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## General Information Memorandum

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ISD-GI 16-25

**TO:** ISD Employees  
**FROM:** *MM* Marilyn Martinez, Director, Income Support Division  
**RE:** EBT Card Trafficking Warning Letter  
**DATE:** March 8, 2016

In an effort to prevent the illegal trafficking of EBT cards, the Human Services Department Office of the Inspector General (HSD OIG) will generate a warning letter to SNAP recipients that have replaced their EBT card five or more times in a 2 month period.

The warning letter will advise and remind the recipient that EBT card trafficking is illegal and outlines items that cannot be purchased with SNAP benefits and lists the violations that are considered misuse or trafficking of the EBT card. Further, the letter advises the client that HSD OIG will be reviewing their EBT transactions closely because of the excessive replacement cards requested by the client. It is not necessary to refer them to OIG since the warning notice can be explained by ISD staff.

When a recipient inquires about the warning letter, ISD staff should:

- Explain that the letter is a notice of warning.
- Explain that as a result of the recipient's high number of replacement EBT cards, their EBT Snap transactions will be closely monitored. The script below can be utilized by CSC and ISD field staff.

"In the past several months you have requested an unusually high amount of replacement EBT cards; therefore the letter was sent to you as a notice of warning. Your SNAP transactions will now be closely monitored for potential trafficking and misuse. Your EBT card can last for years, and can be used as long as you receive benefits. If you continue to request replacement EBT cards, this will result in an investigation."

- Review both the misuse and trafficking criteria which are explained in the warning letter.

The warning letter will need to be scanned in the recipient's ECF under correspondence.

Attached is the Excessive Replacement Card letter. If you have any questions regarding the information in this GI please contact Ken Romero via email at [Ken.Romero@state.nm.us](mailto:Ken.Romero@state.nm.us) or voice at 505-222-9371.

Enclosure:

OIG EBT Card Trafficking Warning Letter

**RESCINDED**



HUMAN  
SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT

Susana Martinez, Governor  
Brent Earnest, Secretary  
Adrian R. Gallegos, Inspector General

Office of Inspector General  
Investigations Bureau  
8909 Adams St NE, Ste. A  
Albuquerque, NM 87113-2701

{Mailing Date}

{APEN Case Number}  
{Case Head First Name} {Case Head Last Name}  
{Case Mailing Address 1}  
{Case Mailing Address 2}  
{City} {State} {Zip}

Dear {Case Head First Name} {Case Head Last Name}

Our records show you have ordered an unusually high number of Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards in the past several months. Specifically, you have ordered a total of \_\_\_\_\_ cards in the past twelve months.

Please be aware that as a result of your unusually high number of replacement EBT cards your Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) transactions will be monitored closely for potential trafficking or misuse. Federal and state law considers each time a card is trafficked or misused to be a crime and/or a SNAP violation. Offenders will be investigated and if a crime occurred, will be referred to the United States Attorney's Office or the New Mexico District Attorney's Office for prosecution. A program violation could lead to the possible reduction or loss of SNAP benefits.

Trafficking means to sell or trade your SNAP EBT card or benefits for:

1. Cash;
2. Alcoholic Beverages or Tobacco Products;
3. Firearms, Ammunition or Explosives; or
4. Illegal Drugs

Misuse of SNAP benefits means to use your EBT card to:

1. Purchase non-food items;
2. Pay on a credit or charge account, even if the charges were for eligible food;
3. Allow a non-household member to buy groceries for themselves; or
4. Purchase food for individuals not included in your SNAP household.

Your EBT card can last for years, and can be used for as long as you receive benefits.

If you continue to request replacement EBT cards, the Office of Inspector General will investigate your case to ensure that your SNAP benefits are not being trafficked or misused. If you are trafficking or misusing your SNAP benefits or EBT Card, you will be penalized and/or prosecuted.

If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact your local New Mexico Human Services Department, Income Support Division office or call 1-800-283-4465.

Sincerely,

Office of Inspector General

**RESCINDED**