A. Issuing Benefits

Issuing benefits is a separate function from eligibility determination. Consider the security of the benefits and the household’s circumstances in determining the appropriate method of issuing benefits.

1. General information

Issue cash benefits by one of the following methods:

- Issue TANF and health-insurance premium reimbursements (HIP) when combined with TANF by Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT), unless benefits are delivered by direct deposit;

- For all other programs, issue benefits by check (printed check or direct deposit) to the primary person or the authorized representative, or by vendor payment;

- For all benefit groups with members working under a JOBS Plus agreement, the employer pays benefits in the form of wages, which are reimbursed by DHS.

Issue SNAP benefits by one of the following methods:

- Except for SNAP cash-out (FSCO) clients and SNAP JOBS Plus clients, SNAP benefits are issued via EBT;

- SNAP cash-out clients may choose to receive benefits by either EBT or Direct Deposit;

- SNAP cash-out clients without a bank account and who are unable to adapt to EBT are issued SNAP benefits by check;

- For all benefit groups with members working under a SNAP JOBS Plus agreement, the employer pays SNAP benefits.

2. Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT)

The Oregon Trail Card (EBT) system makes SNAP and CMS-issued TANF benefits and HIP reimbursements (TANF and HIP equal cash) available to clients by using a plastic debit card at point-of-sale (POS) devices and automated teller machines (ATMs). EBT operates through a partnership between a contractor (eFunds) and DHS. The DHS EBT computer system is EB (electronic benefits). The system functions through an interface among EB, CI-FIND, CMS and FSMIS on one side, and eFunds’s system on the other.
One advantage of the Oregon Trail card is benefit availability. Weekends and holidays do not affect when a client receives their benefits. The client will know when their benefits are available.

There are three types of accounts available in the system: a cash account, a SNAP account and a child care account. Cash benefits issued by CMS will be deposited in the cash account. For SNAP cash-out, SNAP benefits will be deposited to the cash account unless they opt for direct deposit of their SNAP cash benefits. All other SNAP benefits will be deposited in the SNAP account. For the child care account, hours will be placed in the child care account.

SNAP cash-out clients must be issued their SNAP benefits through the EBT or DD system. On a case-by-case basis, SNAP cash-out clients who are unable to adjust to the EBT system may receive their benefits by check only if direct deposit is not an option. If, in the professional judgment of the case manager and supervisor, the SNAP cash-out client has a medical or psychological condition (documented or not) that makes it very difficult for them to adapt to using an EBT card, the client may be issued their SNAP benefits by check.

Cash direct deposit is not affected by EBT. Clients whose cash benefits are directly deposited into a bank account will remain in direct deposit unless changed by the worker. Companion SNAP benefits will be issued by EBT, unless they are for SNAP cash-out clients who have an alternative method (direct deposit or check).

New clients may be issued an Oregon Trail card and select a personal identification number (PIN) before their eligibility is determined; generally after the initial screening interview. This provides better client service by eliminating the need for multiple visits to the branch office. When benefits are issued, they will be deposited to the EBT account.

The Oregon Trail card and PIN together control access to client accounts. The PIN is a four-digit number known only to the client. The selection device encrypts the PIN as the numbers are selected: there is no way to view the PIN on the system. If a client forgets their PIN, they must come into the local office and select one.
3. **How does EBT work?**

The responsibilities of those involved in EBT are as follows:

- The client contacts the branch and has an interview. Branch staff set up a CMS or SNAP case. The case can be in pending status;
- The EB system creates an EBT case or connects the CMS/SNAP case to an existing EBT case. The EBT case and client information is sent to eFunds;
- When branch staff determine that the client may be eligible for benefits, branch card-issuance staff give the client EBT information and an EBT card;
- DHS’s EB system sends the card information to eFunds;
- The client selects a PIN for their card;
- Branch staff determine eligibility and issue benefits using CMS and FSMIS;
- Benefit issuances are sent to the eFunds system. For regular issuance, an overnight process will send the data to eFunds. For immediate issuance, the data is transmitted to eFunds online when the worker authorizes it;
- Some clients receiving child care benefits will begin using their EBT card to check children in and out of child care before the end of this year.

4. **Setting up the EBT case/changing payees**

**EBT case creation.** EBT cases are created automatically by the EB system when you add a CMS or SNAP case. To ensure that a single EBT case is created for clients with companion cases, the cash payee and SNAP head of household need to be the same person. EBT cases are also created when the EBT payee changes (e.g., whenever the SNAP head of household or cash payee changes).

**NOTE**

If an old SNAP case exists in the computer files, but no EBT case was created, an ADJ transaction will establish the EBT case.

**Changing payees.** When the EBT payee is changed, the EB system recognizes that benefits need to be issued to the EBT case with the current payee connection. The connection between the EBT case and the previous payee is automatically changed. The
EBT Case Detail screen displays the case numbers of the eligibility cases connected to the EBT case. It also displays the payee’s status for each eligibility case as “C” (current payee) or “P” (previous payee).

Benefits cannot be transferred from one EBT account to another. If there are any benefits remaining in the previous payee’s account, they must be withdrawn by the previous payee or their alternate payee. Balances cannot be transferred between EBT cases.

**NOTE**

When a SNAP payee changes, it is actually a delete of the old SNAP case and an add of a new case (a case number change).

5. **About EBT alternate payees**

During the eligibility interview, discuss the potential need for an alternate payee. Make sure the client understands that the alternate payee will have access to benefits without the client giving any further authorization.

Any adult member of the benefit group may request their own card and PIN. If the alternate payee is not an adult in the benefit group, the head of household (payee) must give written authorization on the *Designation of Authorized Representative or Alternate Payee* (MSC 231). Do not use the form for filing group members. The head of household may give verbal approval to make a minor on the case an alternate payee, if needed (e.g., a parent with mobility issues may want a 16-year-old to run errands such as grocery shopping.)

Access to each type of account (cash, SNAP and child care) can be controlled separately. The primary payee chooses which account(s) an alternate payee will have access to. Benefits spent by an alternate payee will not be replaced.

