

PART XVIII                    REPLACEMENT OF EBT CARDS, BENEFITS AND FOOD

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A. Replacement of EBT Cards

This chapter covers general guidance for replacing EBT cards, benefits in electronic benefit accounts and food purchased with food stamp benefits destroyed in a household disaster. See Chapter G of the Virginia EBT Policies and Procedures Guide for additional information.

Households need an EBT card to access benefits. The cardholder may call the Customer Service Representative (CSR) for the EBT card vendor or to the local agency to request a replacement card. The CSR will validate the system address before issuing a replacement card if the cardholder calls Customer Service for a replacement card. If the address is incorrect, the card vendor will not mail a replacement card but will refer the cardholder to the local agency to have the address updated.

Cardholders will generally receive a replacement EBT card through the mail. Depending on individual household circumstances however, the local agency may provide a vault card as a replacement card. The cardholder must call the CSR to request a change in the status of a card before the local agency can issue a vault card if the original card is still active. The cardholder does not need to call the CSR if the card already has an inactive status code.

The EW must authorize the issuance of a vault card for replacing an EBT card and notify the Issuance Unit through the completion of the *Internal Action and Vault EBT Card Authorization* form. The household may need to complete the *Nonreceipt Affidavit/Vault Card Replacement Request* form to document the need for a replacement in order for the local agency to credit the replacement fee to the household's account. See [Part XXIV](#) for a copy of these forms.

A cardholder may need a replacement if the original card is lost, damaged, destroyed in a household disaster, or stolen. A cardholder will also need a replacement card if the original card is undelivered through the mail.

In most instances, a request for a replacement card will result in the deduction of a \$2.00 card replacement fee from a household's EBT account. The vendor should not apply the card replacement fee for reapplying households or for replacements for returned, undelivered cards. The local agency must credit the fee back to the household's account if the replacement is due to a household disaster, violence against the household or for improperly manufactured cards. See [Part XVIII.A.4](#) for information about assigning and crediting of the fee for replacement cards.

1. Undelivered EBT Card

a. Undeliverable, Returned Cards

The post office will not deliver EBT cards with inaccurate or incomplete addresses. The post office will not forward EBT cards to a new or changed address if households move but fail to report the change to the local agency.

If the card is undeliverable because of an incomplete or inaccurate address for the primary cardholder or the authorized representative, the EW must update the mailing address, as appropriate.

b. Nonreceipt of the EBT Card

In instances when cardholders report the nonreceipt of a mailed EBT card to the local agency, the agency must check the Administrative Terminal to determine the mailing date and check if the status of the card has been changed. If more than six mail days has passed and the status of the card is unchanged, the cardholder must call the CSR to request a new card. If the local agency is to issue a vault card as the replacement card, the cardholder must still also call the CSR to change the status of the original card.

In some instances, the Department of Social Services may have already received the undelivered card and may have changed the status of the card by the time the cardholder reports the nonreceipt to the local agency or the CSR. In these instances, either the vendor or the local agency may initiate the replacement without further delay.

If the cardholder reports the nonreceipt of a mailed EBT card to Customer Service after a sufficient mail period, the CSR will change the status of the card to cancel the card. The vendor will mail another card to the household or, at the cardholder's option, defer mailing another card to allow the cardholder to receive a vault card at the local agency.

When a cardholder requests a vault card as replacement, the Issuance Worker must determine if there has been a sufficient period for delivery of the mailed card and determine the status of the original card before issuing a vault card. If the Administrative Terminal inquiry shows that the card has an active or a nonactivated status, the cardholder must call CSR to request a change in the status of the card. If there is an

inactive status when the Issuance Worker inquires or once there is an inactive status, the local agency may issue a vault card to the cardholder.

Households will not have the \$2.00 card replacement fee assessed against their benefit accounts when they receive replacement of undelivered cards. Households will generally have the card replacement fee automatically deducted from the account except when there is a replacement card for a card in an inactive status such as the initial card lost in the mail or one returned as undeliverable.

2. Lost, Stolen, Damaged Cards

When a cardholder reports an inability to access the household's benefits because the EBT card is unavailable for use, the cardholder must call CSR to request deactivation of the card. Deactivation will prevent the usage of the card should the cardholder or someone else attempt to use the card.

The cardholder must request replacement of the card through the CSR or the local agency. The cardholder must note the reason for the replacement to the local agency. The reason for the destruction or unavailability of the original card will determine whether the local agency credits the replacement fee back to the household's account. Reasons for replacing an EBT card include:

- Lost - The cardholder loses or misplaces the card.
- Stolen - The cardholder loses the card through violence exerted upon a household in an act of robbery or burglary committed by someone outside the household.
- Household Disaster - The cardholder loses or damages the card through a household fire or natural disaster, such as a flood or tornado.
- Card Damage (negligence) - The card is unusable because of the cardholder's neglect.
- Card Damage (improperly manufactured) - The card is unusable because of a manufacturing error.

