



Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

DANIEL W. TIETZ
Commissioner

BARBARA C. GUINN
Executive Deputy Commissioner

February 14, 2023

Paul Brady
Executive Director
New York Public Welfare Association, Inc.
130 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12210

Dear Executive Director Brady:

This letter is in response to correspondence from former Director Sheila Harrigan dated January 9, 2023, concerning the end of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) supplemental Emergency Allotment (EA) benefits. OTDA recognizes the challenges local districts face in preparing for the discontinuation of EA benefits. We are committed to providing as much advance notice and clarity to SNAP households as possible and supporting local districts' efforts.

Since the end of EA benefit issuances will likely cause an increase in client inquiries, district office visits, and Fair Hearing requests, OTDA is undertaking several complimentary efforts to assist families and local districts with the transition. A recently released general information system notice ([23 TA/DC0011](#)) informs districts of these measures and offers several resources to assist with answering the inevitable rise in inquiries they will receive. OTDA has begun implementing a public messaging campaign to inform SNAP households that EA benefits are ending. This targeted approach includes mailed and web-based information sharing, outreach materials, and a text message campaign to distribute this message as broadly and rapidly as possible.

A letter will be mailed to all SNAP households beginning in February informing them that February is the last month they are eligible to receive EA benefits. The letter directs them to the OTDA SNAP EA Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) [webpage](#) and also includes the statewide OTDA Hotline number (1-800-342-3009) if they would like to reach out with additional questions. Please note, while districts can provide the hotline number to households, we must maintain reasonable expectations as to the call volume that the call center can accept and not cause more frustration or confusion for SNAP households. The hotline's automated response system and call agents will be equipped to confirm information about the ending of EA benefits, but will not be able to provide case-specific benefit information beyond what is included in the SNAP household letter and on the SNAP EA FAQ [webpage](#).

Households with mobile phone numbers on file will receive a series of three text messages over the next 8-10 weeks informing them about the end of EA benefits and directing them to the EA FAQ [webpage](#). The webpage provides guidance on when and how to report changes in household circumstances (i.e., loss of income and increases in certain expenses (shelter, childcare, and out-of-pocket medical costs) to their local district. The webpage also specifies that ongoing EA benefits cannot be restored through a Fair Hearing and provides alternative nutrition and support resources.

As noted above and explained more thoroughly in the GIS [23 TA/DC011](#), households are not entitled to a Fair Hearing based solely on the discontinuation of the supplemental payments. The EA SNAP benefits have been authorized and issued under a separate statutory authority than SNAP benefits and the specific statutory authority for those benefits has been terminated. In accordance with 7 CFR 271.7(f) there is no entitlement to Aid to Continue (ATC) for requests merely disputing the fact that the supplemental EA SNAP benefits ended. However, USDA-FNS considers the discontinuation of these supplements to be akin to a 'mass change' and in accordance with 7 CFR 271.7(f), CFR 273.12(e)(5), and 18 NYCRR 358-3.1(b)(11) households may be entitled to a hearing if they believe their budget was improperly calculated, or otherwise dispute the adequacy of their SNAP benefit amount.

OTDA shares your concerns surrounding the impact of the discontinuation of EA SNAP benefits on local districts and New York's SNAP households. The measures outlined in this letter will serve to mitigate some of the impact and provide support to districts as they assist their clients.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel W. Tietz", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Daniel W. Tietz
Commissioner

cc: Sarah Merrick