If the head of household (payee) decides they no longer want a minor or alternate payee outside the filing group to have access to their account(s), the client should call their case worker. Requests for changes to alternate payees are processed on the EBCAS screen. If the client wants to block access by the alternate payee temporarily, they can call eFunds Customer Service and have the alternate payee’s card status changed to INACTIVE. This is the only status reason that can be changed back to ACTIVE. The client can also call eFunds Customer Service and request that an alternate payee’s card be deactivated/canceled if they need to end an alternate’s access immediately.
**NOTE**

When notified that a person with an EBT card has left the household, be sure to cancel the card. If the card is not cancelled and the alternate payee continues to use it after being removed from the case, DHS must restore benefits.

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**NOTE**

Designated branch staff may inactivate or cancel the EBT card online.

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### Alternate Payees; EBT Rule

**461-165-0035** — Alternate Payees; EBT

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6. **EBT help/EBT problems**

eFunds provides telephone assistance through separate numbers for clients, DHS staff and retailers. eFunds Customer Service number is an *Automated Response Unit* (ARU) that is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can also reach a person at eFunds Customer Service 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To speak to a person at eFunds Customer Service, clients must stay on the line. This includes clients who have rotary phones or who need language services other than Spanish or English.

**Help for clients.** Using the ARU, clients can check their benefit balance and review their last 10 transactions; or transfer to a Customer Service representative to report a card lost, stolen or damaged or request other assistance.

The client should call eFunds for all card losses. For protection of their benefits, clients should call eFunds Customer Service to report a lost/stolen card or a compromised PIN as soon as they discover the loss or suspect that someone knows their PIN.

The client Customer Service number is printed on the training pamphlet and on the back of each Oregon Trail card. The number is 888-997-4447. This is a toll-free call. eFunds has a variety of bilingual staff. If they do not have someone on staff who speaks the client’s language, they have access to other resources, such as the Telephone Language Interpreter Services. Call LanguageLink at 877-764-7888.
Help for staff. eFunds Customer Service number is 800-831-5235. While this is listed as a different number than eFunds Customer Service number for retailers, it reaches the same customer service staff as the number for retailers (merchants). Staff should use this number primarily for assistance with card issuance equipment problems.

For issues other than equipment problems, staff should call the DHS Service Desk at 503-945-5623 or 888-457-3375.

Help for retailers. To make SNAP transactions with the EBT card, retailers must be approved by FNS. If retailers need information about becoming certified to accept Oregon Trail cards, refer them to FNS at 503-326-5971. Retailers that have questions about using the EBT card or need other assistance, such as equipment problems, can call eFunds at 800-831-5235.

7. **Client training; EBT**

Each branch or district will designate staff to provide Oregon Trail card training to new clients and their alternate payees. Depending on local resources and needs, the training could be given in a group setting, as part of an orientation or on a one-on-one basis. The training may consist of two parts.

Each branch or district has a video that can be played continuously or at selected training times.

The second part of the training is the *How to Use Your Oregon Trail Card* (DHS 208) client pamphlet. The DHS 208 is available through Distribution Services. Go over the pamphlet with the client to ensure they are familiar with the process. Some clients may need more individualized training.

8. **Card issuance and PIN selection; EBT**

Card issuance involves:

- Providing Oregon Trail card training to new clients and their alternate payees;
- Issuing original and replacement Oregon Trail cards to clients and their alternate payees;

- Helping the client and alternate payee with the PIN selection process;

- Helping the client and alternate payee use the POS device, the PIN pad and the printed receipt.

The branch worker who determines cash, SNAP or child care eligibility does not issue the Oregon Trail card to the client. This separation of responsibility is an important security measure. The branch or district decides who will issue EBT cards from the office.

The branch person authorized to issue EBT cards must:

- Positively identify the client;

- Log out an EBT card and record it on the client’s EBCRD screen;

- Have the client select a PIN on a POS device;

- After the client has successfully selected the PIN, perform a balance inquiry with the client to verify that the card and PIN are working properly. When the balance inquiry is completed, the system prints a statement for the client.

During PIN selection, emphasize the need for the client to keep their PIN secret. Also, inform the client of the need to call eFunds Customer Service as soon as they discover that their card is missing or that they have compromised their PIN. A PIN is compromised any time the payee feels that someone else may know the number. Emphasize to the client to call eFunds Customer Service number and not the local branch office. When a client has reported a card lost or stolen, eFunds Customer Service staff will deactivate the card. This will prevent anyone from using the card to obtain benefits.

Branch card-issuance staff may deactivate an EBT card to prevent the loss of benefits. Once a card has been deactivated (e.g., coded as lost or stolen), a new card must be issued. eFunds Customer Service staff will direct the client to contact their local office for a replacement card.

**By mail**

Some clients cannot come into the office to obtain an Oregon Trail Card for a reason such as medical issues. In addition, with the increased number of applicants and recipients applying for benefits online, and the ability to conduct an eligibility interview over the telephone, a client may need to have the Oregon Trail Card mailed to their home.
The card issuer must:

- Follow the steps outlined above, except:
  
  a) Write “mailed” in place of the client signature on the Oregon Trail Card Issuance Log (DHS 248).
  
  b) Do not assign a Personal Identification Number (PIN).
  
  c) Place the EBT card and How to Use Your Oregon Trail Card brochure (DHS 208) in an envelope and send to the mailing address of the client.
  
  d) Inform the client, when they receive the Oregon Trail Card they must call the eFunds/FIS Help Desk or go online at www.ebtEDGE.com to select a PIN.

### NOTE

The toll-free customer service telephone number and website are printed on the back of the Oregon Trail Card.

9. Replacing lost, stolen, or damaged EBT cards

Clients must call eFunds Customer Service to report a lost, stolen or damaged card. They need to report these problems as soon as they are aware of them; their benefits are at risk if someone else uses the card. The branch office can also cancel a lost, stolen or damaged card.

Before issuing a replacement, the card issuer must verify the client’s identity and ensure that the old card is no longer active. When the client gets a new card, they can use their old PIN or select a new one.

If someone finds a lost card, it should be returned to address on the back of the card. The card will then be destroyed. Cards returned to branch offices should be destroyed. Cards left in Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) will not be returned to clients and must be replaced by the branch.

