2363 1-800-445-6604
Where should I go if I have questions about applying for SNAP, TAFDC or EAEDC benefits?	DTA Website DTA Automated Hotline DTA Recipient Services (live agent)	www.mass.gov/dta 1-877-382-2363 1-800-445-6604
How do I get an Income Verification?	My Account Page DTA Automated Hotline DTA Recipient Services (live agent)	www.mass.gov/vg/selfservice 1-877-382-2363 1-800-445-6604
How do I get my balance or report a lost or stolen EBT card?	Massachusetts EBT Customer Service	1-800-997-2555
How do I get information about all services available in my community?	Massachusetts 211 – United Way	211
How do I apply for or ask questions about MassHealth?	MassHealth Service Center	1-800-841-2900
How do I report fraud? I live in Massachusetts.	DTA Fraud Hotline (Massachusetts Resident)	1-800-372-8399
How do I report fraud? I do NOT live in Massachusetts.	DTA Fraud Hotline (Out-of-State Resident)	617-348-5222
How can I file a complaint about disability discrimination?	DTA Director of Equal Opportunity	617-348-8531
How do I apply for or check the status of unemployment benefits?	Division of Unemployment Assistance Telecenter	1-877-626-6800 or 617-626-6800
How do I get information on child support?	Massachusetts Child Support Customer Service	1-800-332-2733
How do I get information on Social Security or SSI?	Social Security Information	1-800-772-1213
How do I get information on fuel or energy assistance?	Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development - Heat Information	1-800-632-8175
How do I get information on Veterans' Services?	Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services Information	1-800-827-1000
How do I get information about WIC?	WIC Information	1-800-942-1007
How do I get information for domestic violence help?	SafeLink Hotline	1-877-785-2020



Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance



The mission of the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) is to assist low-income individuals and families to meet their basic needs, increase their incomes, and improve their quality of life. To be eligible for services provided by DTA, residents must meet certain financial and non-financial criteria.

DTA serves working families, children, seniors, and people with disabilities. Our services include food and nutritional assistance and cash assistance.

Located within the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, DTA ensures that the emergency and transitional needs of the individuals and families of the Commonwealth are met through a combination of state- and federally-funded programs.

You have the right to interpreter services provided by the Department, when needed, unless you want to bring your own interpreter. If you have trouble understanding this brochure, please call 1-800-445-6604.

This brochure outlines the eligibility requirements and documents needed to process applications for food and cash assistance. Once you start getting benefits, you may have to follow certain rules and requirements. If you think you have a good reason for not meeting a requirement, contact your case manager right away. You may have good cause if you have:

- ♦ A Mental or Physical Health Problem or Disability
- ♦ A Family Emergency
- ♦ A Child-Care Problem, or
- ♦ Other Good Reason for Not Meeting a Requirement

If good cause is granted, your benefits will not be reduced or stopped.

How may we help you?



Self-Service Assistance

Skip the waiting room and try DTA's self-service options! We now offer two ways to find out about your benefits 24 hours a day, seven days a week:

- ◆ **My Account Page (MAP):** MAP allows you to see information about your DTA benefits **online**. If you are the head of household (the person who signed the application for benefits), you can get information about your DTA benefits including the next date your benefits will be available. You can also view and print recent notices DTA has sent to you, and you can print a verification of your benefits. To sign up for access to My Account Page, visit www.mass.gov/vg/selfservice.
- ◆ **Automated Hotline:** By calling **1-877-382-2363**, you can find out your case manager's name and phone number, your current case status and benefits, and the date of your next recertification for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly Food Stamps). You can also request an Income Verification letter and learn about how to report a change, replace an EBT card, and more. The automated hotline offers help in English and Spanish.

These options are fast, easy and save you time.

Food Assistance

What is SNAP?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps), is a federally funded program that provides a monthly benefit to buy nutritious food.

Eligibility guidelines are developed by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). The amount of SNAP benefits you receive is based primarily on your monthly income and the number of people in your household.

Are you eligible?

(Eligibility is based on areas listed below)

- ◆ Household income which may not exceed:
 - 200% of the Federal Poverty Level for families with dependent children or pregnant women living alone (see Income Eligibility Chart); or
 - 130% of the Federal Poverty Level for households without children.
 - There are no gross income limits for households with elders and/or persons with disabilities only. (*see chart)
- ◆ Citizenship or legal non-citizen status (for example, legal adult permanent residents must live in the US for 5 years before they are eligible, unless they are disabled).
- ◆ Household assets, for certain households; your case manager will let you know if this applies to you.

What verifications are necessary?

- ◆ Proof of Identity
- ◆ Social Security numbers for all household members applying (you do not have to provide Social Security cards)
- ◆ Proof of household income (this includes earned and unearned income)
- ◆ Proof of residency
- ◆ You may also give us proof of child support payments, dependent care, medical, and shelter expenses to qualify for more SNAP benefits.

