

ATTENTION

Temporary Assistance (TA) & Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Households

Safeguard Your EBT Card

Thieves place overlay devices (skimmers) on retailer Point of Sale (POS) card reading machines (where you swipe your EBT card), which allow them to copy EBT account and PIN information so they can steal SNAP and cash benefits. Once EBT card and PIN information is stolen, the data is typically used to create a duplicate card which allows thieves to access your EBT account and spend your SNAP and cash benefits.

Skimmers copy EBT card and PIN information when an EBT card is used to make a legitimate purchase. The (POS) card reading machine allows the transaction to go through without any issues and the cardholder doesn't know their information has been stolen. Therefore, most victims of skimming are not aware that their EBT card and PIN information has been stolen during the transaction until the next time they try to use their EBT card or review their account balance.

There are a few steps that you can take to safeguard your EBT card and reduce your risk of benefit theft:

- **Change Your PIN Frequently**—Once a card has been skimmed, the duplicate card uses the same information stolen from the EBT cardholder (e.g., card number and PIN). If you change your PIN often, anyone attempting to steal your benefits using a duplicate card will no longer have the correct information to gain access to your account. It is recommended you avoid choosing a PIN that is easy to guess, such as repeated or consecutive numbers. For example, avoid choosing a PIN of “2222” or “1234”.
- **Physically Inspect Card Reading Machines**— Skimmers are designed to look like the POS machine that they fit over and will likely be difficult to notice. However, there are some signs that may indicate that a skimmer is being used, including:
 - Some skimmer devices block LED indicator lights or illuminated backlit keypad numbers, or partially cover stylus/pen trays.
 - The faceplate of card reading machines may be loose, appear ill-fitting, or be easily dislodged from the body of the machine.
 - In some instances, the faceplate may be miscolored, texturally mismatched, or otherwise appear different than the body of the POS card reading machine.

Please note that while these signs do not necessarily prove that a skimming device is being used, cardholders should always exercise caution when making purchases and refrain from using any card reading machine that they suspect may be compromised.

- **Report Suspicious Devices & Activity**— If you notice any signs that a skimmer may be in use, you should alert the retailer and should not use your EBT card to make a purchase. You should also regularly review your account balance. If you identify any suspicious activity, contact your local department of social services' fraud unit immediately.

In addition, if you believe your benefits have been stolen, immediately report your card as stolen by calling the EBT Customer Service Helpline at **1-888-328-6399** and a replacement card can be mailed to you. The EBT Customer Service Helpline is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, and assists Arabic, Chinese, English, Haitian-Creole, Italian, Korean, Russian, and Spanish speakers. You can also report your card stolen and order a new card by visiting www.connectebt.com or through the **ConnectEBT** mobile app.