✔ SEE SNAP-H.21 FOR MORE INFORMATION ON REPLACING SNAP EBT CARDS.
10. **Forgotten or compromised PINs; EBT**

The eFunds system keeps track of the number of times an incorrect PIN is used during the day. Anytime someone attempts to use the EBT card and enters an incorrect PIN, the transaction is rejected and the number of “PIN fails” increases. If a person fails to enter the correct PIN four times in one calendar day, the card/PIN is locked up, to be released after midnight. If the client does not know their PIN or cannot wait until the next day, they must come into the local office to select a new PIN. It is not necessary to cancel the EBT card to assign a new PIN.

![NOTE]

If the client successfully uses their PIN after fewer than four failures, the PIN fail number resets to 0. It also resets every day at midnight.

If a client forgets their PIN or believes that someone else knows what it is, they should call eFunds Customer Service to report it. eFunds Customer Service staff will invalidate the PIN. eFunds staff will also advise the client to go into their local office to select a new PIN.

11. **Access to benefits via EBT**

**Cash benefits**

Clients and their alternate payees may access cash benefits (including SNAP cash-out benefits) in two ways, through POS devices at some retailers displaying the “Oregon Trail Card Accepted Here” sign and at participating ATMs. As retailers sign up to participate in the Oregon Trail card project, they decide what amount of cash they will allow a client to withdraw per visit using the POS device. Each store will have their own policy, so the client should ask how much cash they can get back, and if they can do cash-only withdrawals. Clients will not be charged for a cash purchase or a purchase with cash back. They have two free POS cash-only withdrawals each month. After the two free withdrawals, there will be an 85-cent charge for each subsequent withdrawal in a calendar month. Retailers can sell clients money orders at a minimal fee, for all or part of their cash benefits. This would count as a purchase, not one of the two free withdrawals. This option provides a good solution to both the client and retailers as the client does not leave the store with large amounts of cash and the retailer reduces security issues by not being required to keep large amounts of cash on hand.
ATMs

Some clients choose to use ATMs to access their cash benefits. There is an 85-cent deduction from the client’s TANF account for each ATM transaction, plus any bank surcharges. Many ATMs have a surcharge and the amounts differ. Most ATMs will accept the Oregon Trail card.

The following is a partial list of ATMs that are participating:

- US Bank;
- Bank of America;
- First Security Bank;
- Chetco Federal Credit Union;
- Card Capture Services.

There are other participating ATMs that have an Oregon Trail card sign on them. For others, the only way to know if the ATM accepts the card is by trying.

ATM misdispense

If clients contact the branch to report they received the wrong amount from an ATM (a misdispense), refer them to eFunds Customer Service Desk 888-997-4447. Federal banking laws require a resolution within 30 days but it sometimes takes as long as 45 days. If the bank finds the ATM out of balance, eFunds will credit the client’s EBT account. Narrate when client calls to report a misdispense.

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<tr>
<th>Access Fee for EBT-Issued Benefits Rule</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>461-165-0096</strong> — Access Fee for EBT-Issued Benefits</td>
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SNAP benefits

Clients access their SNAP benefits through POS devices at retailers displaying the Oregon Trail sign. The client can make as many food purchase transactions as they need each month with no transaction fees. The retailer is responsible for ensuring that only allowable food items are purchased from the SNAP account. By doing two separate transactions, a client with SNAP and cash benefits can pay for food and nonfood items with their Oregon Trail card. The client receives no change or cash back on a SNAP transaction. A return of a SNAP purchase results in a credit to the client’s SNAP benefit account.

Clients can also access their Oregon Trail card SNAP benefits when no POS device is available by using an off-line voucher system with retailers that have been approved to
accept SNAP benefits. This includes nontraditional retailers such as route delivery providers. These retailers, and traditional retailers when their terminals are down, will use an off-line voucher system. However, not all retailers will process voucher transactions when their terminals are down. If they will not, the client will either have to return when their terminals are back up, or go to a different store. The voucher works similar to a credit card transaction. The retailer fills out the voucher, which is then signed by the client. The retailer compares the signatures on the voucher and the Oregon Trail card, and then calls for telephone confirmation of benefit availability by eFunds. The retailer calls the eFunds Help Desk number. The off-line voucher system applies to purchases from SNAP benefits only.

NOTE

Because elderly and SSI clients in the cash-out demonstration area receive SNAP benefits in their cash account, they will not be able to use the voucher system.

12. Retailer issues; EBT

Overcharges

When clients report that a retail store has deducted money from their account in error, (i.e., the store said the card did not work and they paid cash or left the groceries but the amount was deducted) print a copy of the transaction from EBT Financial History, give it to the client and suggest they take this back to the store for resolution. If the issue cannot be resolved at this level, have the client call eFunds and file a claim with their research department. eFunds will research the issue and credit the client’s account, if appropriate.

Undercharges

Retailers cannot identify clients unless the retailer has a voucher with the client’s name. Sometimes clerks fill out the voucher and get approval but fail to record the entire card number. It is appropriate to provide the retailer with this information if the voucher information is available on EBT Financial History.

For POS transactions, the only client information retailers have is the Oregon Trail card number, or only the last four digits. They may contact branch offices to request help when the client’s account is not deducted because the store made an error. If the client can be identified, contact the client and encourage them to take their Oregon Trail card
to the retail store where the error occurred. If the retailer has only the last four digits of the card, the branch will be unable to assist them.

Retailers contacting the branch regarding equipment problems should be referred to the eFunds Customer Service Desk for Retailers at 800-831-5235.

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FOR ATM MISDISPENSE PROBLEMS, SEE ACCESS TO BENEFITS VIA EBT IN THIS SECTION (IB-A.11).

Other retailer information

- Retail stores cannot require identification in addition to the Oregon Trail card. The card and the PIN are the identification;
- For voucher transactions, the signature on the card reverse, and the voucher signature are the client identification.

