



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

June 22, 2005

Dear County Director of Social Services:

Re: Food Stamp Telephone PIN Selection

Implementation of the telephone PIN selection process for Food Stamp EBT cards will occur in July 2005. Most card holders will be able to accomplish telephone PIN selection at that time. In the course of testing the new procedure that requires entry of the card holder's Social Security Number (SSN) as the unique identifier, we have been made aware of a problem affecting approximately 5,000 card holders statewide who do not have a SSN. This situation can occur if an individual failed to provide a SSN, or is an undocumented alien without a SSN who gets benefits on behalf of other eligible persons, often children.

Our EBT contractor is in the process of developing an alternative unique identifier consisting of the card holder's date of birth. Until that time, it is a security risk to provide a blanket instruction to enter all zeros for the SSN since it is not a unique identifier. It will be necessary to refer individuals with no SSN who get a new or replacement EBT card back to your agency. Although all new cards will include telephone PIN instructions, when the caller is unable to enter a valid SSN he will be unable to select the PIN by telephone. When the caller speaks with a customer service representative, he will be instructed to go to the DSS to select a PIN. All caseworkers should advise new clients who have no SSN to bring the card in to select a PIN until the date of birth identifier is in place. There are two workable options for PIN selection for affected individuals:

- 1) Use your existing PIN selection device and procedure to have the client select a PIN; or
- 2) Have a designated staff person follow the telephone PIN select instructions. Upon request for entry of the card holder's SSN, enter all zeros (this process will work). When the automated response requests selection of the PIN, allow the client to select the PIN using the telephone key pad.

Only a small number of households are anticipated to get a new or replacement EBT card until the telephone PIN select function is modified. The revised process is expected to be in place around the end of August. 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-12-2005

cc: David Steele
Food Assistance and Energy Programs Representatives
Local Business Liaisons