



Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT)

Top 25 Q & A's

Acronyms used in this document are:

- **CSR** – Customer Service Representative
- **EBT** – Electronic Benefit Transfer
- **EPPIC** – Electronic Payment Processing Information Control
- **SNAP** – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- **BPS** – Benefit Program Specialist
- **Conduent** - Virginia's EBT vendor
- **VaCMS** – Virginia Case Management System
- **VDSS** – Virginia Department of Social Services
- **PCH** – Primary Card Holder
- **IAF** – Internal Action Form
- **AR** - Authorized Representative
- **USDA** - United States Department of Agriculture

1. Can the Issuance Unit set up a manual account in EPPIC?

The Issuance Unit must set up a manual account in EPPIC, and give the primary cardholder his or her EBT card before the demographic and benefit files are transmitted to EPPIC if the customer will need to wait more than 15 minutes for the batch to process, to alleviate extended wait times.

2. Can the authorized representative be given a card with the manual account set up process?

No. The manual account setup is for the primary cardholder only. The Issuance Clerk must wait for the demographic and benefit files to transmit and then attach a vault card to the representative's name. This is to ensure the authorized representative information is correctly transmitted from VaCMS to EPPIC. An EBT account must have an authorized representative in order to have more than one EBT card that can access the account.

The authorized representative's name will be sent in the next demographic file after the AR is submitted to the case in VaCMS under "Alternate Payee" page.. Demographic files are sent at 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 3:30 p.m., 5:30 p.m. and 8:30 pm and should be completed by the top of the hour.

3. The BPS approves a SNAP application and checks "mail" on the Card Request

page in VaCMS. This action will generate a mailed card when the demographics and benefits are sent to EPPIC in the next batch. Meanwhile, the worker realizes she meant to authorize a vault card to be issued over-the-counter. When can the issuance clerk issue the vault card?

There is not a way to stop the mailed card from being created. When Conduent receives files from VDSS, it sorts all the requests for mailed cards into a card creation file that it will ship to the card producer. Those files are created three times a day at 10:30 a.m., 2:00 p.m., and midnight.

When a mailed card request is sent to the card creation file, the status “ISSUED” is put on the Recipient Card Management Screen to show the card is in the process of being issued. **The issuance clerk cannot status and replace that card with a vault card until the card file is run and the status changes from “ISSUED” to “ACTIVE”.**

Depending on which card file that case is in, the agency might not be able to issue a vault card until the next day.

Note: if the issuance clerk is issuing a vault card to replace a mailed card before the mailed card has been received, please explain to the clients that the vault card being handed to them REPLACES the card they will be receiving in the mail in a few days. The mailed card will be cancelled in the process of issuing the vault card.

- 4. The Issuance Clerk gave a \$2 refund for a card fee that should not have been charged, but it does not appear in the transaction history. What probably happened?**

The Issuance Clerk did not click the “settle” button to complete the transaction. Once that button is clicked, the refund will be posted.

- 5. The BPS requested a vault card be issued to replace a card that had been stolen. The Internal Action Form indicated that the \$2 should be waived. The replacement fee of \$2 was taken from the account even though the original card was statused “stolen.” Why was the fee taken?**

In order to waive a fee, the “Waive fee” box must be checked in EPPIC, regardless of the reason for the replacement. If the agency discovers it charged a fee that it should not have, the person with update capability can credit the fee back to the account.

- 6. What happens if a replacement fee for a card should be charged and there isn’t \$2 in the account?**

The card replacement fee stays pending through the month following the month the fee was attempted to be imposed. As soon as any money is posted to the account, the fee will be taken. If no money is posted within that timeframe, the fee is removed.

- 7. The BPS says she/he completed the process in VaCMS to order a mail card. The client calls several days later and says she/he is still waiting for the card. The worker checks EPPIC and sees that the card number is “unassigned”. Has**

a card been mailed or not? What should the agency do?

If EPPIC says the card number is unassigned, that means a card has not been mailed. At this point the agency should contact the client and offer to issue a card over the counter, or if the client prefers a mail card; please call in a help desk ticket.

8. The BPS approved the case with an authorized representative but there is no authorized representative in EPPIC. What might have happened and how can it be fixed?

When this happens, the likely reason is that VaCMS did not send over the demographic. This is a ticket.

9. The husband is the case name, but the demographics in EPPIC are the wife's. How did this happen?

The "SNAP Cardholder's" name is not designated correctly on the SNAP/TANF Case Level Details page in VaCMS. VaCMS sends EPPIC the demographics of the adult household member that is in this field. This person is known as the "Primary Cardholder" or "PCH". It is important that the case name's demographics are transmitted to EPPIC because if a client needs to call Customer Service, the customer service representative will confirm the identity of the caller by the demographics.

10. The application is approved and the EBT card is mailed. The client moves immediately after approval, and reports the address change. The BPS changes the address in VaCMS and the new demographic goes to EPPIC. Will EPPIC send another card automatically to the new, correct address?

No. The card file is created with the original address, and that is the address the card will be mailed to. EPPIC will not automatically send another card. In most cases, the original card will be returned to the Home Office post office box, at which time an employee in the Division of Finance will status it as "undeliverable". The local agency should issue a replacement card. Even if the card has not been returned to Home Office yet, the local agency may replace the original card once the card status has changed from "issued" to "active."