13. Availability of benefits via EBT

Benefit authorizations are transmitted to eFunds in one of three ways:

- For a client’s regular monthly benefit, there is the monthly transmission to eFunds. Benefits sent this way are available by 8:00 a.m. For SNAP, the benefits are available on the calendar day equal to the last number of the SNAP case number. For CMS and SNAP cash-out, benefits are available on the first of the month. Benefits will be available on these dates regardless of which day of the week it falls. Weekends and holidays do not affect availability of benefits;
- The second method is the daily transmission. For CMS, benefits sent this way are available to the client by 8:00 a.m. the calendar day following the benefit authorization, but no earlier than the first of the payment month. For SNAP, once the monthly report has been processed, the benefits are available on the next day or the calendar day equal to the last number of the SNAP case number;
- The third method is immediate issuance. Benefits sent this way are available to the client immediately. SNAP benefits will be available the same day as issued when an immediate issuance release code such as IA, IX, or IJ, is used on FSMIS. TANF benefits are available immediately when issuing from the EBT Immediate Cash Issuance screen (EBISS).
14. **EBT benefit aging**

**Aging process.** If an issuance does not have any withdrawals for 12 benefit aging periods, it becomes inactive and the remaining balance is “aged off” and expunged from the state. Benefits that have aged off cannot be restored to the client.

**NOTE**

Benefits issued through direct deposit (cash and SNAP cash-out) are not affected by the aging process.

- eFunds tracks which issuances have not been accessed by an EBT payee for each aging period. Aging periods for TANF and SNAP are from the 16th of each month through the 15th of the following month. Partial months are not counted. For example, an issuance available June 3 would not be counted in the aging period beginning May 16 and ending June 15. Instead, because eFunds does not include partial months, it would first be included in the aging period beginning June 16 and ending July 15;

- eFunds tracks each benefit issuance, not the total account balance. The system works on a “first-in, first-out” basis. Purchases are deducted from the balance of the oldest issuance first. For clients who wish to accumulate benefits in their account, making a small purchase each month will only preserve the oldest remaining issuance, not more recent ones;

- For child care, unused hours will not be available to the client after the last day of the issuance month.

**Client notification.** Notice WCN005R-A: EB12 – Unused Benefits May be Lost – will be sent monthly to all clients with a balance of $2.00 or more that has not been accessed for 12 months. Information on this notice will be displayed on the Client Notice Log – LOGI. The notice is mailed mid-month.

**Tracking aged benefits.** Information about aged benefits is available in the EB.

- For 90 days after the issuance has been aged off, the aging transaction will display on the client’s EBT Financial History screen (EBFHL) with the Msg-Type “S1014” and the Trans-Type “DEL.” The aged off issuance will also display on the client’s EBT Benefit Issuance History screen (EBISH) with the benefit status code “D;”
• SNAP issuances that have been aged off will display on page 3 of FSUP. When none of the original SNAP issuance was accessed by the client, and the original issuance amount is aged off and expunged, the aged issuance displays as canceled. When the aged off issuance is a portion of the original issuance amount, it is displayed as an adjustment;

• Cash issuances that have been aged off will display on WISH. When none of the original cash issuance was accessed by the client, and the original issuance amount is aged off, the aged issuance displays as canceled. When the aged issuance is a portion of the original issuance amount, it is displayed as an adjustment.

Restoring aged benefits. Benefits will remain in client’s EBT accounts for 12 months. Once the benefits age off, they are expunged from the account and sent back to FNS and the benefits cannot be restored to the client.

15. Using EBT benefits to make voluntary repayments

By completing and signing the Voluntary Agreement to Reduce or Close Benefits or Withdraw Application and Notice of Action Taken (DHS 457D), clients may choose to make voluntary repayments of part or all of their SNAP or cash account balance. Branch staff with appropriate RACF authority may reduce, in whole dollar amounts, the available SNAP or cash benefit using the EBT Adjustments/ Conversion screen. Cash adjustments will display on the WISH screen.

To avoid an overpayment. The client’s SNAP or cash account balance is reduced on the EBT Adjustments/Conversion screen by entering the amount of available balance to be reduced to avoid an overpayment. An “N” should be entered in the repayment of overpayment field.

To repay an overpayment. The client’s SNAP or cash account balance is reduced on the EBT Adjustments/Conversion screen by entering the amount of available balance to be reduced to repay an overpayment. A client may also choose to reduce a cash balance in order to repay a SNAP overpayment. A “Y” should be entered in the repayment of overpayment field. An Overpayment/Overissuance Change Report (MSC 284A) must be completed and sent to Overpayment Recovery so that the client’s overpayment may be reduced.

16. Canceling EBT issuances

Clients may request EBT issuances canceled by completing and signing the Authorization to Cancel Benefits Deposited to an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) Account (DHS 215). EBT issuances may be canceled on the EBT Benefit Issuance History (EBISH) screen by branch staff with the appropriate RACF authority. Only issuances that have not been
accessed may be canceled. SNAP issuance cancellations will display on page 3 of FSUP. Cash issuance cancellations will display on WISH.

17. **When the FSMIS and CMS cases close; EBT**

   The Oregon Trail card account does not close when a case is closed: the client is entitled to use whatever TANF or SNAP amounts remain in their account. In addition, the client may still need EBT services from the local office (e.g., they may need to add an alternate payee, get a replacement card, select a new PIN, etc.)

   When a case is closed, advise the client to hold on to their card. If they reapply, they may use the same card if they meet all the following:

   - The primary payee for the case has not changed;
   - They still have the card;
   - The card has not had the status changed to anything other than INACTIVE;
   - The card is still in good working order. The client can perform a balance inquiry to make sure the card still works.

   If they do not meet any of these conditions, issue a new card to the client.

   When benefits end because a person has died, and there are no other persons in the SNAP benefit group, branch staff with RACF authority remove the balance from the SNAP account using the EBADJ (EBT Adjustments/Conversion) screen. For all other benefits except child care, the balance belongs to the client’s survivors. Determine if DHS should designate an alternate payee.

18. **When a client moves out of state; EBT**

   The Oregon Trail card can be used to access SNAP and cash benefits in almost all locations in the U.S. When a client leaves the state with benefits remaining they will need to locate a retailer or ATM that accepts the Oregon Trail card.

   **Cash clients.** If the client does not have an active card or valid PIN and has only cash or SNAP cash-out benefits remaining, use the EBADJ (EBT Adjustment/Conversion) screen to convert the benefits. Issue a special pay check using special pay reason code 5.

