



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF
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MONROE COUNTY REPORTS SURGE OF THEFT FROM EBT ACCOUNTS

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

ROCHESTER, NY — The Monroe County Department of Social Services is reporting roughly 350 skimming incidents of Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards in the month of June. This theft has resulted in accounts being compromised and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance (TA) benefits being stolen.

Card skimming directly copies card and personal identification number (PIN) information from EBT cardholders using a device (skimmers) placed on top of a store's card reading machine. The stolen data is used to access the victim's EBT account and spend their SNAP and TA cash benefits.

Monroe County is committed to addressing these thefts and acknowledges their disruptive impact on people's lives. To expedite the replacement of funds, the department has prioritized benefit replacement applications.

Social Services staff are allocating additional resources to this effort to expedite as many refunded benefits as possible. The Monroe County Department of Human Services is assisting affected clients with alternate means of receiving food, such as food banks or food vouchers, while waiting for benefits to be restored.

Individuals seeking replacement benefits must visit Monroe County Social Services at 691 St. Paul Street or 111 Westfall Road to obtain a replacement EBT card and PIN, and to file their application for replacement benefits. It is recommended that applicants download the benefits replacement form (available at otda.ny.gov/workingfamilies/EBT-scam-alert.asp), fill it out, and bring it with them.

Forms are also available at the Social Services office. Including a transaction report from ConnectEBT.com or the ConnectEBT app showing unauthorized transactions will be helpful.

Please note that incidents involving lost cards, physical theft of cards, voluntarily giving an EBT card or card information to someone, or transactions conducted by authorized individuals are not eligible for replacement.

Also note, the law limits the number and amount of benefit replacements. Details about those limits can be found at <https://www.monroecounty.gov/hs-assistance> or <https://otda.ny.gov/workingfamilies/EBT-scam-alert.asp>

All cardholders should take these steps to protect their benefits:

- Immediately change the PIN, and remember to change it frequently
- Protect their EBT card and PIN information
- Monitor their EBT account regularly to watch for unauthorized transactions

If you believe your benefits have been stolen, please immediately report your card stolen by calling 888-328-6399, by visiting <https://www.connectebt.com/> or through the connectEBT mobile app.

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