



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

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Commissioner

**Online Guide Transmittal 2022-6  
February 1, 2022**

**To: Department of Transitional Assistance Staff**  
**From: Sarah Stuart, Associate Commissioner for Change Management**  
**Re: Cross Programs: 2022 Social Security COLA for TAFDC, EAEDC, and SNAP**

**Overview**

Every year in January, the Social Security Administration (SSA) implements a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for RSDI and SSI recipients. This COLA can affect TAFDC, EAEDC and SNAP benefits. COLA calculations for February 2022 DTA benefits are anticipated to be completed on the following schedule:

- Social Security numbers ending in 0-4 will be completed from 1/24/2022 through 1/28/2022; and
- Social Security numbers ending in 5-9 will be completed from 1/31/2022 through 2/4/2022.

This year, the SSA COLA will increase RSDI and SSI income by 5.9 percent. This unprecedentedly large increase is expected to reduce SNAP benefits for over 180,000 households. Therefore, staff should anticipate a relatively high number of phone calls from clients with questions related to the COLA.

When speaking with these clients, staff must explore whether they can increase their benefit level by verifying deductible expenses that are not already on record. Where possible, staff are to encourage clients to verify such expenses via telephonic signature.

Staff must also reiterate to households with elderly and/or disabled members that they can potentially increase their benefits by verifying medical expenses, provided that the total amount is over \$35 per month.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this Online Guide Transmittal is to advise staff of:

- the implementation of the SSA COLA;
  - the notices that will be sent to the impacted households;
  - information on the 2022 Medicare Part B premiums, 2022 Medicare Part D deductibles and the 2022 Medex premiums; and
  - corresponding updates to the Online Guide.
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**Revised Online  
Guide Pages**

**Topic:** SNAP  
**Book:** Expenses and Deductions  
**Chapter:** Health Insurance/Medical Expenses  
**Subchapter:** Medical Expenses  
**Page:** Medicare Part D

**Topic:** Scheduled Mailings/Projects  
**Book:** SSA COLA  
**Page:** SSA COLA Overview

**Topic:** Scheduled Mailings/Projects  
**Book:** SSA COLA  
**Page:** Medex Premiums

**Topic:** Scheduled Mailings/Projects  
**Book:** SSA COLA  
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**Topic:** Cross Programs  
**Page:** Helpful Charts and Figures

**Topic:** Notices/Forms  
**Book:** Cross Program  
**Page:** Cross Program Notices

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**Communication** The client populations impacted by the SSA COLA change have been the sent the following notices:

- Cash-Only SSA COLA Notice;
- Cash and SNAP SSA COLA Notice;
- Notice of Bay State CAP Food Assistance Benefits;
- Residential Facility SSA COLA Notice; and
- SNAP-only SSA COLA Notice.

To help reduce call volume, the Department will include the following message in the DTA Assistance Line and website:

“If your social security income is increasing, DTA will automatically update your case. This may impact your DTA benefits starting in February. The temporary extra, pandemic-related SNAP benefits continue to be available. Learn more: [Mass.gov/dta/covid-19](https://www.mass.gov/dta/covid-19).”

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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](mailto:DTA.Procedural.Issues).

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

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