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Electronic Benefit Transfer Photo Requirement Exemptions Report

July 2023



**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE
ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFER
PHOTO REQUIREMENT EXEMPTIONS REPORT
JULY 2023**

REPORT OVERVIEW

Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 18, Section 2 (B)(s) requires DTA to file an annual report detailing the numbers of recipients exempt from the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card photo requirement and the reasons for such exemptions.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE MISSION

DTA’s mission is to assist and empower low-income individuals and families to meet their basic needs, improve their quality of life, and achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency. DTA offers a comprehensive system of programs and supports to help individuals and families achieve greater economic mobility, including food and nutritional assistance, economic assistance, and employment supports. Currently, DTA serves one out of every seven people in the Commonwealth including working families, children, older adults, and people with disabilities.

EBT PHOTO REQUIREMENT

In August 2013, the Legislature passed a law requiring the use of photo identification on the front of each newly issued, and reissued, EBT card. The requirement covered recipients who are 18 or older that are designated to be the “head of household” on a DTA assistance case. Other classes of recipients are exempted from the requirement as follows:

- 60 years of age or over
- Blind
- Disabled
- Victims of domestic violence

DTA must also comply with federal laws. The United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (USDA-FNS) requires that heads of households who do not receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits on their own behalf be exempted (e.g., some relative caretakers of minor children). In addition, exemptions based on religious beliefs also must be allowed.

EBT PHOTO EXEMPTIONS BY PROGRAM

The following table, compiled as of March 30, 2023, details the number of current program participants who have been exempted from the photo requirement.

Exemption	SNAP	TAFDC	EAEDC
Younger than 19	1,036	159	20
Older than 59	210,103	1,626	11,329
Domestic Violence	13,778	6,465	502
Disabled	267,237	5,209	16,402
Religious Exemption	1,762	112	15
Non-Applicant	3,994	311	114