   **SNAP clients.** If the client does not have an active card or valid PIN and has SNAP benefits remaining, issue a new card and have the client select a PIN by phone. The card is to be mailed to the client. The PIN is not to be mailed to the client. The client must remember the PIN they selected. The identity of the client must be verified to the satisfaction of the card issuer.
19. **Nonstandard living situations; EBT**

Some clients receive their SNAP benefits in nonstandard living situations. Some considerations that may not apply to clients living independently include:

- The client may designate an employee of the facility as their alternate payee, or may choose to use their benefits for themselves;

- Facilities may use SNAP benefits through a POS device in the facility, through vouchers or by shopping at the store with cards. How this is done will be decided on a facility-by-facility basis depending on SNAP volume. Cash benefits can also be accessed through the POS in some facilities. The facility with a POS device can swipe the Oregon Trail card and transfer SNAP benefits to the facility’s account. Clients in semi-independent living may shop for themselves and swipe the card at the store. In some instances, facilities with a smaller SNAP volume will use vouchers to transfer SNAP benefits. To have a POS device or use vouchers, the facility must be authorized by FNS as a retailer;

- When the facility accesses SNAP benefits, they should determine a prorated daily amount based on that individual’s SNAP benefit, with the facility swiping the card weekly or biweekly based on the cost of meals for the week. Facilities that are not authorized as a retailer and must shop with individual cards will need to use SNAP benefits carefully to ensure that one half of the benefits are left in the client’s account should they leave the facility before the 15th;

- The facility should ensure that the client has their card and that the amount in their EBT account reflects the full balance that the client is entitled to. If the client is entitled to any part of the EBT funds already deducted, the facility can process a SNAP purchase refund. This will debit the center’s daily transactions and credit the client’s SNAP benefit account.

When the client leaves a facility, they need to call the local office to update their address, have the facility removed as their authorized representative and/or alternate payee and select a new representative or payee, as needed.

20. **Direct Deposit (DD)**

Direct Deposit (DD), also called Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT), is an issuance method for cash benefits (including SNAP cash-out). Direct deposit is not affected by EBT. Clients with a bank checking or savings account may prefer to use DD instead of EBT. There is a fee to withdraw EBT benefits from an ATM but there is no fee to withdraw money from a personal bank account. Additionally, benefits issued by DD are not subject to the aging process, such as those issued to EBT accounts.

Clients whose cash benefits are directly deposited into a bank account will remain in direct deposit unless changed by the worker. Companion SNAP benefits will be issued by
EBT, except for SNAP cash-out. Benefits direct deposited into bank accounts will not be displayed on EBT screens. Using DD, clients can have their benefits deposited directly into their checking or savings account. DD is available for CMS-issued benefits, including cases in the MRS and reimbursement of cost-effective, employer-sponsored health insurance premiums (HIP). Special cash payments cannot be made via DD. DD is also available for FSMIS-issued benefits for SNAP cash-out clients only.

Benefits are replaced only if some problem with coding the case prevents direct deposit. Once DHS transmits the electronic transfer to the client’s bank, credit union or savings and loan account, the benefits are considered the same as a check the client has cashed.

The Client Maintenance Unit (CMU) does the DD data entry for all clients. CMU is also responsible for resolving problems with deposits. Report all problems to CMU at 503-378-4369. Branches should send all authorizations they receive to CMU using the state shuttle (if available), or mail them.

21. **How to sign up for DD**

The sign-up procedure for DD is as follows:

- The branch will give a Request for Direct Deposit – A Safer Easier Way to Put Your Benefits in Your Bank Account (AFS 7262) and a pre-addressed, postage-paid envelope to any new or ongoing clients who want to sign up for DD;

- Clients who want to use DD complete the AFS 7262, or take it to their financial institution;

- The bank, credit union or savings and loan enters the account number and routing number shown on the AFS 7262 and returns the form to the client;

- The client then returns the DD authorization to the address on the form, using the pre-addressed, postage-paid envelope;

- DHS sends a pre-note to the client’s bank to ensure that the account is open and all information is accurate;

- When the client’s first DD is successfully completed, a computer notice is sent to inform the client. The notice is recorded in the client notice file (LOGI).

22. **DD check redirects**

Clients receiving their CMS cash benefits via DD may get their benefits redirected, just like other clients.
For CMS-issued benefits, the benefit redirect is processed using HLD1/HLD2. These checks are redirected to the branch. The hold may be generated by the worker or the system. All holds are listed on HLD2 (accessed via HLD1) and the *List of Branch Held Checks* report (WCM0120R-A) on ViewDirect.

23. **Removing clients from DD**

The DD authorization becomes invalid when either of the following occurs:

- The DD is rejected (e.g., the client’s account is closed, the payee changed or the CMS/SNAP case is closed); or
- A client indicates that they no longer want to receive their benefits through DD.

When the client indicates that they no longer want to receive benefits via DD, contact CMU to make the change. When CMU closes the DD record, the system sends a notice to confirm the change in issuance method.

24. **Check registers and assistance summaries**

For CMS

Check registers and assistance summaries show the codes for cash payments. The indications of direct deposit issuances are:

- A DD beside the check amount under the heading DD;
- A DD series of check numbers.

The assistance summary will show the electronic deposit as a regular CP with no DD notation.

For SNAP

Page 3 of FSUP and the Electronic Deposit Transaction Register report (WEB387X-B) on ViewDirect show the codes for SNAP cash-out benefits issued by DD. The indications of direct deposit issuances are:

- A two-digit release code (REL ATP) starting with a “D” (e.g. DG indicates direct deposit for a monthly batch issuance).
25. **Rejected DD**

When a client has DD and reports that they did not receive a deposit because their bank account closes or their account number changes, the worker needs to take action to issue the monthly benefits. Below is a summary of what to do:

- Call CMU (503-378-4369). CMU needs to know the client closed their bank account or their account number changed. CMU receives a notice when a DD did not go through. It can take six to 10 days for the notice to get to CMU. A call from the worker allows CMU to change the DD status so DHS does not try to make any further DDS to the closed account;

- When you are sure DHS did not make a DD, issue the client a check. Use either the Special Cash Pay process online, or, if you judge that the client needs the money right away, issue the check through the revolving fund. In either case, use code 03 for CMS and code 81 for SNAP cash-out benefits.

**NOTE**

It is unnecessary to do a check replacement or go through the check replacement procedure. Because DHS could not make an electronic deposit, the client needs a check instead of the DD.

