

Part 5 Applications and Proofs

71 Where do you apply for EAEDC?

Apply for EAEDC at your local DTA office. Everyone has the right to apply without delay, whether or not you appear to be eligible. 106 C.M.R. § 702.115(A). If you are sick or disabled and cannot go to the office, ask the DTA office for a home visit. 106 C.M.R. § 701.600(Y).

Be sure to sign an application the first time you go into the welfare office. You can do this even if there is no worker there to interview you and complete the application. 106 C.M.R. § 702.115(B). The date you sign is the earliest date your benefits will begin. You cannot be turned away even if you do not speak English. DTA must provide you with an interpreter. 106 C.M.R. § 701.360.

72 What should you bring with you?

A DTA intake worker will interview you and is supposed to help you with your application. You have to bring in proof of your eligibility. Your worker will give you a list of proofs or "verifications" that you should bring. 106 C.M.R. § 702.310(B).

If you do not have everything, bring what you have. In many cases, you can sign a sworn statement to prove something. You can also sign a form letting your worker contact someone else to get the proof. 106 C.M.R. § 702.340.

The following chart lists some of the items you might be asked to bring.

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If you are seeking benefits in this category:	You may be asked for these proofs:
Disabled - 60 days or more (106 C.M.R. § 320.200)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Medical report filled out by physician ■ Disability Supplement ■ Proof of an application for SSI
Mass. Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) participants (106 C.M.R. § 320.250)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ MRC medical or psychiatric reports, statement from a MRC counselor regarding your disability and MRC program activity
Caring for the disabled (106 C.M.R. §§ 320.300)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Statement from physician regarding the disabled person's disability and need for constant care to avoid being institutionalized ■ Proof of income and assets of disabled person
High school or voc/tech students until age 21 (106 C.M.R. § 320.450)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Signed statement from school authority showing "full-time" status and "regular attendance"
Elderly - age 65 or older (106 C.M.R. § 320.100)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Proof of age ■ Proof of application for SSI
Parental Families (106 C.M.R. § 320.400(A))	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TAFDC ineligibility (DTA determines) ■ DET work registration of parents (unless good cause for non- registration) ■ Proof of age and relationship to parents
Caretaker Families (106 C.M.R. § 320.400(B))	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TAFDC ineligibility (DTA determines) ■ DET work registration if caretaker chooses to be included (or unless "good cause" for non-registration) ■ Proof of legal custody or guardianship of child (after 6 months) or proof of "good cause." See Question 29.

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These are other documents you might be asked to bring:

- proof of where you live, or that you are a Massachusetts resident, 106 C.M.R. § 320.530;
- proof of who you are (for example, driver's license, voter registration, birth certificate), or, if not available, a statement from a knowledgeable third part, 106 C.M.R. § 320.510;
- social security numbers for everyone in your family or proof that you have applied for them (unless exempt due to non-citizen status), 106 C.M.R. § 320.700;
- proof of age (for example, birth certificates, school records, statement from someone who knows you and them), 106 C.M.R. § 320.500;
- proof of your immigration status if you are not a U.S. citizen, 106 C.M.R. § 320.620;
- proof of any income (pay stubs, government checks, etc.), 106 C.M.R. § 321.210;
- proof of any assets (money in the bank, cars, etc.), 106 C.M.R. § 321.120;
- proof that you aren't eligible for Veterans' Services benefits or unemployment compensation (available from the Division of Employment Security), 106 C.M.R. § 702.720(B); **or**
- proof that you have housing expenses (to determine living arrangement and qualify for the rent allowance and to avoid the in-kind deduction); this can be a lease, rent receipt, mortgage, or statement from a landlord, 106 C.M.R. § 321.410(B).

Advocacy Reminder:

- ✓ There are many other proofs that DTA can ask for in a particular case. Do the best you can to get them, but if you can't get them, ask for help from the worker and ask if you can verify by signing a statement. If you need more time, you can get an extension. If you have trouble, talk to an advocate.

73 How much time do you have to bring in proofs?

As a rule, you have 22 days to bring in the proofs or verifications so that you receive your first payment within 30 days. 106 C.M.R. § 702.160(A). However, if you need more time to get all the proofs in, you can get extensions. You automatically get an 8-day extension if all the proofs are not in by the 22nd day. Your worker is supposed to send you a reminder letter telling you what proofs are missing and how much time you have to bring them in. If you need more time beyond this, you can get a 15-day extension if you ask for an extension in writing.

If you are denied EAEDC because you could not get the proofs in within these time limits, you can still bring in the proofs within 30 days of the date you were denied. If the welfare office determines that the proofs you brought show you are eligible, they are supposed to reopen your case back to the date you first applied. You do not need to file a new application. 106 C.M.R. § 702.160(B).

74 How long does it take to decide whether you are eligible?

DTA must decide on your application within 30 days and send you an EBT payment or deny your application. 106 C.M.R. § 702.160(A). The 30-day time limit can be extended if you ask for more time to get proof of eligibility. If you get a notice from DTA saying you did not bring enough proof, you have 30 days from the date of the notice to bring in proof and get retroactive benefits.

75 What if you need benefits right away?

You can get help with **immediate needs** within 24 hours of your application. 106 C.M.R. § 702.130(F).

- **Rent, utilities or fuel.** If you need help right away with rent, utilities or fuel and you **appear to be eligible**, you can get an

advance on your EAEDC benefits to pay for these things. The advance will be paid as a voucher to the landlord, utility or fuel company and the amount deducted out of your first EBT payment.

- **Food.** You may qualify for emergency or "expedited" EBT food stamps. Ask your worker about this. If, for some reason, you are not eligible for food stamps, DTA may issue you a food voucher, which would be deducted from your first EBT payment.
- **MassHealth.** You are eligible for a temporary MassHealth Basic card when you apply for EAEDC. Even if you are ultimately denied EAEDC, you may still be eligible for MassHealth Basic as a "long-term unemployed" individual. See **Question 64**.

76 What is Front End Detection?

If the DTA worker thinks you are lying about something in your application, the worker can refer your case to the Bureau of Special Investigations (BSI). BSI sends out investigators who question your neighbors and people who live with you. This is called "Front End Detection." There is no DTA regulation authorizing this policy; however, you should be given an opportunity to clear up any inconsistencies in your application. If the worker still thinks you are lying, DTA may deny your application. Contact an advocate immediately. See **Part 7, Appeal Rights**.

