



EBT Fraud Reimbursement 101 Know Your Rights Under Maryland's New Law

A new law in Maryland effective April 24, 2023, made it easier to restore stolen cash and food benefits. Learn more about the process and make sure you get the full replacement of benefits stolen. If you discover that your benefits have been stolen, you should take the following steps:

Cancel your card right away and request a new one

- You should immediately cancel your EBT card if you discover it's been stolen.
- Call the Maryland EBT Customer Service Center 1-800-997-2222 to report the card stolen or go to www.ConnectEBT.com
- Change your Personal Identification Number (PIN)
- If you want to pick up an emergency EBT card (also known as vault card) in person, we recommend you call to set up an appointment at your Local Department of Social Services (DSS) by calling the DHS Call Center at 1-800-322-6347. You can also walk into your DSS office to request a card without an appointment.

Submit a claim for reimbursement

You may be eligible to have your benefits replaced even if you have previously had an application denied. You can file a claim for reimbursement with the Department of Social Services to get reimbursed for stolen benefits:

- **Electronically** through the MDTHINK Consumer Portal (tinyurl.com/EBTFraudClaim)
- **Paper** form, submitted in person at your Local DSS office or by mail or fax. We recommend you make a copy to have proof you submitted the form.
- **By phone** through the Maryland Benefits Center at 1-833-373-5867 (9am-5pm Monday-Friday). A representative will help you submit the application.

Do you need assistance submitting your claim?

The following SNAP Community Partner Organizations can also assist with your application:

Maryland Hunger Solutions for **Statewide** (English, Spanish)
Call (866) 821-5552

Community Outreach & Development for **Prince George's County** (English, Spanish)
Call (301) 735-0121

Community Engagement & Consultation Group for the **Laurel, Anne Arundel, Howard County** (English, Spanish and Farsi)

Call (301) 525-8807

LifeStyles of Maryland for **Southern Maryland** (English, Spanish)
Call (301) 609-9900

As soon as possible, but no more than 10 days after you file your claim or notify the Department of your lost benefits due to theft, the Department must:

- Notify you in writing of the Department's decision on your reimbursement claim;
- Restore your benefits in the **exact amount stolen** (if the Department determines you receive benefits and a theft occurred); and
- Provide you with a new EBT card (you have the right to receive your card no later than 10 days after filing your claim)

The Department cannot:

- Require you to file a police report.
- Provide you with partial replacement of benefits if more was stolen.
- Limit the number of times that your benefits can be replaced.

You have the right to appeal any decision made by the Department.

You have the right to request a hearing to challenge any decision made by the Department about your case. This process is called an "appeal." If you decide to appeal, you must request a hearing **within 90 days** after the date of the Department's decision. Your appeal will be scheduled for a hearing in front of a judge. The judge is called an "Administrative Law Judge."

You can request an appeal over the phone with DSS or in paper using a [Request for Fair Hearing](#) Form at any local Department of Social Services office. You can turn the Request for Fair Hearing Form into DSS, or fax it to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) at (410) 229-4266 or (410) 229-4268. Make a copy (or take a photo) of the completed appeal form, so you have proof you filed it. About 10 days after you request a hearing, the Office of Administrative Hearings will mail you a hearing notice with information including your case number, hearing date, and whether the hearing is remote or in person. To check on the status of your appeal request, you can call OAH at (410) 229-4292.

Under the new law, when you request a hearing, the Department must replace your benefits in the full amount that you requested while you are waiting for your appeal hearing. This is your right to receive "benefits pending" during the appeal.

If the Administrative Law Judge issues a decision in your favor, you get to keep the replacement benefits that you received. If the Administrative Law Judge finds the Department's initial determination was correct, you will need to pay back your replacement benefits over time. Your benefit amount in future months will be reduced by no more than \$10 or 5% of your monthly allotment, whichever is less, until the amount is paid back.

Programs eligible for benefit replacement (current as of 10/18/23):

Supplemental Nutrition
Assistance Program (SNAP)

Disaster SNAP (DSNAP)

Emergency Allotments (EA)	Minimum State Supplement (MSS)
Heat and Eat (H-EAT)	Summer SNAP
Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA)	Transitional Support Services (TSS)
Child Support Passthrough	Temporary Disability Assistance Program (TDAP)
Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA)	Public Assistance to Adults (PAA)

EBT Cards now have a new security feature!

The new law requires the Department to make EBT cards more secure. One way you can secure your card, is by downloading the **ConnectEBT app** on your Apple or Android smartphone. This app can be used to keep your card “locked” when you are not using it. Unlock the card when you are ready to pay and lock it again when you are finished. You will need internet access to lock and unlock your card. This will help prevent any unauthorized use of your card. Instructions on how to download and use the app are available at tinyurl.com/connectEBT

Do you have questions about your rights under the new law? Contact us!



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