

Accessing DSS Public Benefits During COVID-19 (information current as of 9/1/20)

Local Department of Social Services (DSS) offices are reopening to the public on an appointment-only basis. To request an appointment or contact DSS for any reason, you can call the DHS Customer Service Center at 1-800-332-6347. To request an appointment in Baltimore City, you can call 443-423-6400.

ACTIVE CASES:

- **Changes:** To report a change in income, address, family member, or to get an update on your case, you can call the phone numbers listed above or report the change online at <https://mydhrbenefits.dhr.state.md.us>
- **Redeterminations:** As of July 1, 2020, DSS will resume redeterminations for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), TCA (Temporary Cash Assistance), and TDAP (Temporary Disability Assistance Program). Redets will be by phone or mail. You do not need to go in person to complete a redetermination. If you want to go in person, you can call DSS to request an appointment. DSS granted 6-month extensions for redets in April, May, and June.
- **Work activity:** If you receive TCA, DSS may be contacting you between now and October to conduct an assessment to see if you should continue to be excused from work activity (called “good cause”) or if you would like the option of participating in virtual learning or remote work.

New Applications:

- You can apply for benefits online at <https://mydhrbenefits.dhr.state.md.us> There are no required in person meetings. After you apply, DSS will call you for a telephone interview.
- If you received a sanction in the past, you can still file a new application and the sanction will not prevent you from being approved.
- If DSS needs documentation from you, DSS must explain exactly what it needs and must give you an opportunity to obtain it. DSS can assist you in obtaining any documentation if you request help.

Appeals:

- If you are terminated, sanctioned or denied benefits or have difficulty accessing benefits, you have the right to file an appeal by calling 1-800-332-6347. You may also reapply for benefits at the same time as filing an appeal. Please contact the Homeless Persons Representation Project (HPRP) at 410-364-4198 to request free legal information or legal representation.
- Have a SNAP question? Call HPRP’s SNAP Free Legal Help Hotline at 800-613-2518.

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