

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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[Thomas.Betti@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:Thomas.Betti@jfs.ohio.gov)**Ohio Department of Job and Family Services issues warning on SNAP fraud**

COLUMBUS, OHIO – Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Director Matt Damschroder is urging Ohioans receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to act now to protect those benefits. As the holidays approach, ODJFS is seeing an uptick in suspicious activity, particularly in Cuyahoga County.

“Criminals continue to prey on vulnerable Ohioans who rely on food assistance to supplement their monthly grocery costs,” Damschroder said. “SNAP recipients should be vigilant in protecting their benefits by looking for signs of skimming, protecting their EBT card number and PIN, and using tools such as the ConnectEBT app and its “Lock Everywhere” feature to avoid becoming victims.”

Criminals use a process called “skimming” to steal EBT card numbers. This is when a fraudulent device is placed over a point-of-sale card reader to steal payment card information. When a recipient swipes their card over a compromised device, they are unsuspectingly sharing their card information with criminals.

SNAP is a federal food assistance program of the USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) that is overseen in Ohio by ODJFS and administered by county departments of Job and Family Services. A federal program currently authorized by congress allows recipients whose funds have been stolen since Oct. 1, 2022 to apply for replacement benefits.

SNAP recipients are encouraged to take some simple steps to reduce the likelihood of becoming a victim:

- Manage your benefits by downloading the secure ConnectEBT app on your mobile phone or tablet. Through the App’s card lock features, users can enable a feature that requires the user to unlock their EBT prior to making any purchases, including in-state.
- Create a PIN for your card that is unique and difficult to guess.





- Change your PIN monthly, before each scheduled deposit.
- Never share your card number or PIN. ODJFS will never ask for these numbers.
- Carefully examine point-of-sale card readers before using them to check for skimming devices.
- When using your card, cover the keypad with your body or hand to stop others from seeing your PIN.

ODJFS uses a variety of methods to detect potential fraud, including suspicious activity and identifying point-of-sale terminals where skimming or criminal transactions may be taking place. ODJFS shares that information with the Ohio Investigative Unit, local law enforcement and FNS.

EBT cardholders can reduce their risk by following these tips on avoiding skimmer devices:

- Do not use card reader if you notice anything unusual.
- Pull at the edges of the keypad before swiping your EBT card to ensure there is nothing over the reader.
- Notify store staff if you notice anything suspicious with the card reader.

Currently, individuals who have had their SNAP benefits stolen electronically can seek reimbursement by contacting their [local County Department of Job and Family Services](#).

From October 1, 2022, through December 1, 2024, ODJFS issued \$12.6 million in reimbursements to 25,400 Ohioans.

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*The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services manages vital programs that strengthen Ohio families. These include job training and employment services, unemployment insurance, cash and food assistance, adult protective services, and child support services.*

