



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
Office of the Commissioner

S. Duke Storen
Commissioner

August 7, 2026

Dear SNAP Retail Partner,

Thank you for everything you do for communities across Virginia. As a SNAP retailer, you make a meaningful difference for families and individuals throughout the Commonwealth. Because of your commitment, Virginians can rely on access to fresh, healthy food and dependable service when they need it most. At the Virginia Department of Social Services, we want to ensure you have the resources and information needed to continue serving your customers, while also helping to protect them from skimming and other attempts to steal benefits.

As previously communicated, Virginia is transitioning to chip-enabled Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards, and all SNAP-authorized retailers located in Virginia must ensure that their point-of-sale (POS) equipment can process chip EBT transactions before **September 2026**.

The USDA Food and Nutrition Administration has indicated to our agency that your store may not yet have completed the necessary upgrades to support chip EBT card acceptance. To avoid disruptions for SNAP customers and your business, we encourage you to act as soon as possible.

If you have already upgraded your systems, please disregard this notice. If you are unsure of your status, contact your POS provider immediately for assistance.

What your business needs to do:

1. **Contact your POS provider or payment processor** to confirm whether your current equipment supports chip EBT transactions. SNAP EBT chip cards will use:
 - Standard EMV chips
 - Both contact-only and dual-interface
 - New EBT Application Identifier (AID): A0000000044542
 - 220 service code on Track II of the magstripe

2. **Upgrade or replace POS devices, software, or payment applications** as needed to enable EBT acceptance.
3. **Complete any required testing or certification** with your processor to ensure chip EBT transactions function properly.
4. **Train store staff** on the use of chip EBT cards and updated transaction procedures.

Retailers that do not complete these upgrades before the September 2026 implementation deadline may be unable to process SNAP transactions using chip EBT cards, which could result in loss of revenue for your business.

Additional resources are available at the links below:

- www.nationalgrocers.org/semtac/ebt-chip-cards/frequently-asked-questions
- www.fna.usda.gov/snap/ebt/modernization/chip-resources
- www.dss.virginia.gov/relief/food-assistance/ebt/snap-retailer-information

For questions about this SNAP EBT Chip Card Modernization Initiative, please contact chipcard@dss.virginia.gov.

The Virginia Department of Social Services is holding monthly virtual office hours to answer questions about the Chip Card Modernization Initiative and other topics affecting SNAP-authorized retailers.

- Thursday, August 20, 2026, 2-3 p.m. – [Click here to register](#)
- Thursday, September 3, 2026, 2-3 p.m. – [Click here to register](#)

As the leader of an agency who is uniquely positioned to help Virginia's children and families in the fight against hunger and food insecurity, I thank you for your continued participation in SNAP and for helping ensure uninterrupted service for Virginia families. This change to chip-enabled EBT cards will help keep benefits safe from skimming and other fraud, ensuring funds are used by the people who need them most at approved retailers like yours.

Sincerely,



S. Duke Storen