Restrictions: SNAP benefits may only be used to purchase food.

Cash Assistance (TAFDC)

What is TAFDC?

Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) is a state- and federally funded program that provides cash assistance to low-income families. Many clients are required to participate in a work activity as part of this program.

Are you eligible?

In addition to income and asset limits, you must be:

- ◆ A family with children under 18 (or in some cases, 19); or
- ◆ A pregnant woman with no children (the child's due date is within 120 days of the date of application).

Cash Assistance (TAFDC)

What verifications are necessary?

- ◆ Proof of Identity
- ◆ Social Security numbers for certain household members applying
- ◆ Birth Certificates for all household members applying (needed to prove citizenship and relationship for those included on the application)
- ◆ Proof of pregnancy and due date from a competent medical authority (if applying due to pregnancy)
- ◆ Proof of all household earnings for the last four weeks
- ◆ Proof of all shelter costs (rent receipts, mortgage statement, utility bills, lease, etc.)
- ◆ Other forms of verification may be necessary; your case manager will let you know if this applies to you.

Restrictions: TAFDC benefits held on electronic benefit cards (EBT) cards may not be used to pay for: alcoholic beverages; tobacco products; lottery tickets; gambling; visual materials or performances intended to create or simulate sexual conduct or excitement; firearms and ammunition; vacation services; tattoos; or body piercings, jewelry; or any fines, fees, bail or bail bonds. Penalties for a prohibited purchase include paying back DTA for the amount of the purchase and disqualification from TAFDC for multiple violations.

Cash Assistance (EAEDC)

What is EAEDC?

Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled, and Children (EAEDC) is a state-funded program that provides cash assistance to those in need to stabilize their lives.

Are you eligible?

In addition to income and asset limits, you must be:

- ◆ Unable to work due to a physical or mental incapacity which has lasted or will last at least 60 days; or
- ◆ Age 65 years or over and waiting for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments to begin; or
- ◆ Caring for a child living in the home and not related to you; or
- ◆ Participating in a Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission program; or
- ◆ Required to be in the home to care for an incapacitated person who would otherwise need care at a facility outside the home.

What verifications are necessary?

- ◆ Proof of Identity
- ◆ Social Security numbers for all household members applying
- ◆ Legal custody or guardianship of the non-related child
- ◆ Proof of medical incapacity
- ◆ Participation letter from Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
- ◆ Other forms of verification may be necessary; your case manager will inform you.

Restrictions: EAEDC benefits held on electronic benefit cards (EBT) cards may not be used to pay for: alcoholic beverages; tobacco products; lottery tickets; gambling; visual materials or performances intended to create or simulate sexual conduct or excitement; firearms and ammunition; vacation services; tattoos; or body piercings, jewelry; or any fines, fees, bail or bail bonds. Penalties for a prohibited purchase include paying back DTA for the amount of the purchase and disqualification from EAEDC for multiple violations.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How long does it take to get my benefits?

A: Once an application has been started, you will be required to provide verifications by a certain time. If you provide the required verifications on time, your eligibility should be decided within 30 days of the application date.

Q: Can someone help me with getting certain verifications?

A: Yes. If you need help getting verifications, ask your case manager for assistance.

Q: Who can I call to find out the status of my application?

A: You don't have to call the office to ask if your paperwork has arrived. Your case manager will contact you if you need to provide more information. You can call the Recipient Services Hotline for answers to general questions about your case. This and other helpful phone numbers are listed on the back of this brochure.

SNAP						TAFDC	
<i>Income Eligibility Chart</i>						Maximum Gross Income Standard	Net Income Standard/Maximum Monthly Benefit
HH Size	Gross (as of 10/1/2012)	Net (as of 10/1/2012)	165% (as of 10/1/2012)	200% (as of 1/24/2013)	Maximum Monthly Benefit	185%	
1	\$1,211	\$931	\$1,536	\$1,915	\$200	\$792	\$428
2	\$1,640	\$1,261	\$2,081	\$2,585	\$367	\$982	\$531
3	\$2,069	\$1,591	\$2,625	\$3,255	\$526	\$1,171	\$633
4	\$2,498	\$1,921	\$3,170	\$3,925	\$668	\$1,352	\$731
5	\$2,927	\$2,251	\$3,714	\$4,595	\$793	\$1,539	\$836
6	\$3,356	\$2,581	\$4,259	\$5,265	\$952	\$2,103	\$941
7	\$3,785	\$2,911	\$4,803	\$5,935	\$1,052	\$2,288	\$1,046
8	\$4,214	\$3,241	\$5,348	\$6,605	\$1,202	\$2,475	\$1,151
ADD	\$429	\$330	\$545	\$ 670	\$150	\$194	\$105

***NOTE:** SNAP cases with an elderly or disabled member are not subject to the Gross Income Standard. These cases must meet the Net Income Standard. TAFDC cases are also subject to a Net Income Standard, outlined in the last column above.