



OFFICE OF POLICY, PROCEDURES, AND TRAINING

POLICY BULLETIN # 22-60-ELI

PANDEMIC EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FUND (PEAF) BACK-TO-SCHOOL PAYMENT AND INFANT NUTRITIONAL ASSISTANCE PAYMENT

Date: August 25, 2022	Subtopic(s): Pandemic Emergency Assistance Fund, COVID-19
	<p>The purpose of this policy bulletin is to inform Human Resources Administration (HRA) Benefits Access Center (BAC), Non-Cash Assistance (NCA) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Center, HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA), and Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) staff of additional payments made using the Pandemic Emergency Assistance Fund (PEAF) to Cash Assistance (CA) households with a child(ren) aged 17 years or under. This payment is intended to assist with the purchase of formula or food for households with a child(ren) under three (3) years of age, and to purchase back-to-school supplies for households with a child(ren) 3-17 years of age.</p> <p>PEAF was established with the passage of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 on March 11, 2021. PEAF provides non-recurring, short-term benefits to assist needy families impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p><u>Program Implications</u></p> <p>The Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) issued a one-time non-assistance cash payment on August 12, 2022, to certain CA households.</p> <p>Back-to-School Payment</p> <p>CA households that meet all of the following eligibility criteria received a payment of \$214 per eligible child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The open CA case contains an active child aged 3-17 who received benefits on the case during the month of July 2022; and• The CA case remains open on the date of payment issuance.

HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS PROCEDURE?
Call 718-557-1313 then press 3 at the prompt followed by 1 or
send an e-mail to *FIA Call Center Fax* or fax to: (917) 639-0298

Infant Nutritional Assistance Payment

CA households that meet all of the following eligibility criteria received a payment of \$150 per eligible child:

- The open CA case contains an active child under the age of 3 who received benefits on the case during the month of July 2022; and
- The CA case remains open on the date of payment issuance.

OTDA issued these payments directly to the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cash account of the CA case. Households eligible for these one-time non-assistance payments were sent the Pandemic Emergency Assistance - Family Pandemic Payment (**LDSS-5204**) notice from New York State (NYS) OTDA informing them of the payment and of their rights to an OTDA Administrative Review.

All PEA Payments Will:

- have no effect on the household's eligibility or benefit amounts for CA, SNAP, or HEAP;
- not be part of the regular recurring CA grant;
- be excluded from the CA standard of need;
- be excluded as income to the CA and SNAP household;
- be excluded from CA and SNAP resource limits;
- be excluded from the State sixty-month time limit for CA;
- not be offset by Child Support Collections;
- not offset CA or SNAP overpayments;
- not be subject to overpayment determinations/calculations; and
- not be included in Interim Assistance Reimbursement (IAR).

The Back-to-School Payment and Infant Nutritional Assistance Payment were issued to eligible CA households as an unrestricted one-time single issuance via mass authorization to recipients on their EBT cards. These payments were issued on August 12, 2022.

Rejection Reports and Manual Payments

Rejection Reports

OTDA generates rejection reports to identify cases where the benefit could not be issued. For both the Back-to-School Payment and the Infant Nutritional Assistance Payment, there were no instances found of a benefit not being issued to eligible households. BAC and HASA staff do not have to review the rejection reports.

Manual Payments

If staff are reopening a CA case that was closed in error or due to a Fair Hearing going back to July 2022, staff should evaluate whether the CA household would have been eligible for the Back-to School Payment and/or the Infant Nutritional Assistance Payment. If eligible, the benefit must be issued as part of the package of retroactive benefits. Staff must use the Paperless Alternate Module (PAM) to issue the payments with issuance code **WS** for the Back-to-School Payment and **WU** for the Infant Nutritional Assistance Payment.

Effective Immediately

Reference:

[22-LCM-09](#)

Related Items:

[PB #22-29-ELI](#)

[PB #22-12-OPE](#)

Attachments:

LDSS-5206 Pandemic Emergency Assistance – Back to School Payment (8/22)

LDSS-5207 Pandemic Emergency Assistance – Infant Nutritional Assistance Payment (08/22)

August 2022

Case Number:

Amount of Payment: \$

Dear Recipient:

This notice is to tell you that you are getting a one-time cash payment to help with back-to school costs for the children in your household. This payment is equal to \$214 per child and is based on the number of children in your household who are between the ages of 3 through 17 years old during the month of July 2022 and currently in receipt of Public Assistance (PA) benefits.

