



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Division of Social Services

• 325 North Salisbury Street •

2420 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2420

Courier # 56-20-25

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

Pheon E. Beal, Director
(919) 733-3055

March 24, 2005

Dear County Director of Social Services:

Re: Food Stamp EBT PIN Selection Equipment

As you know, the Department of Health and Human Services is working with our Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) vendor, eFunds, Inc., to implement a telephone PIN selection process for Food Stamp EBT cards. The cost of each PIN selected using the telephone accessible Automated Response Unit (ARU) for both English and Spanish speaking customers will be \$.17. If a customer requires PIN selection assistance in Spanish, the process will be handled by an eFunds Customer Service Representative (CSR) and the cost is \$2.00 per PIN selected. This new PIN selection process is much more customer friendly. Currently, PIN selection requires a visit to your office and can only occur during the business days and hours your agency is open. Telephone PIN selection can be accomplished any time, day or night, from any telephone. It will allow individuals to use their Food Stamp benefits more quickly once benefits are available. Telephone PIN selection will also support the upcoming Simplified Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) targeting seniors who receive SSI. These individuals will be able to complete the entire application process and use benefits without ever having to visit the local office.

Most counties currently lease PIN equipment and the remaining counties purchased one or more PIN machines. When the telephone PIN selection process is implemented, you may choose to rely solely on the telephonic process, or you may elect to keep and use the PIN machine for those customers who experience difficulty in accomplishing the process by telephone. Another option is for the caseworker to assist clients who visit the office and are having trouble with telephone PIN selection, minimizing the need to retain leased equipment. While the PIN can be selected using any touch-tone phone, you may decide to keep leased equipment for a few months to assess the transition and gauge the need to keep a leased PIN machine as a backup.

In order to coordinate with eFunds for the return of leased equipment and upgrading PIN equipment in the future, we will contact you soon to find out what you plan to do. If you have any questions, please contact your Food Assistance and Energy Programs Representative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane Schwartz".

Jane Schwartz, Chief
Economic Services Section

FAEP-04-2005

cc: David Steele
Food Assistance and Energy Programs Representatives

Local Business Liaisons