This transaction will show on the MCR1 screen for CMS replacements and FSUP page 3 for SNAP cash-out replacements. If the client wants to continue using DD, they must complete a new Request for Direct Deposit - A Safer Easier Way to Put Your Benefits in Your Bank Account (*AFS 7262*) and send it to CMU.

26. **Replacement checks for DD benefits**

To determine if a client in DD is entitled to a replacement check, for CMS-issued benefits, look at the WCMI or UCMS screen to determine if the case is coded Y in the DD field. The Y will be deleted if the DD cannot be made.

- If DD is not coded Y, check MCR1 to determine if cash payment was issued. If no special cash payment was issued, issue a replacement check. If a special cash payment check was issued but not received, issue a replacement using the check replacement procedure. Otherwise, do not issue replacement benefits;

- If DD is coded Y, but the client claims no deposit was made, contact CMU.
For SNAP-issued benefits, look at FSUP to see if Y displays in the DD field and FSUP page 3 to determine whether and how the issuance was made.

- If a direct deposit issuance is indicated and BR also displays, check EBISH to see if the issuance was deposited into the EBT account;

- If a direct deposit issuance displays, there is no BR status indicated for that issuance and client claims no deposit was made, contact CMU (503-378-4369).

27. **SNAP Cash-Out Project for SSI/seniors**

   ✔ SEE [SNAP-H.2](#) FOR INFORMATION ABOUT SNAP CASH-OUT.

28. **Legal status of benefit payments**

   - Under Oregon law, cash benefits are not subject to assignment, transfer, garnishment, levy or execution, as long as they can be identified as program payments and are separate from other money in the client’s possession;

   - A cash payment accrues to and becomes vested in the client when issued;

   - Except for EBT, consider a benefit issued if the check has been handed to the client in the branch office, or mailed to the client. Consider a benefit issued, and received by the client, when a direct check deposit is made to the client’s bank account;

   - For EBT, consider benefits issued and received when an EBT card and personal identification number (PIN) have been issued in person to the client, or the EBT card and PIN have been received by the client in the mail, and the benefits have been deposited to the client’s EBT account;

   - SNAP benefits in the EBT account remain available for client access as long as the account is active. The EBT system removes them after three calendar months without account activity;

   ✔ SEE ITEM 14 ([IB-A.14](#)), EBT BENEFIT AGING, OF THIS SECTION.

   - Cash benefits, including SNAP cash-out, are unrestricted and do not require accountability for individual expenditures or amounts. SNAP benefits are required by Federal Law to only be used for allowable food items.
Stores accepting SNAP benefits are required by federal law to restrict the usage to allowable food items.

**Legal Status of Benefit Payments Rule**

461-165-0010 — Legal Status of Benefit Payments

29. **Concurrent and duplicate program benefits**

Clients cannot receive benefits of the same type (cash, medical, SNAP) for the same time period from Oregon. For example, a client cannot receive SNAP benefits in Portland and also receive SNAP benefits as a member of another household in Klamath Falls for the same time period. For medical, a client who receives a subsidy through the Office of Private Health Partnerships (OPHP) may not receive benefits from the EXT, MAA, MAF, OHP, OSIPM, REFM, or SAC programs at the same time. Another example is that no person may receive both foster care/adoption assistance and TANF for the same dates. A third example: a client who receives a subsidy through the Office of Private Health Partnerships (OPHP) may not receive benefits from the EXT, MAA, MAF, OHP, OSIPM, REFM, or SAC programs at the same time. The exceptions to this rule follow:

- A client receiving TANF for themselves and their children may also receive ERDC for children who are in the household group but cannot be included in the TANF filing group;

- A client may receive TA-DVS and cash payments from other programs for the same time period;

- A child who is an ERDC benefit group member may also be a member of the following benefit groups:
  - A TANF benefit group when living with a non-needy caretaker relative, if the caretaker relative is not the parent;
  - An OSIP-AB benefit group.

- SNAP clients who leave a filing group that includes a person who abused them and enter a domestic violence shelter/safe home may receive SNAP benefits twice that month;
A QMB-BAS client may also receive medical benefits from EXT, MAA, MAF or OSIPM.

Clients cannot receive benefits of the same type (cash, medical, SNAP) for the same time period from Oregon and another state, except as follows:

- Medical benefits may be authorized for an eligible client if an Oregon provider refuses to bill another state and the client would not otherwise receive medical care. Accept the client’s statement as verification that a provider will not bill another state for needed medical services;

- Basic needs payments, support services and medical benefits may be authorized during the Pre-TANF Program, if it has been verified that benefits from another state will end by the last day of the month in which the client applied for TANF. These may be issued even if the client has received TANF from that state for the same month;

Appschn

Applicants for SNAP from another state are not eligible in Oregon if they have already received their SNAP through EBT, even when they are unable to access the benefits. The state they left is responsible for issuing their SNAP benefits by a method they can use here.

If eligible, prorate benefits based on the application filing date unless the applicant is a migrant or seasonal farm worker.

Use the following procedure to determine if the client received benefits from another state while receiving benefits in Oregon:

- Contact the other state to see if benefits were issued to the client;

- If benefits were issued, but then returned and canceled, that is proof that the client did not receive benefits from the other state;

- For all programs except SNAP, if benefits were issued but not returned and canceled, have the client sign a statement that they did not receive benefits from
the other state. If the other state says the benefit check was cashed, ask them to send a copy of the check to Oregon. Use the replacement check procedures to determine if the signature on the other state’s check is the client’s. If it is, the client is responsible for the overpayment. For SNAP, client statement in any form is not acceptable verification.

Concurrent and Duplicate Program Benefits Rule
461-165-0030 — Concurrent and Duplicate Program Benefits

30. Assigning a payee; not EBT

When benefits are not issued by EBT, a person may be payee for a case regardless of whether they receive benefits on that case. They may be the payee for more than one program or case. The payee is the primary person or authorized representative.

Assigning Payee; Not EBT Rule
461-165-0040 — Assigning Payee; Not EBT

31. Emergency payee; SNAP and TANF

An emergency payee may be appointed for an open SNAP case when all the adults in the filing group are deceased, incarcerated or have left the household with whereabouts unknown. Appoint the adult acting as guardian an alternate payee. Give them an EBT card and PIN to access any remaining benefits. Send a 10-day notice to close the SNAP case. The guardian may apply for the children.

