



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DHS identifies possible compromised benefits

Potentially impacted customers should file a police report and contact DHS' Office of Program Review, Monitoring and Investigation

(WASHINGTON, DC) – On March 1, 2022, DC's Department of Human Services (DHS) began receiving calls from residents who reported missing Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits from their Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards.

The DHS Office of Program Review, Monitoring and Investigation (OPRMI) preliminarily investigated the disbursement and availability of TANF benefits and identified a pattern consistent with possible compromised benefits. Once the pattern was identified, OPRMI began collecting data and notifying proper DHS personnel.

"We understand how crucial benefits assistance is for our residents and theft of these essential supports is unconscionable," said Laura Green Zeilinger, Director of DHS. "I'd like to make three things clear: first, we will work with our families to replace funds that were wrongfully removed from their accounts; second, we will closely collaborate with law enforcement to be sure those responsible are held fully accountable; and finally, residents can protect their benefits and stop potential bad actors by heeding our call to immediately change their PIN numbers."

If you believe your DHS public assistance benefits have been compromised, please:

1. File a report with Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) by one of the following:
 - Call 311 and report a financial or cyber crime
 - If you are outside DC, you may call (202) 265-9100
 - Visit the nearest MPD station and ask an officer to take file a report and forward it to OPRMI

2. File a report with DHS' OPRMI using one of the options below:
- Call the 24-hour OPRMI hotline at (202) 673-4464
 - The voicemail should include full name and date of birth
 - Call to speak directly with DHS personnel (202) 671-4460, then press "3" for a live representative between 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
 - DHS has increased staffing to handle an influx of calls, but please expect extended wait times
 - Email OPRMI@dc.gov with the subject "TANF benefit compromised," and provide pertinent details of your case and the following information:
 - name
 - date of birth
 - the number from the associated police report
 - a phone number where you can be reached
 - Visit the online Portal- <https://dhs.dc.gov/page/fraud> and click "Fraud Allegation Form"

As a reminder, EBT cards are like credit cards and should be kept in a safe place. Do not share your pin number or give out your EBT number. As a precaution, DHS is completing a general assessment of benefits for inconsistencies. For general information about eligibility or information about your case, please call DHS' Economic Security Administration's (ESA) Public Benefits call center at 202-727-5355.

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