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Department of Human Services Continues Efforts to Combat SNAP Fraud

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS - The Virgin Islands Department of Human Services (**VIDHS**), Division of Family Assistance (**DFA**), is taking action to prevent and minimize fraud within the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (**SNAP**). VIDHS is reminding SNAP clients and vendors of the importance of adhering to federal guidelines to maintain the program's integrity.

According to SNAP Regulation 278.2:

“SNAP benefits may only be accepted by an authorized food store from eligible households or their authorized representative, and only in exchange for eligible food items.”

SNAP clients are issued one Electronic Benefits Transfer (**EBT**) card per household. Therefore, only the authorized household member or their designated representative should use this card for food purchases. Vendors are also required to follow this regulation and must not accept SNAP benefits from anyone other than the eligible household member or their authorized representative. **Violating this rule is an intentional program violation**, which could result in the vendor losing their **SNAP EBT Retailer License**.

SNAP fraud poses significant challenges to the integrity of the program. It not only diverts critical resources away from those in need but also greatly increases program costs. By misusing SNAP benefits, whether through unauthorized purchases or trading benefits for cash, individuals and vendors undermine the program's mission to reduce hunger and support low-income households.

Combatting fraud is essential to ensure that benefits are available for those who rely on the program to meet their basic nutritional needs. VIDHS reminds vendors to be on the lookout for customers who attempt to make purchases using more than one EBT card. Vendors are expected to adhere to the regulations and report any suspicious activity.

Any suspicious activity should be reported to the Department of Human Services DFA Fraud Unit. Reports can be made via phone to the St. Thomas office at **(340)-774-0930 ext. 4167** or **4321**, and the St. Croix office at **(340)-772-7100 ext. 7004**.

Additionally, you can report suspicious activity to the VIDHS Fraud Hotline at **(340)-715-6973** or visit the DHS website at www.dhs.gov.vi for more information.

For more information on DHS, DFA and its services, please visit the Department's website at www.dhs.gov.vi or on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/usvidhs>).

The Virgin Islands Department of Human Services (VIDHS) exists to provide social services to members in our community with diverse needs. In times of national uncertainty and hardship we act as a safety-net and exist to inspire hope and empower change through non-judgmental, quality delivery of needed services and resources.

The Bryan-Roach Administration is investing in the Territory's people, infrastructure, and future through transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in the government, and ensuring that recovery projects are completed as quickly as possible. Visit transparency.vi.gov.

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