

March 19, 2023

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER

This All County Welfare Directors Letter (ACWDL) serves as a notification to the County Welfare Departments (CWD) of a new informational flyer, "Protect Your Benefits" (PUB 524), for the cash and food assistance programs to address Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card skimming and benefit theft.



KIM JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
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GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

March 19, 2023

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

FROM: RYAN GILLETTE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR
RESEARCH AUTOMATION AND DATA DIVISION

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES EBT THEFT
AND SKIMMING EDUCATIONAL FLYER

REFERENCE: [ACWDL OCTOBER 24, 2022](#)

The purpose of this All County Welfare Directors Letter is to notify the County Welfare Departments (CWDs) of a new informational flyer, "Protect Your Benefits" (PUB 524), for the cash and food assistance programs to address Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card skimming and benefit theft. This includes, but is not limited to, the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs), CalFresh, Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA), the California Food Assistance Program (CFAP), the Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI), and the Trafficking and Crime Victims Assistance Program (TCVAP).

BACKGROUND

California continues to see an increase in the theft of cash and food benefits via skimming and phishing. To further educate and communicate with applicants and recipients on ways to protect themselves from benefit theft, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Data Stewardship and Integrity Bureau (DSIB) created an EBT theft flyer, "Protect Your Benefits" (PUB 524).

EBT THEFT FLYER CONTENT AND DISTRIBUTION

The "Protect Your Benefits" (PUB 524) flyer addresses steps applicants and recipients can take to prevent them from becoming a victim of EBT theft or fraud, and what to do if they think their benefits have been stolen. The new flyer will be included with all new and replacement EBT card mailings along with a sticker on the cards directing

recipients to the Public Service Announcement video that also provides information about skimming and scamming. In addition to the flyer accompanying all new and replacement cards, the CWDs are encouraged to distribute the flyer however they choose and/or display it in office lobbies.

The English version can be located on the [CDSS Forms/Brochures](#) webpage. A Spanish version of the flyer will also be released soon.

COPIES AND TRANSLATIONS

Forms referenced in this letter are available on the [CDSS Forms/Brochures](#) webpage. When CDSS completes all translations of a form, they are posted on the [Translated Forms and Publications](#) webpage. When made available by CDSS, forms translated into an individual's preferred language must be provided to the individual pursuant to [Manual of Policies and Procedures \(MPP\) Section 21-115.2](#). For questions on translated materials, please contact Language Services at (916) 651-8876. If translations are not available, recipients who have elected to receive materials in languages other than English should be sent the English version of the form or notice along with the [GEN 1365-Notice of Language Services](#) and a local contact number.

Per [Government Code Section 7290, et seq.](#), the County Welfare Departments (CWDs) must ensure that effective bilingual services are provided. This requirement may be met through utilization of paid interpreters, qualified bilingual employees, and qualified employees of other agencies or community resources. These services must be provided, free of charge, to the applicant/recipient. If CDSS does not provide translations of a form, it is the county's responsibility to read and interpret the form if an applicant or recipient requests it.

Additionally, the CWDs must provide auxiliary aids and services to persons who are deaf or hearing impaired, or persons with impaired speech, vision, or manual skills, where applicable. More information regarding provisions for services to applicants and recipients who have limited English proficiency or who have disabilities can be found in [MPP Section 21-115](#) and [ACL 19-45](#).

If you have any questions or need additional guidance regarding the information in this letter, please email FraudCoordinator.DSIB@dss.ca.gov.

Attachment

PROTECT YOUR BENEFITS

BEWARE OF SKIMS AND SCAMS



- Keep your PIN and card number a secret
- Cover your hand when typing in your PIN
- Try to change your PIN the day before your benefits become available each and every month



- Do not click on any links from text messages or emails regarding your EBT card

- Watch out for suspicious websites



- Protect your benefits. Keep track of your balances daily. There are three ways to check your EBT balance:

- Online: www.ebt.ca.gov/cardholder or www.benefitscal.com
- Call: 1-877-328-9677 Available 24/7
- Check your receipt after each purchase



**FOR MORE
INFORMATION
ON SKIMMING
AND
SCAMMING,
SCAN THE QR
CODE.**



HAVE YOUR BENEFITS BEEN STOLEN?

If you believe your food or cash benefits have been stolen, please call the California EBT Customer Service Helpline at 1-877-328-9677 OR your county office right away.