This payment is intended to help your family cope with the tough economic times resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 established the Pandemic Emergency Assistance Fund to assist families economically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds are enabling New York State to make these payments to assist families affected by the pandemic in meeting their basic needs.

What can I use the money for?

This payment can be used to buy items such as books, pencils, pens, notebooks, and other essential school items.

How will I be paid the money?

Your money has been paid directly into your EBT cash account. This payment can be withdrawn through an ATM or, it can be spent at retail locations where EBT cards are accepted. If your EBT card is damaged and fails to work at the ATM or store, you will need to contact your case worker at your local department of social services and request a replacement card. You may request that the replacement card be mailed directly to your home. **Please note if you do not use your cash account for a period of 90 consecutive days, any cash benefit remaining in the account that is at least 90 days old will be expunged (removed) from the account.** You should check your cash balance so you can use this benefit before it expires. You may check your cash balance free of charge at an ATM, on the Internet at www.connectebt.com or by calling the EBT Helpline number on the back of your card.

Is this just a one-time payment?

Yes. The back-to school payment for your household is a one-time payment.

Will this money affect my SNAP Benefits, Medical Assistance, PA or other benefits?

No. This one-time payment will not affect your eligibility for the benefits you are currently receiving.

How can I find out about other benefits that I might be eligible for – like cash assistance or help with emergency needs?

If you are in need of assistance and reside outside the New York City area, you may go to www.mybenefits.ny.gov to check your eligibility for other benefits such as cash assistance, the Home Energy Assistance Program, help with rent arrears, and various tax credits that might help you make ends meet during these difficult economic times. New York City residents may go to ACCESS NYC (www.nyc.gov/accessnyc) for assistance.

What do I do if I think the amount of the Payment is incorrect?

Please refer to the Agency Administrative Review page on the bottom of this page.

You should be aware that there is limited money available for Pandemic Emergency Assistance Fund payments. Once the available money is exhausted, no payments will be issued.

Who can I contact if I have questions about this notice or want to request a conference?

You may call the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance at 1-800- 342-3009 if you have questions about this payment or want to request a review.

AGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW – DO YOU THINK WE ARE WRONG?

If you think this decision is incorrect, you can request an administrative review to have the decision reviewed. If you want to request a review, you must do this within thirty (30) days of the date on the letter. To request a review, please call 1-800-342-3009.

August 2022

Case Number:

Amount of Payment: \$

Dear Recipient:

This notice is to tell you that you are getting a one-time cash payment to help with the cost of infant nutritional needs for children in your household. This payment is equal to \$150 per child and is based on the number of children in your household who were under the age of 3 through July 31, 2022, and currently in receipt of Public Assistance (PA) benefits or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. Please see the "Amount of Payment" note above, for the total amount of this payment.

This payment is intended to help your family cope with the tough economic times resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 established the Pandemic Emergency Assistance Fund to assist families economically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds are enabling New York State to make these payments to assist families affected by the pandemic in meeting their basic needs.

What can I use the money for?

This payment can be used to assist your household in purchasing infant formula or food.

How will I be paid the money?

Your money has been paid directly into your EBT cash account. This payment can be withdrawn through an ATM or, it can be spent at retail locations where EBT cards are accepted. If your EBT card is damaged and fails to work at the ATM or store, you will need to contact your case worker at your local department of social services and request a replacement card. You may request that the replacement card be mailed directly to your home. **Please note if you do not use your cash account for a period of 90 consecutive days, any cash benefit remaining in the account that is at least 90 days old will be expunged (removed) from the account.** You should check your cash balance so you can use this benefit before it expires. You may check your cash balance free of charge at an ATM, on the Internet at www.connectebt.com or by calling the EBT Helpline number on the back of your card.

Is this just a one-time payment?

Yes. The infant nutritional assistance payment for your household is a one-time payment.

Will this money affect my SNAP Benefits, Medical Assistance, PA or other benefits?

No. This one-time payment will not affect your eligibility for the benefits you are currently receiving.

How can I find out about other benefits that I might be eligible for – like cash assistance or help with emergency needs?

If you are in need of assistance and reside outside the New York City area, you may go to www.mybenefits.ny.gov to check your eligibility for other benefits such as cash assistance, the Home Energy Assistance Program, help with rent arrears, and various tax credits that might help you make ends meet during these difficult economic times. New York City residents may go to ACCESS NYC (www.nyc.gov/accessnyc) for assistance.

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