

There Is A Lot At Stake !

Learn your reporting requirements and REMEMBER TO REPORT CHANGES to your financial worker within TEN DAYS.

If you commit fraud, you may LOSE your benefits, be disqualified from the program, have to pay back benefits, or even be prosecuted criminally and possibly serve jail time.

How To Report Fraud?

Report fraud in writing, in person, or via telephone by contacting Blue Earth County's Fraud Investigator. Please provide the investigator with as much detail as you can and answer any questions that they may have.

Questions?

Please contact your financial worker if you have any questions regarding your public assistance case or the information presented in this pamphlet.

SNAP (FOOD STAMPS) TRAFFICKING IS ILLEGAL !

Trafficking Is Defined As:

- (1) The buying, selling, stealing, or otherwise affecting an exchange of SNAP benefits issued and accessed via Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards, card numbers and personal identification numbers (PINs), or by manual voucher and signature, for cash or consideration other than eligible food, either directly, indirectly, in complicity or collusion with others, or acting alone;
- (2) The exchange of firearms, ammunition, explosives, or controlled substances, as defined in section 802 of title 21, United States Code, for SNAP benefits;
- (3) Purchasing a product with SNAP benefits that has a container requiring a return deposit with the intent of obtaining cash by discarding the product and returning the container for the deposit amount, intentionally discarding the product, and intentionally returning the container for the deposit amount;
- (4) Purchasing a product with SNAP benefits with the intent of obtaining cash or consideration other than eligible food by reselling the product, and subsequently intentionally reselling the product purchased with SNAP benefits in exchange for cash or consideration other than eligible food; or
- (5) Intentionally purchasing products originally purchased with SNAP benefits in exchange for cash or consideration other than eligible food.
- (6) Attempting to buy, sell, steal, or otherwise affect an exchange of SNAP benefits issued and accessed via Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards, card numbers and personal identification numbers (PINs), or by manual voucher and signatures, for cash or consideration other than eligible food, either directly, indirectly, in complicity or collusion with others, or acting alone.

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Blue Earth County Human Services



INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FRAUD



**BLUE EARTH
COUNTY**

About Fraud



The State of Minnesota's Public Assistance Benefit Programs are protected through the detection and prevention of Fraud.

Blue Earth County is committed to increasing public confidence in the administration of public assistance programs.

Blue Earth County's goal is to discourage fraud through public education, investigation and criminal prosecution of those individuals who intentionally commit Fraud.

What is Fraud?

Fraud is *intentionally* making false statements, misrepresenting facts, or situations to get benefits a person is not eligible to receive.

Public Assistance Recipients are committing fraud if they: (Examples)

- * *Falsely report that a parent is absent from the household*
- * *Intentionally fail to report a change in household composition, income or resources that would affect eligibility requirements*
- * *Intentionally receive benefits for children not in the household*

- * *Intentionally receive benefits from two or more states at the same time*
- * *Alter or forge paperwork, speak or write false or misleading statements*
- * *Fail to report ANY change in circumstances that would affect their eligibility for benefits*
- * *Use another persons EBT Card without being authorized to do so*
- * *Sell or trade your EBT Benefits*
- * *Buy or Attempt to Buy tobacco products or alcohol with your EBT Card.*

Fraud Investigations

The Blue Earth County Sheriff's Office is responsible for the investigation of suspected fraudulent activity and has assigned a Fraud Investigator to Blue Earth County Human Services.

The Fraud Investigator receives allegations of welfare fraud either from the financial workers who regularly work with the recipients of public assistance or from the general public. ALL clearly defined allegations of fraud are investigated.

If the investigation finds that a recipient has violated program rules/regulations the case is either referred to an administrative disqualification process or to the Blue Earth County Attorney's Office for criminal prosecution.



Penalties & Consequences

For those who have committed public assistance fraud, the consequences are as follows:

DWP / MFIP / WB / SNAP / CCAP / GA / MSA

⇒ 1st Violation = 1 Year Disqualification

⇒ 2nd Violation = 2 Year Disqualification

⇒ 3rd Violation = Permanent Disqualification

DWP / MFIP / WB / SNAP

⇒ Duplicate Assistance = 10 Year Disqualification

If a person receives benefits from more than one state at the same time, they will be disqualified from benefits in Minnesota for 10 years.

Restitution

Fraud offenders will be required to pay back all money that they fraudulently received.

Criminal Prosecution

If the case is referred to the County Attorney's Office for criminal prosecution, there are a number of criminal charges that could be filed, these include:

- ◇ Wrongfully Obtaining Assistance; Theft
- ◇ Declaration & Penalty; Perjury
- ◇ Forgery
- ◇ Financial Transaction Card Fraud
- ◇ Conspiracy
- ◇ Medical Assistance Fraud

These crimes can be Felony Level Offenses with severe fines and jail terms.