3. EBT Card Replacement Fee

Each cardholder will receive written and verbal instruction on how to protect the EBT card. When an EBT card is or becomes unusable for any reason, the cardholder must obtain a replacement card to access the household's EBT account. The EBT card vendor will deduct \$2.00 from each food stamp case benefit account for replacement EBT cards in nearly every instance when a cardholder receives a replacement card.

The automatic fee deduction will not occur when the original card has an inactive status or when a household reapplies for benefits. The chart below summarizes application of the card replacement fee.

No Fee	Fee Deducted	Fee Credited
Reapplication		x (if applied)
Inactive card, such as lost in the mail		x (if applied)
	Lost	
	Stolen/robbery	x (police report required)
	Household disaster	x (verify if questionable)
	Improperly manufactured	x
	Cardholder name change	x
	Card damaged/destroyed	
		x Agency-cause error, such as misspelled name

4. EBT Card Replacement Fee Credit

The EBT vendor will automatically deduct a \$2.00 fee from a household's food stamp EBT account in most instances when a cardholder requests a replacement card. There are instances however, when, despite proper care of the card by the cardholder, the household experiences loss or destruction of the EBT card. In these instances, the local agency must credit the \$2.00 replacement fee back to the household's account.

An eligibility or administrative unit supervisor must authorize the credit on the *Internal Action and Vault EBT Card Authorization* form. To secure sufficient information related to the loss or destruction of the card, the EW may require the household complete the *Non-Receipt Affidavit/EBT Card Replacement Request* form.

The local agency must credit the replacement fee when a household experiences an individual household disaster or there is a natural disaster. An EBT card destroyed by fire or a flood, tornado, hurricane or earthquake would allow the agency to credit the replacement fee back to the household. The agency must verify the impact of the disaster upon the household if the report is questionable otherwise; the household's statement is acceptable. The local agency must also credit the replacement fee when a cardholder loses the card through violence inflicted upon the household or cardholder by someone outside the household. The household must file

a police report to document its claim. The agency must verify the existence of the police report if the information is questionable otherwise; the household's statement is acceptable.

In addition to crediting the replacement fee for instances of a household disaster or violence against the household, the local agency must credit the replacement fee if the agency discovers an improperly manufactured card after a cardholder receives the card. The agency must also credit the replacement fee if the vendor fails to identify a replacement card at reapplication or a replacement for an inactive card. The local agency may also credit the fee back to the household's account, if requested, when the household identifies another Case Name or authorized representative.

The chart above summarizes instances when the local agency must credit the card replacement fee to the household. As indicated above, an eligibility or administrative supervisor must authorize the credit. The Issuance Supervisor must provide the credit.

**B. BENEFIT REPLACEMENT**

Households will not receive a replacement for benefits lost due to loss of the EBT card and/or PIN up to the time that the cardholder reports the loss to CSR. Households will have benefits replaced if someone accesses the benefits after the household reported to CSR that the card was lost or stolen. Households will also receive replacement for benefits lost due to a system error.

**C. REPLACEMENT OF FOOD DESTROYED IN A DISASTER**

A household may request a replacement for food purchased with food stamp benefits and that was then subsequently destroyed in a household disaster. This policy will apply to an individual household disaster or a disaster that affects more than one household.

Normally, replacements would only be made to currently participating households, but this is not a requirement for a food replacement. The agency must use prudent judgement on a case-by-case basis when a nonparticipating household requests a food replacement.

The household may be entitled to a replacement of the actual value of the loss but the amount may not exceed the allotment for one month. The household must report the disaster within 10 days of the loss. A household member must sign the **Non-receipt Affidavit/EBT Replacement Request**

attesting to the loss. If the local agency does not receive the affidavit within 10 days after the report of the loss, the household will not receive a replacement. If the 10th day falls on a weekend or holiday, and the affidavit is received the day after the weekend or holiday, the agency must consider the statement as received timely.

The agency must verify the household's disaster. Sources of verification include community agencies, such as the Red Cross or fire department or through a home visit.

The agency must provide replacement benefits within 10 days of the reported loss or within 2 working days of receiving the affidavit, whichever is later.

There is no limit on the number of times a household may receive replacement of food destroyed in a disaster. If USDA issues a disaster declaration and the household is eligible for emergency benefits under that policy, the household may not receive both the emergency benefits and a replacement for the same time period. **See Part XX for a discussion of the Disaster Food Stamp Program.**