



MEPD and TW Bulletin 21-08

Date: April 22, 2021

To: Eligibility Services Supervisors and Staff
Program Managers
Regional Directors
Regional Attorneys
Hearings Officers

From: Access and Eligibility Services Program Policy
State Office 2115

Subject: **1. Electronic Benefit Transfer Card Issuance Processing**
2. Personal Identification Number (PIN) Packet Issuance Procedures
3. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits Distribution Schedule Update

The information in this bulletin will be included in a future handbook revision. Until the handbook is updated, staff must use the information in this bulletin. If you have any questions regarding the policy information in this bulletin, follow regional procedures.

Active bulletins are posted on the following websites:

- [Medicaid for the Elderly and People with Disabilities Handbook \(MEPDH\)](https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/mepd/policy-bulletins) at <https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/mepd/policy-bulletins>;
- [Texas Works Handbook \(TWH\)](http://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins) at <http://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins>.

1. Electronic Benefit Transfer Card Issuance Processing

Background

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) issues Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits via Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) to a recipient's Lone Star Card. When a household is certified, HHSC establishes an EBT account and issues a Lone Star Card to the primary cardholder (PCH). The process for staff to request issuance of a Lone Star Card is now integrated into the Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS).

Current Policy

[TANF and SNAP](#)

Staff complete [Form H1172](#), EBT Card, PIN and Data Entry Request, and give the completed form to EBT issuance staff to:

- request issuance of an initial Lone Star Card in the office or by mail ([TWH B-233.2](#), Issuing Lone Star Cards for PCHs);
- send a new PCH record for a TANF or SNAP EDG; and
- enter the personal account number (PAN), if applicable. ([TWH B-233.2.4](#), Applicants Interviewed by Home Visit)

New Policy

[TANF and SNAP](#)

Staff must complete the **EBT Card Details** Logical Unit of Work (LUW) in TIERS to request issuance of a Lone Star Card.

Exception: Staff must generate the manual Form H1172 for applicants interviewed by home visit, or if TIERS becomes unavailable.

Automation

Changes to TIERS are currently scheduled to be implemented with TIERS Release 109.2 on May 22, 2021.

Correspondence

Correspondence changes are not required.

Handbook

Updates to the MEPDH are not required.

The TWH is currently scheduled to be updated in the October 2021 revision.

Training

A web-based training (WBT) titled "EBT Card Issuance" will be available May 13, 2021.

Effective Date

This policy is effective with the implementation of TIERS Release 109.2 currently scheduled for May 22, 2021.

2. Personal Identification Number (PIN) Packet Issuance Procedures

Background

HHSC issues TANF and SNAP benefits via EBT to a recipient's Lone Star Card. When a household is certified, HHSC establishes an EBT account and issues a Lone Star Card. Recipients access benefits using the card and a Personal Identification Number (PIN).

Current Policy

[SNAP and TANF](#)

Cardholders receive a PIN packet from the local office or the Lone Star Help Desk when they need a pre-assigned PIN because of a barrier that prevents the person from choosing a PIN. ([TWH B-234.3](#), Initial PIN Issuance Procedures for Clients with Barriers that Prevent PIN Self-Selection)

For applicants interviewed by home visit, staff use Form H1173, EBT Card Issuance and PIN Self-Selection/Issuance Log, to log out a Lone Star Card and PIN packet to deliver to the household during the home visit. ([TWH B-233.2.4](#), Applicants Interviewed by Home Visit)

At the end of each month, EBT site coordinators in the local office complete one [Form H1174](#), Inventory of EBT Cards/PIN Packets, to account for their supply of Lone Star Cards, and an additional Form H1174 to account for PIN packets.

New Policy

[SNAP and TANF](#)

PIN packets are no longer issued by the local office. Cardholders must call the Lone Star Help Desk to request a PIN Packet.

Staff must continue to use Form H1173 to log EBT card issuances. EBT site coordinators must continue to use Form H1174 for inventory of EBT cards.

Automation

Automation changes are not required.

Correspondence

Form H1173, EBT Card Issuance and PIN Self-Selection/Issuance Log, is retitled to "EBT Card Issuance Log." The section to record PIN issuance is removed.

Form H1174, Inventory of EBT Cards/PIN Packets, is retitled to "Inventory of EBT Cards", and references the removal of PIN packets.

Handbook

Updates to the MEPDH are not required.

The TWH is currently scheduled to be updated in the July 2021 revision.

Training

Training is not required.

Effective Date

This policy is effective July 1, 2021.

3. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits Distribution Schedule Update

Background

The implementation of House Bill (H.B.) 1218, 86th Legislature, Regular Session, 2019 expanded the SNAP benefits distribution schedule over a 28-day period. The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) applied the new distribution schedule to all new SNAP households certified on or after June 1, 2020.

To create a balanced caseload across the entire 28-day distribution period, HHSC will modify the requirements to include households who have not received SNAP benefits in the previous six months.

Current Policy

[SNAP](#)

For new SNAP households certified on or after June 1, 2020, SNAP monthly benefits are available on a staggered basis between the 16th and the 28th day of the month, based on the last two digits of the EDG number. ([TWH B-251](#), Monthly Benefit Issuance Schedule)

SNAP households certified before June 1, 2020, retain their previous benefit issuance schedule, even if the household experiences a break in benefits and reapplied.

New Policy

[SNAP](#)

The following will have their SNAP monthly benefits available on a staggered basis between the 16th and the 28th day of the month, based on the last two digits of the EDG number:

- New SNAP households certified on or after June 1, 2020; and
- Previously certified SNAP households who reapply after a break in coverage and who did not receive SNAP benefits in the previous six months preceding the application.

Automation

Changes to TIERS are currently scheduled to be implemented with TIERS Release 109.1 on April 24, 2021.

Correspondence

Correspondence changes are not required.

Handbook

Updates to the MEPDH are not required.

The TWH is currently scheduled to be updated in the October 2021 revision.

Training

A one-page reference tool is available in The LOOP - Training Development and Delivery (TDD) - Training Broadcasts, titled "SNAP Benefits Distribution Schedule Update." Training was made available in a web-based module titled "Release 109.1 SNAP Benefits Distribution Schedule Update" on April 15, 2021. A training broadcast was sent with further details.

Effective Date

This policy is effective with the implementation of TIERS Release 109.1 currently scheduled for April 24, 2021.