



Department of
Job and Family Services

John R. Kasich, Governor
Michael B. Colbert, Director

**Family Assistance Letter #124
OFFICE OF FAMILY ASSISTANCE**

April 19, 2013

TO: Directors, County Departments of Job and Family Services

FROM: Trudie J. Bormann, Deputy Director
Office of Family Assistance

SUBJECT: **New Ohio Cash & Food Assistance Electronic Benefit Transfer Cards**

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Office of Family Assistance is currently preparing to transition to a new electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card vendor for both the cash and food assistance programs effective July 1, 2013. The current contract with Xerox State & Local Solutions, Inc. ends June 30, 2013. J.P. Morgan Electronic Financial Services, Inc. was awarded the contract on September 5, 2012 as a result of a competitive sealed proposal issued through the Department of Administrative Services. The new contract includes several enhancements: new cards for both cash and food assistance recipients and access to the new UCard Center which provides account information and a data warehouse. Below please find detailed information on the transition plan and further information on the upcoming system enhancements:

Food Assistance Transition Plan:

The look of the Ohio Direction Card will soon be changing for the Food Assistance Program. The administration of the current EBT card and associated recipient balances will be transitioned to the new J.P. Morgan EBT system on June 16, 2013. On July 8, 2013 new cards will begin to be mailed to Ohio cardholders who received a benefit and/or had a transaction within the last six months. The card name and customer service number will remain the same but the card image will be new (shown in Figure 1).



Figure 1

The mailing event will occur over a 45 day mailing period and the card issuance will be staggered randomly across the state to reduce the impact to each county agency. New cards will be received during July and August 2013. All replacement cards requested on or after June 16, 2013 will be issued with the new card design.

Upon receipt of the card the cardholder must logon to www.ucard.chase.com or call the number on the back of their new card, 1-866-386-3071, to activate their card and select a personal identification number (PIN). Once the new card has been activated the old card

30 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
jfs.ohio.gov

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will expire. If the new card is not activated prior to the end of the month that follows the month in which the new card was received the old card will automatically expire. For example, if a new card is received in July and a PIN is not selected prior to August 31, the old card will automatically expire on August 31.

System Outage

The system conversion to transition to J.P. Morgan will require an outage on Sunday, June 16, 2013. This means Food Assistance transactions will not be available. The outage will begin at 12:01 a.m. EST. J.P. Morgan expects the system to be operational no later than 10:00 a.m. EST on June 16, 2013 (duration 10 hours). Manual voucher authorizations can also not be processed during the outage. Any manual vouchers or Food Assistance Program EBT transactions performed by a retailer during the outage will be solely at the risk of the retailer. The system outage has been planned to ensure the least possible impact to Ohio's retailer and cardholder community and, depending on store hours, locations may not be affected. An Ohio Direction Card retailer outage notification will be sent to all retailers on May 1, 2013 to provide detailed information about the planned outage.

Cash Assistance Transition:

The look and name of the Ohio EPPICard for the cash assistance programs, which include the Ohio Works First (OWF) Program, OWF Work Allowance Payments, Disability Financial Assistance Program, and the Refugee Cash Assistance Program, will also be changing. The new card name is the "Ohio Pathway Card," with a new card design (shown in figure 2).



Figure 2

On June 3, 2013 the new Ohio Pathway Card will be sent to assistance group payees who received a cash auxiliary benefit and/or recurring June benefit for the above specified cash assistance program from May 1, 2013 through June 1, 2013.

On June 17, 2013 the new Ohio Pathway Card will be sent to assistance group payees who received a cash auxiliary benefit from June 2, 2013 through June 14, 2013 to ensure all recipients have a new card. In addition, all replacement cards requested effective June 17, 2013 will also be issued with the new Ohio Pathway Card.

Upon receipt of the card, the cardholder can logon to www.ucard.chase.com or call the phone number on the back of their new card, 1-866-669-6109, to activate the card and select a new PIN.