11. The issuance clerk is trying to issue a vault card and the demographics in EPPIC say "unknown shell." What can be done to get the demographic record into EPPIC?

For the PCH a card should be issued through the manual process. (Directions can be found in EPPIC under User Guide.) If it is an AR and the next batch, after the page was completed in VaCMS has completed, then submit a ticket. Note all changes/updates in VaCMS are not immediate in EPPIC. All changes/updates should be in EPPIC by the top of the hour following the batch run.

12. The household files a reapplication. The customer no longer has the old EBT card, so the worker authorizes a vault card to be issued. Will the card replacement fee be charged?

The customer should not be charged the replacement fee on a reapplication. On a reapplication, when a mailed card is authorized, the system is programmed so the replacement card fee will not be charged. However, when a vault card is issued, the worker must instruct the issuance clerk to waive the fee on the Internal Action Form authorizing the vault card. If the “Waive Fee” box is not checked on the Card Issuance Screen in EPPIC, the \$2 fee is taken. (Please note that if a fee is mistakenly taken, the Issuance Clerk can credit the fee back to the client’s account. Directions are found in EPPIC under User Guide.)

13. No one in the agency can see the option on the EPPIC menu bar to order vault cards or client training materials. How can this be fixed?

The local security officer must change the profile of the user so that their access contains the Role ID with card ordering privileges. Profiles that contain the number 2 have card ordering privileges, such as Inquiry 2 and Update 2.

14. The client said a store charged too much. What can the client do?

The client should address this directly with the store. If the customer is not satisfied with the outcome the customer may follow the regular DSS appeals process. Customer Service (number on the back of the card) can only assist customers if the issue is due to a “system” issue.

15. A local retailer asked how to be approved to accept EBT cards. What should the agency tell him?

Retailers must be approved by USDA to accept EBT cards. The retailer can be referred to the USDA’s public web site, which has a section on how to become an authorized retailer at this link: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/>
At this link there is a Retailer Information button, with a specific section called “Become a SNAP Retailer.” The agency can give the retailer the phone number of the USDA office 877.823.4369

16. The worker tries to access EPPIC and keeps getting the message “Page not found” or once in cannot access the menu items. Is there any way to troubleshoot this problem?

Sometimes workers are able to get in if they shut down the computer to reboot, and then try again. If the problem persists, call in a ticket.
If a worker cannot access menu items it could be a role issue or a Compatibility View Setting issue (process to fix this found on Fusion’s EBT page).

17. The client calls the Conduent Customer Service Representative (CSR) to request a replacement card. What is the client told regarding receiving a mail replacement or picking up a card over-the-counter?

Before the call is transferred to a CSR, the recorded message says:

It will take about 5 to 7 days for you to receive a replacement card in the mail. A \$2

replacement fee will be deducted from your benefits. If you have a household emergency and need a card sooner, contact your local office after you complete this call for information on how to get a card.

When the client reaches the CSR, the CSR can status the original card, or status and replace the original card. (Note – the CSR cannot replace the card if the client gives an address different from the one showing in EPPIC. In these situations, the client is told to contact the local department. Address changes in EPPIC must come from a demographic file in VaCMS.) The CSR explains that the card will take 5 to 7 business days to reach the client by mail. If the client asks if there is a way to get the card faster, the CSR is supposed to reiterate the message on the recorded script, which says the client should contact the local agency. Localities must not restrict hours for vault card issuance as this is a barrier to access.

18. Are workers still supposed to look at the Aging Reports showing EBT accounts that age to 320 days?

EBT accounts no longer go dormant. However, the 320 day report may continue to be reviewed to see if a claim has been established against the household; benefits in the account can be applied against the claim.

19. Can a BPS worker or BPS supervisor issue a card?

No, no one that can approve a case can be involved in any part of the vault cards or issuance process or supervise those that do so. This is to maintain the federal statute of separation of duties.

20. Does a customer have to use up all of the benefits on their EBT card each month?

No, the customer must be educated on the process of expungement. The client must be told that once an expungement has taken place (day 366 of nonuse), the benefit cannot be replaced.

21. Is address verification needed to issue a card?

No, the worker obtains verification of the cardholder's identity before releasing the vault card to that person. It is recommended that the worker view a picture identification, whenever possible. In the absence of a picture identification, acceptable forms of verification include a Social Security or Medical card, library card, voter registration card or a bill for a utility or other household expense mailed to the cardholder.

22. What should be done with the IAF from VaCMS and when?

The IAF is on the list to be scanned into the record via DMIS. This should be done AFTER all required signatures are obtained.

23. Who can pick up a vault card?

Only the Cardholder can pick up their own card.

A PCH can only pick up the PCH card.

An AR can only pick up the AR card.

24. When will I receive my EBT and/or EBT materials order?

Orders placed by noon on Thursday should be received by COB of the following Wednesday.

25. Why doesn't EPPIC show my delivery information etc.?

Orders are actually sent to a third party that does not, currently, have a direct connection to EPPIC so, until this bridge is completed, it will not be updated timely.