



THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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Department of Human Services Discovers Unauthorized Use of SNAP EBT Cards

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS—The Department of Human Services Division of Family Assistance, which administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recently received complaints from some clients that their Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards appeared to have discrepancies in account balances.

Upon further investigation, it was determined that certain EBT cards were the subject of “unauthorized use” that resulted in these discrepancies.

Commissioner Designee Kimberley Causey-Gomez expressed concern and indicated that the department has been in contact with its federal partners to immediately remedy this matter.

“This is a very serious matter, as the unauthorized use of federal benefits is illegal and can result in criminal prosecution,” she said, noting that the temporary loss of benefits for recipients is equally important.

“I have directed a complete internal review to verify the ‘unauthorized use’ on a case-by-case basis,” Commissioner Designee Causey-Gomez said. “While we are committed to restoring those benefits, we also encourage recipients to be more diligent in protecting their EBT cards.”

While the Department of Human Services is collaborating with the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS), it remains steadfast in its efforts to deter fraud throughout its operations. Specifically, the department advises SNAP recipients about the importance of selecting a strong or stronger PIN.

“We are advising our clients to stay away from what is considered weak PINs which are usually sequential numbering such as 1234 or 3377,” Commissioner Designee Causey-Gomez said. “We also do not advise clients to use birthdays as PINs.”

SNAP recipients are further advised that it is not necessary to visit the DHS offices. Clients should change their PINs through the customer service telephone (IVR) system by calling 1-866-884-2868.

For more information, please call 340-774-0930 ext. 4386 in the St. Thomas/St. John District or 340-772-7103 in the St. Croix District.

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