Benefits authorized through June 14, 2013 will be issued on the Ohio EPPICard. Cardholders will be advised that they should continue to use their Ohio EPPICard until their balance reaches \$0.00. The card balance will not be transferred to the new Ohio Pathway Card. Benefits authorized after June 15, 2013 will be on their new Ohio Pathway Card.

Customer Service

The Ohio Direction Card Customer Service number will remain the same: 1-866-386-3071. The Ohio EPPICard Customer Service will remain active at 1-866-320-8822 so recipients can call with any issues with the Ohio EPPICard as they spend their remaining balances. The new Ohio Pathway Card Customer Service will be available after June 3, 2013 at 1-866-669-6109.

Transition Notice

Attached are the transition notices that will be sent on April 19, 2013 to cash and food assistance program cardholders informing them of the upcoming card transition plans. The notices provide program specific information on how they will receive their new card, how to activate the new card, a reminder to change their address if they are moving and other pertinent program specific reminders and information. Each county agency will also be receiving this information as posters for display in your waiting rooms.

Cardholder Materials

Also, attached are the new program cardholder materials that will be included when a recipient receives a new card. The card will be attached to the card carrier and include a brochure.

Enhancements:

UCard Center

The current EBT system, known as EPPIC, is being replaced with the new UCard Center on June 17, 2013 that will be available to current users. All users will have administrative access through the UCard Center for both cash and food assistance EBT card account information based on granted security permissions. The UCard Center features a smooth, intuitive user experience. Its numerous useful navigation methods include easy-to-understand drop-down menus that enable users to move easily and efficiently from one page to another.

Authorized users will use the UCard Center to access all administrative functionality for the EBT accounts, including general cardholder information, benefit issuance, address updates, card activity (status changes, issuances, and replacements), transaction history, and reports.

In addition, access will now be available for cash assistance accounts to provide general cardholder information, deposits, address updates, card activity (status changes, issuances, and replacements), and reports. Unfortunately, transaction history for cash assistance accounts will not be available as this information is restricted by FDIC regulations.

For more information about obtaining access to the UCard Center, contact your county assigned EBT or EPC coordinator. The EBT and EPC coordinators can direct questions to the EBT Section as follows:

Melissa Wolfe (counties A-K)
Melissa.Wolfe@jfs.ohio.gov

Terrie Hartmeyer (counties L-Z)
Terrie.Hartmeyer@jfs.ohio.gov

Webinar

Train-the-trainer webinars will be held on May 28-31 for current EPPIC users on the new UCard Center. The webinars will be held four times each day for 90 minutes in length and include 25 individuals in each session. An invitation will be sent from the EBT Section announcing the dates and times available for the Webinar. Additional make-up sessions will be offered in June.

Data Warehouse

In early Fall, J.P. Morgan will provide a new data warehouse tool in addition to the comprehensive, standard reporting that will be available in the UCard Center.

The advanced data warehouse and web-based data mining tool expands and complements the reporting capabilities of the UCard Center. J.P. Morgan made a significant investment more than six years ago to provide a full featured data warehouse that provides new reporting features and enhanced fraud detection measures. This includes:

- Functionality to turn raw data into highly formatted user-friendly reports
- Efficient data retrieval to allow results to come back quickly
- New GPS Tracking to assist with fraud detection

More information and training will be provided on the data warehouse soon.

Timeline of Events

As there are a lot of important dates outlined in this letter we have attached a one page Timeline of Events for your reference.

Questions regarding the transition or enhancements can be directed to Christina Thomas in the EBT Section by e-mail at Christina.Thomas@jfs.ohio.gov or by calling 614-644-1319.

c: Michael Colbert, Director
Michael McCreight, Assistant Director
ODJFS Deputy Directors
Family Assistance Staff

Joel Potts, ODJFSDA
Larry Long, CCAO
Kim Bridges, OCDA
Crystal Allen, PCSAO