Who We Are

The mission of the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) is to assist low-income individuals and families to meet their basic needs, increase their incomes, and improve their quality of life. Located within the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, the Department ensures that the emergency and transitional needs of the individuals and families of the Commonwealth are met through a combination of state- and federally-funded programs.

DTA serves one out of every nine people in the Commonwealth - including working families, children, elders, and people with disabilities.

Information for Grandparents

DTA is proud to work with thousands of grandparents throughout the Commonwealth in order to help them raise their grandchildren. We offer a number of programs that can assist grandparents that differ from our typical program requirements. For example, work program requirements and income limitations that apply to parents raising dependent children may not apply to grandparents raising their grandchildren. In some circumstances, time limitations on assistance and case review are reduced.

Food and Nutritional Assistance

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps, provides critical nutritional support to low-income households in the Commonwealth by helping families and individuals to buy healthy food. The program serves as the first line of defense against hunger.

Eligibility for SNAP depends on the number of people in the household and the household's total income. Other expenses, such as dependent care costs, medical deductions, earned income deduction, child support, and some shelter costs are also considered in determining benefits. The members of the SNAP household must also be U.S. citizens or legal non-citizens. Eligibility requirements for SNAP are not reduced for grandparents raising grandchildren; as a result, the grandparents' income is considered.

To apply online, visit www.mass.gov/vg/selfservice, to have a SNAP application mailed to you call the DTA Assistance Line at 1-877-382-2363, or to apply in person visit your local DTA office.

Cash Assistance

Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) is a state- and federally-funded program that provides cash assistance to families with children under age 18 (or in some cases until age 19) and certain pregnant women, with little or no assets or income.

Grandparents can apply for a special type of TAFDC benefit on behalf of their grandchildren. These applications are not subject to typical TAFDC income and asset limitations if the grandparent is not the adoptive parent of the child. Grandparents who apply under these circumstances do not have access to employment service programs, child care or transportation supports. Grandparents may opt to apply for TAFDC for themselves and their grandchild; however their income and assets are then countable. To apply for cash assistance, visit your local DTA office. If you need an accommodation, such as a home visit or help understanding a notice, call the DTA Assistance Line at 1-877-382-2363.

Additional Help

- For DTA information 24 hours a day, call the DTA Assistance Line at 1-877-382-2363.
- The Mass 211 call center is a statewide phone-based information and referral system. It is free, confidential, and is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Dial 211, to be connected to specialists who can provide information and referral in each community.
- Department of Elder Affairs at 1-800- 243-4636.
- Department of Early Education and Care may be able to provide information and financial assistance for child care. For more information call 617-988-6600.
- The Commission on the Status of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren serves as a resource to the Commonwealth on issues affecting grandparents and all relatives raising grandchildren. For more information visit www.massgrg.com.

Contact

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