

New rules for replacing or changing your TAFDC or EAEDC EBT card

DTA has issued new rules on replacing or changing a cash assistance EBT card. See DTA Operations Memo 2012-56 (December 6, 2012). Here's a summary of the rule changes.

To get a replacement card, call or go to your local DTA office. DTA **will deduct a \$5 replacement fee** from your next TAFDC or EAEDC semi-monthly grant. You should **NOT** be charged a replacement fee if:

- You do not get any cash assistance.
- You need a replacement because of a disability. Ask for a disability accommodation.
- You need a replacement because of domestic violence. Ask for a domestic violence waiver or accommodation.
- You have a new SSN or changed your name.
- Your card was lost or damaged in the mail, or your card is defective.
- DTA sent you a card in the mail, but you requested another card before you received or had a chance to use the earlier card they mailed you.
- You got an emergency card that does not have your name on it and you want a card with your name.
- You applied for benefits and got a card but you were not approved and never used the card.
- Your case was closed for 30 days or more, you reapply, and you no longer have the card that was issued before.
- Your card was lost or destroyed in a disaster or fire or flood.

DTA should issue your replacement card *the day you request* it or the following day.

If DTA plans to charge the \$5 replacement fee, they will give or send you a form notice that says you will be charged. You can request a refund if you disagree for one of the reasons above.

If you request more than four replacement cards (including a SNAP-only card) in a 12-month period, you will have to speak with a DTA worker to get another card. If your worker is not available, you should speak with the worker on duty.

Important reminders:

- √ You will not get notice of your right to appeal the \$5 fee and you will not get notice of the reasons a fee should not be charged. This may not be legal. Consult an advocate if you want to challenge the fee.
- √ You can avoid a replacement fee by telling DTA to deposit your benefits to your bank account. Check with your local bank to see if you can open an account that does not charge fees.
- √ SNAP recipients who get TAFDC or EAEDC will be charged a replacement fee but SNAP recipients who do not get cash assistance will not be charged a replacement fee. This may not be legal. Consult an advocate.
- √ Call customer service (800-997-2555) to report a lost or stolen card.

For more information contact Mass.Law Reform Institute, Deborah Harris, dharris@mlri.org, 617-357-0700 x 313 or Pat Baker, pbaker@mlri.org, 617-357-0700 x 328.