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## **USDA Warns of Scams Targeting SNAP Recipients**

The following are informative reports concerning scams.

### **College Student Email Scam (07/11/23)**

Please be aware of emails that target college students claiming that they are automatically eligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits if enrolled in an academic year. The email includes a link for a website or email address that is not from SNAP. Do not click on any links or give any of your information. To apply for SNAP benefits, please contact your [local office](#).

### **Instant Cash EBT Card Scam (06/26/23)**

There may be a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card scam asking people to sign up for instant cash. This is not real. Any social media platform asking you to sign up to receive instant cash is fake. Do not click any links or give your information to anyone. If you are not sure, contact your [local SNAP office](#).

### **SNAP Phony Text Message Alert (3/9/2023)**

USDA is aware of several reports of criminals using phony text messages that say a recipient's SNAP EBT card has been locked. The text message provides a phone number to call for help. This is known as a phishing scam and is a type of fraud. If you do not know if a request for information about SNAP is real, contact your local [SNAP office](#).

### **SNAP EBT Card Skimming Scam Alert 10/19/2022**

USDA recently received several reports of SNAP fraud in which thieves use "card skimming" to steal SNAP benefits. Thieves place a device on a retailer's card-swiping machine to copy EBT card information. Card skimming can happen to anyone that

uses a credit, debit or EBT card, including SNAP participants.

USDA encourages SNAP participants to take actions that may help prevent card skimming. For example:

- **Keep your PIN secret.** Do not share your PIN with anyone outside your household. Cover the keypad when you enter your PIN on a machine.
- **Check your EBT account regularly for unauthorized charges.** If you notice any, change your PIN immediately to stop the thief from making any new purchases.
- **Check card reading machines** to make sure there's nothing suspicious overlayed or attached to the card swiper or keypad. The overlays can be difficult to detect but are often bigger than the original machine and may hide parts of the machine.

If you believe you are the victim of card skimming and SNAP benefits were stolen from your EBT card, contact your [local SNAP office](#).

### **Prior SNAP Alerts**

If you are unsure if a request for information is legitimate, please contact your local SNAP office. If you do not know your local SNAP office, you can find your state's contact information at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/state-directory>

If you believe you are the victim of identity theft, contact your local police department regarding procedures for filing a report. You may also file a consumer complaint online with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at <https://www.ftc.gov>. FTC is the federal agency responsible for protecting consumers from identity theft scams.

### **For More Information About SNAP**

#### **All About Virginia SNAP Benefits**

Article Source

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Source URL

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program>

Last Reviewed

Tuesday, January 16, 2024