An emergency payee for ongoing TANF may be used when the dependent children are abandoned by the caretaker relative for reasons such as the caretaker relative’s death or whereabouts unknown and there are no other relatives immediately available to be the children’s caretaker.

- An emergency payee may be used for up to two payment months;
- An emergency payee does not have to be related to the dependent child;
- An emergency payee may not be used for initial payments.

The emergency payee may be included in the benefit group if all the following are true:

- They meet all eligibility requirements except relationship and cooperation with JOBS;
- Their income and resources are counted;
- There is no other caretaker relative in the benefit group.
When an emergency payee or alternate payee is named, and benefits are issued via EBT, issue that person an EBT card and they must also select a PIN.

Change the payee and case name during the 60-day emergency period. Use an authorized representative or alternate payee (if benefits issued via EBT) designated by the client or the branch when the caretaker relative has not relinquished care, control and supervision of the children.

### Emergency Payee; TANF Rule

| 461-165-0045 | Emergency Payee; TANF |

#### 32. Dual payee: when to use

For OSIP and REF, use a dual-payee check for protective payments if the benefit group has shown they are not able to properly manage benefits meant to meet their needs. Issue the dual-payee check in both the name of the client and the name of the service provider.

Issue TA-DVS checks for shelter, moving costs, property taxes and home repairs as dual-payee or vendor checks. The supervisor or manager must authorize an exception to this policy in advance and only when necessary to prevent putting the client at risk of harm.

To make sure a JOBS payment is used to meet a specific need, the branch office may write a special cash pay or dual-payee revolving fund check in the name of both the client and the vendor.

### Benefits; TA-DVS Rule

| 461-135-1230 | Benefits; TA-DVS |

### Dual Payee; When to Use Rule

| 461-165-0050 | Dual Payee; When to Use |

#### 33. Prohibition against benefits in amounts less than $10

In the SNAP program, a benefit group is not eligible for benefits in the initial month if the allotment is less than $10. For ongoing months, SNAP benefits are issued as follows:

- An eligible, including categorically eligible, benefit group of one or two persons receives a minimum monthly allotment of $16;

- An eligible benefit group of three or more persons receives the calculated allotment. A categorically eligible benefit group of three or more persons does not receive an allotment, but the case remains open with zero net allotment.
For TANF and REF, do not issue benefits if the computed monthly benefit is less than $10. People who do not receive a cash payment because the monthly benefit is less than $10 are eligible for medical benefits. The $10 limitation does not apply to:

- Special payments, such as one-time special needs, emergency assistance, supplements or a benefit amount under $10 due to recovery of an overpayment;
- Dual-payee payments made in money management cases if the monthly benefit amount is $10 or more. Issue to the client any remaining funds after the dual-payee payments are made;
- Wage supplements issued to JOBS Plus participants.

Minimum Benefit Amount; REF, SNAP, TANF Rule

34. Immediate and advance issuance

Provide the client with an immediate issuance of benefits for new, reopened and restored cases if the client is eligible for a benefit and has emergent needs that must be met before a benefit can be issued through the automated computer system; or for SNAP, meets the criteria for expedited service.

Provide immediate issuance of benefits as follows:

- For cash benefits, issue by EBT using the EBT Immediate Cash Issue Screen (EBISH), revolving fund check or the special cash pay system;
- For medical benefits, issue a temporary medical I.D. card;
- For SNAP, except for SNAP cash-out clients who receive a check or DD, issue by FSUP into the EBT account;
- For SNAP cash-out clients who receive benefits by check or DD, issue a revolving fund check (code 80).

Immediate Issuance of Benefits Rule

SEE SNAP-H.8 FOR INFORMATION ABOUT SNAP BENEFITS OF LESS THAN $10.
35. **Method for delivery of benefits**

Benefits are delivered several ways, depending on the program and client situation. Send all mailed benefits to the client’s address. A rural route box number is acceptable as a client address.

Make either of the following exceptions on a case-by-case basis if directions to the home are included in the case record.

A post office box number can be used if any of the following is true:

- There is no mail service to the client’s home;
- The client lives in a nonstandard living arrangement;
- There have been verified cases of benefits being stolen from home mailboxes in the client’s neighborhood.

Use General Delivery only if it is the client’s sole means of mail receipt.

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<td>461-165-0080 — Method for Delivery of Benefits</td>
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36. **Alternate methods for delivery of non-EBT benefits**

Redirect non-EBT cash benefits to the branch office if any of the following is true. The benefit group:

- Is unstable (i.e., moving constantly, and the branch needs to re-establish contact when there has been an unreported change of address);
- Is transferred to a new branch;
- Has not cooperated in completing a QC review;
- Must be contacted personally to obtain essential information that may affect eligibility or the correct computation of the benefit amount.

Additionally, if a SNAP cash-out client receives a check for the value of their SNAP benefit because they are unable to adapt to EBT, DD is not an option, and has a history of theft from their mail or lives in an area that has been identified by branch staff, or postal inspectors as high-risk for mail loss, they may receive their benefits redirected to the branch.
37. **Issuance date of benefit**

For all cash payments and for medical assistance:

- Date an authorized cash payment check on the first day of the payment period, or as soon as possible thereafter;

- Mail checks so they can be delivered to the client on the first day of each month. Exceptions are:
  
  - Initial month benefits for new/reopened/restored cases;
  
  - Cases with no special needs or service coding receive the $1.70 OSIP payment in advance for the benefit period, from the date of eligibility to the end of the calendar year;

  - If the first day of the month falls on Sunday or a holiday, mail the check in time for the client to receive it on Saturday or the mail day preceding the holiday;

  - Checks redirected to the branch office may be released any time on the workday preceding a weekend or holiday.

Benefits issued by EBT should be available on the first day of each month, except for the following:

- Initial month benefits for new/reopened/restored cases;

- Held cash benefits;

- SNAP benefits sent through staggered issuance.

SNAP benefits issued by EBT (except SNAP cash-out) are staggered based on the last digit of the case number over the first nine calendar days of the month. For SNAP changes that could not be made in time to adjust the monthly allotment, issue a supplement within 10 days of the date the change was reported.

