

DATE: July 19, 2022

OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM #22-07-04

SUBJECT: Changes to Benefit Expungement Timeframes for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Cash Assistance Benefits

TO: Executive Directors

FROM: Inez Titus
Deputy Secretary
Office of Income Maintenance

PURPOSE

To inform County Assistance Offices (CAOs) about changes to SNAP and Cash Assistance benefit expungement timeframes beginning August 2nd, 2022.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, more commonly known as the Farm Bill, made changes to the way that SNAP benefits will be expunged, changing the permanent expungement time frame from 12 months to nine months. In order to be consistent across programs, the Department of Human Services is making the same change to Cash Assistance at the same time that the change is made for SNAP. Currently, benefits are suspended at 180 days and a confirming notice is sent to the client. If the client does not contact the CAO, the benefits remain suspended. But if the client contacts the CAO, the caseworker reinstates the benefits and reissues expunged benefits.

Beginning August 2nd, 2022, the system will issue a notice (reason code 452 option 3 or reason code 451 option 6) to the SNAP and/or Cash Assistance household after eight months of inactivity informing the client that if their card is not used at least once in the next 30 days, the benefits will be expunged from that card. If households contact the CAO in response to this notice (or if they ask about how long benefits will remain on their card), the CAO will advise them that they must use the card at least once every nine months or benefits will be expunged. They must make at least one purchase before the nine month date listed on the notice or they will lose all of their accumulated benefits. During the SNAP or TANF interview, the CAO should review the expungement time frames with the household and remind them to follow up with the

CAO if they do not receive the EBT card within two to three weeks (if the card is being mailed centrally).

After benefits are expunged, they cannot be reissued. At nine months, the budget will be put in a suspended status. The household can contact the CAO to request the budget be returned to an active status, but expunged benefits cannot be reissued. If there is no contact from the client, the budget will remain in a suspended status until the next Semi-Annual Review (SAR) or renewal. If there is no response to the SAR or renewal, the budget can be closed.

NEXT STEPS

1. Share and review this information with appropriate staff members.
2. Direct questions regarding this Operations Memorandum to your Area Manager.
3. This Operations Memorandum is in effect until further notice.
4. This Operations Memorandum makes Operations Memorandum OPS-08-09-09 obsolete.