



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF
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MONROE COUNTY SEES UPTICK IN REPORTS OF THEFT FROM EBT ACCOUNTS

Individuals whose Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or Temporary Assistance funds have been stolen via electronic means are eligible for benefit replacement; county is expediting replacement applications

ROCHESTER, NY —The Monroe County Department of Social Services has seen an increase over the past week of clients who use state-issued Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards reporting that their accounts have been compromised and their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance (TA) benefits stolen.

Electronic theft of EBT card balances is not an issue specific to Monroe County; it affects public assistance programs nation-wide. Due to a change in federal and state law, clients who have lost EBT benefits through card skimming, card cloning, phishing or other forms of electronic fraud are eligible to have stolen benefits replaced.

The county takes these thefts seriously, and understands the disruptive impact they have on people's lives. To ensure funds are restored as quickly as possible, the department has prioritized and is expediting benefit replacement applications.

To receive replacement benefits, individuals must visit Monroe County Social Services at 691 St. Paul Street to get a replacement EBT card and PIN, as well as file their application for replacement benefits.

We recommend applicants download the benefits replacement form (available via otda.ny.gov/workingfamilies/EBT-scam-alert.asp) fill it out and bring it with them, although forms are also available at the Social Services office. Providing a transaction report from ConnectEBT.com or the ConnectEBT app that shows unauthorized transactions will be helpful.

It will typically take 48 to 72 hours for clients to have their benefits restored. Social Services staff are working with affected clients to ensure they have alternate means of receiving food (food banks or food vouchers) in the time between applying and benefit restoration.

Additionally, the county recommends that everyone who has an EBT card closely monitor transactions on their card and immediately seek a replacement card and PIN if the account appears compromised. Often these kinds of thefts begin with a small unauthorized charge before escalating to a larger theft.

Incidents involving lost cards, physical theft of cards, voluntarily giving an EBT card or card information to someone or transactions conducted by anyone authorized to access the benefits are not eligible for replacement.

Additional resources are available here: monroecounty.gov/hs-assistance and otda.ny.gov/workingfamilies/EBT-scam-alert.asp.

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