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38. **Exception to staggered issuance; SNAP**

The second month’s allotment of SNAP benefits is not subject to staggered issuance if the filing group applies after the 15th of the month and the application is not for a redetermination of eligibility. Once eligibility for SNAP benefits is established for these groups, benefits are issued as follows:
• If the SNAP case is opened by the last day of the initial month of eligibility, the computer will prorate benefits for the initial month and will automatically issue benefits for the second month on the first of that month; or

• If the case is opened after the initial month of eligibility, the computer will prorate benefits for the initial month and will automatically issue benefits for the second month on the same day if the SNAP benefits are issued using a prior month issuance code.

Federal regulations require that clients who qualify for SNAP and apply after the 15th of the month have their second month’s benefits excluded from staggered issuance. The computer automatically issues the second month’s benefits, even if the client is placed in the MRS. If the second month’s benefits are incorrectly calculated due to a change that the branch could not act on, a supplemental payment may be made.

**Exception to Staggered Issuance; SNAP Rule**

461-165-0105 — Exception to Staggered Issuance; SNAP

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**NOTE**

SNAP cash-out clients are not subject to staggered issuance of their benefits.

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39. Issuing expedited SNAP

To ensure that SNAP expedited benefits are received by the seventh calendar day following the date of application, authorize immediate issuance benefits on the system by the seventh calendar day after the filing date.

**NOTE**

Applicants for expedited SNAP who apply on the first through the 15th of the month and do not supply complete verification are not eligible for the second month’s benefits. Remember to code FSMIS so that the second month’s benefits are not automatically issued.

When these benefit groups provide the postponed verification, issue the second month’s benefits:
- Within seven working days of receipt of the verification; or

- On the first of the month, whichever is later. Do not delay benefits for cases in the MRS. Issue benefits even if the report has not been received. Use the last month’s report to determine the benefit amount.

Applicants for expedited SNAP who apply after the 15th of the month and do not supply complete verification are not eligible for the third month’s benefits. When these benefit groups provide the postponed verification, issue benefits according to regular staggered issuance procedures.

40. **Alternatives to direct money payment**

For OSIP, REF, and TANF, the alternative to direct money payment is protective payments when the goal is to ensure that the benefits are used to meet basic needs. For REF and TANF, protective payments may be made whenever clients demonstrate such an inability to manage funds that DHS determines their benefits are not being used in their best interest. Protective payments should be used particularly if mismanagement of funds, caused by repeated interruptions of TANF benefits, poses a threat to the health and safety of children in the household.

Protective payment methods include the following:

- Payments to authorized representatives;
- Dual-payee payments;
- Vendor payments.

### Alternatives to Direct Money Payment Rule

**461-165-0110** — Alternatives to Direct Money Payment

If the branch is paying a client’s benefits by vendor payment, all money left over after the client’s bills are paid are to go to the client. The branch may not retain leftover TANF grant money.

### Legal Status of Benefit Payments Rule

**461-165-0010** — Legal Status of Benefit Payments

41. **Protective payment; general information**

For OSIP, REF and TANF, protective payment is part of case management. Additionally for REF and TANF, protective payment should be discussed as part of case planning decisions around potential disqualifications to reduce the risk of harm to the children and cannot continue for longer than 24 months.
Review all protective payment plans monthly for REF and TANF, and every six months for OSIP cases. This review can be part of the redetermination of eligibility.

For information on Payment Procedure for Client in Hospital see OAR 461-165-0120.

42. Payment of benefit out of state

For all programs except SNAP, send benefits out of state if clients are absent from Oregon and they establish their intent to return within 60 days.

If clients are detained out of state beyond 60 days for medical reasons, determine continued eligibility and require the client to provide documentation of the need to remain in the other state.

For medical benefits, out-of-state medical expenditures must have prior authorization.

Refer out-of-state medical providers to DMAP for approval and copies of Oregon’s fee schedule so they can accurately bill for medical services provided to the client.

Advise people receiving medical assistance, who are temporarily leaving Oregon, that they will receive only emergency medical coverage while they are out of state. If the client needs specific information, contact the “out-of-state” coordinator at DMAP.

Clients who are enrolled with an FCHP or PCO should contact their respective plan offices for information and/or authorization for out-of-state medical coverage.

Send SNAP benefits out of state when: restoring lost benefits; DHS determines there is a need to send benefits out of state; or the client has an EBT account with residual benefits that they cannot access. SNAP cash-out benefits issued by DD into the bank account cannot be sent, restored, or replaced, if they were received by the bank.

Payment of Benefit Out of State Rule

461-165-0130 — Payment of Benefit Out of State

43. Endorsement of benefits

The client or the client’s payee must endorse checks issued in payment of a benefit. The endorsement on the check must be the same as the name appearing as payee.

The client can endorse a check with a mark or thumbprint if duly witnessed by two people giving their full names and addresses.
The person with power of attorney may:

- Act as authorized representative or alternate payee;
- Endorse and cash the benefit check as in the following example:

  John Doe (Recipient)
  by Richard Jones (Power of Attorney)

For all programs except SNAP, any cash benefit issued to clients before their death is available to their survivors. Checks may be endorsed in the name of the deceased beneficiary by the surviving spouse or next-of-kin, or by the administrator of their estate. Use the following procedure:

- Before the next of kin endorses a check, the check must be presented to the branch office;
- Rubber-stamp the endorsement on the check only if it has been determined that the client died on or after the first day of the period for which the payment was provided;
- The endorsement must show both the name of the deceased beneficiary and the name of the surviving spouse or next of kin, as well as the relationship of the endorser to the beneficiary;
- The person who endorses the check receives the proceeds of the benefit.

For cash benefits in an EBT account (except for SNAP cash-out), designate an adult survivor as the alternate payee. Issue the payee an EBT card and PIN to access the balance in the EBT account.

For SNAP, there is no survivor’s right to benefits unless the survivor is included in the benefit group. When the survivor is not in the group:

- Ask them to return non-negotiated SNAP cash-out checks to the branch;
- For SNAP benefits that were issued via EBT, delete the remaining benefits from the EBT account.

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<td>461-165-0140 — Endorsement and Survivorship of Benefits</td>
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When the only survivor(s) is a child, refer to policy on emergency payees.