



*Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Health and Human Services  
Department of Transitional Assistance*

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Governor


MARYLOU SUDDERS  
Secretary

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Lieutenant Governor

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Commissioner

**Online Guide Transmittal 2020-30  
Date**

**To:** Department of Transitional Assistance Staff

**From:**  Sarah Stuart, Associate Commissioner for Change Management

**Re:** SNAP: Emergency Allotment to SNAP Households

**Overview**

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As part of the Families First Coronavirus Act of 2020, Massachusetts obtained a waiver from FNS to issue emergency SNAP allotments to certain SNAP households for the months of March and April. This emergency allotment will bring impacted SNAP households up to the maximum benefit level for their current household size for the months of March and April. More important, the supplement will provide clients with additional nutritional supports needed as a result of circumstances related to COVID-19.

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**Purpose**

The purpose of this Online Guide Transmittal is to advise staff of how DTA will administer the issuance of the Emergency SNAP Allotments for March and April. These changes include:

- a new supplemental issuance type: FSP Administrative Benefit for easy tracking of the emergency allotments;
  - an automatic batch narrative entered in all cases that have been issued an emergency allotment; and
  - sending a text message to clients who are issued an emergency allotment.
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**March 2020  
Benefits**

For the month of March, clients who did not receive the maximum benefit level for their household size received the difference in benefits starting March 31, there is a small subset of clients who will receive the emergency allotment on April 2 by 11am.

**Example:** Household of 1 received \$100 for March. Max allotment for a household of 1 is \$194. Client will be issued the difference of \$94.

A batch narrative, “COVID-19 FNS Waiver – Emergency SNAP Supplement issued” automatically populated in all cases that received this emergency SNAP supplement.

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**April 2020  
Benefits**

For the month of April, clients will continue to receive benefits on their usual cyclical issuance date. Clients who did not receive the maximum benefit level for their household size will receive the difference in benefits. **Details regarding the emergency allotment plan for April are continuing to be developed and will be communicated to staff at a later date.**

If a client’s net income is reduced to zero for the month of April, you must issue a supplemental payment following established procedures.

DTA wants eligible households to receive their added SNAP benefits as soon as possible. MIS will filter and exclude households that already received maximum benefits. These households will not receive a future supplement for the same month.

**Example:** Household of 1 received \$102 per month in SNAP benefits. The client reports loss of income in April which reduces the households’ net income to zero. The maximum allotment for a household of 1 is \$194. The client must be issued the difference of \$92 for April.

A batch narrative, “COVID-19 FNS Waiver – Emergency SNAP Supplement issued” will automatically populate all cases that will be receiving this emergency SNAP supplement.

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**EBT Cards**

DTA is working to issue EBT cards to households active at \$0 that may no longer have an EBT card. In the meantime, if a client reaches out through the Assistance Line, assess the client’s need for an EBT card and issue one according to COVID-19 EBT procedures.

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**Informing  
Eligible  
Households  
of Emergency  
Allotment**

Households that are issued an emergency allotment will be advised of this issuance via text messaging, if they have a cell phone on record.

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**Questions**

If you have any policy or procedural questions, after conferring with the appropriate TAO personnel, please have your Systems Information Specialists or TAO management email them to DTA.Procedural Issues.

Systems issues should be directed to the Systems Support Help Desk.

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