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JEFFERSON CO. DSS FINANCIAL PROGRAMS



“Jefferson Co. DSS empowers individuals and families to be safe, healthy, and financially secure through compassionate, efficient delivery of services.”

The Goals of our Financial Programs are:

- To enhance the economic security of low-income working families
- To assist work-capable public assistance recipients in achieving entry into the workforce
- To assist individuals with priority needs other than work-readiness in accessing appropriate benefits and services
- To enhance child well-being and reduce child poverty



myBenefits.ny.gov:
 Allows any New Yorker to go online and find out if he or she may qualify for work support benefits and other programs designed to help low-income working families and individuals make ends meet.
 New Yorkers can do a simple, 10-minute prescreening from any computer with Internet access at any time, to determine whether they are likely to qualify for Food Stamps, the Earned Income Tax Credit, child dependent care credits, and school lunch programs.

• **Burials**

Assistance may be available for indigent burials.
 Please call 315-785-3008 for more information.

Child Care Resource Personnel from CAPC (Community Action Planning Council) - A worker is on site at the Department of Social Services and assists with billing for Daycare Assistance and also assists individuals who are in need of a daycare provider. Call 315-785-3317 for assistance.

- Their duties include:**
- Supplying a list of various Daycare providers and telephone numbers
 - Reviewing legally Exempt Daycare applications
 - Providing technical assistance to legally exempt daycare providers

Important Links:

- Americans with Disabilities Act: **Americans with Disabilities Act**
- Domestic Violence Information**
 Victims Assistance Center of Jefferson Co.
- Office: (315) 782-1823**
24hr Hotline: (315) 782-1855
Toll Free: (866) 782-1855
www.vacjc.com
- North Country Prenatal Perinatal Council**-Directory of Available Services in Jeff. Co.
http://directory.ncppc.org/
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)**
 For more information regarding OMRDD Services and for a “Guide to Understanding Supports and Services,” visit **www.parenttoparentnys.org**

Jefferson Co. DSS Financial Programs



BOOKLETS AND FORMS

Below is a list of three booklets with a summary of their contents. They are available on the Internet at <http://www.otda.ny.gov/programs/applications/> under "Application Booklets".

They are offered in several languages, and **you may either read them online or print them out.**

(1) What You Should Know About Your Rights and Responsibilities (LDSS-4148A)

This booklet tells you about **your rights and responsibilities** when applying for and receiving benefits.

(2) What You Should Know About Social Services Programs (LDSS-4148B)

This booklet gives information about different programs – such as **Temporary Assistance and Food Stamps, as well as Medical Assistance.**

It also provides information on other services including **child care, foster care, child welfare, adoptions and other programs.**

(3) What You Should Know If You Have an Emergency (LDSS-4148C)

This booklet tells you what to do in case of an emergency – such as a need for food, help with housing expenses and/or a need for medical attention.

Miscellaneous Forms

Landlord Information

Request for Voluntary Restricted Payments Shelter Verification

Form W-9, Inst W-9

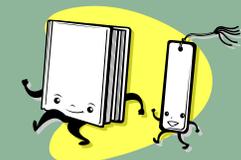
Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification

SNAP Application Forms

SNAP Benefits Application/Recertification (LDSS-4826)

How To Complete The SNAP Benefits Application/Recertification (LDSS-4826A)

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Authorized Representative Request Form (LDSS-4942)



Please note: Books 1, 2 and 3 are included with all applications and are available on-line.

These books tell you in many ways how your local Department of Social Services may be able to help if you or your family is in need.

Please remember that these programs or services have Federal or State rules that must be followed.

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JEFFERSON CO. DSS FINANCIAL PROGRAMS

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT



The child support program provides custodial parents with assistance in obtaining financial support and medical insurance coverage for their children by locating parents, establishing paternity, establishing support orders, and collecting and distributing child support payments.

Location Investigation

If the custodial parent does not know where the noncustodial parent or putative (alleged) father lives, child support will attempt to locate the parent by checking the last known address and place of employment and through other local efforts.

Paternity Establishment

For a child born to unmarried parents, there is no legal relationship between the father and the child. This legal relationship can be established either by completing a voluntary Acknowledgment of Paternity form or by filing a paternity petition in court.

Child support staff can assist unmarried parents to complete and file a voluntary Acknowledge of Paternity form. If paternity is not already legally established and there is a question about the identity, child support staff can assist either parent to file a paternity petition for the court to determine the identity of the father. This determination will be made using genetic marker or DNA tests.

Financial Investigation

To determine a noncustodial parent's ability to pay child support, child support staff will investigate the noncustodial parent's income and assets. This investigation is completed through inquiries to employers and banks.

Support Establishment

Local child support staff will assist custodial parents to file a petition in Family Court to obtain a child support order. Information about the noncustodial parent's ability to pay is presented to the court to use to calculate the support amount.

Support Collection

The child support order will require the noncustodial parent to send all child support payments to the NYS child Support Processing Center. The local SCU will keep track of how much child support is due and how often it is due.

DNA testing: www.dnacenter.com

NYS Unified Court System: <http://www.courts.state.ny.us/>



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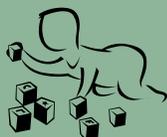
Child Support Enforcement Links:

New York Child Support Online: <https://newyorkchildsupport.com/>

The Federal Child Support Site: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/>

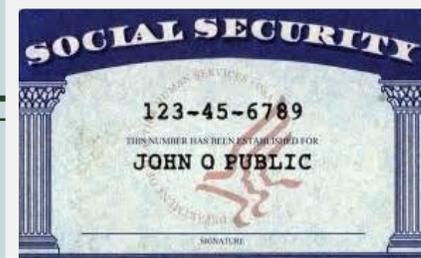
Other State Links to child support: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/extinf.html>

Family Court's Support Modification Petition Program: <http://www.nycourts.gov/courthelp/diy/supportmodification.html>



JEFFERSON CO. DSS FINANCIAL PROGRAMS

EXPANDED SOCIAL SECURITY ONLINE SERVICES



The Social Security Administration (SSA) has recently announced the expansion of its online services. Individuals aged 18 and older can now establish a mySocial Security account to access information about their benefits, earnings, and estimates for retirement. The portal contains links to information about other SSA online services such as applications for retirement, disability and Medicare. Additional services are also available to Social Security recipients.

One service provided through the mySocial Security account portal is access to benefit verification letters for recipients of Social Security and Supplemental Security Income. Recipients can now print copies of their benefit verification letters from the site.

Copies of benefit verification letters printed from this site are acceptable documentation in the same manner as verification letters received directly from SSA.

In order to establish an account, the individual must have a valid e-mail address, have a social security number, have a U.S mailing address, and be able to provide some personal information. As part of the verification of identity, SSA may perform a "soft inquiry" on the individual's Experian credit report to obtain information and create unique identify verification question sets. This inquiry is performed only when the account is established and is not reported to lenders.

Once the verification process is completed, the user can create the account with a unique user name and password.

mySocial Security account may only be used to access records for the individual's own account and purposes and may not be used to access the records of another person for any reason. This prohibition applies to representative payees.

Important Links:

[How To Create An Online Account](#)

[Important Information: Changes In Certain Services Beginning](#)

[February 2014](#)

[Getting A Replacement Social Security Card](#)

[The Fastest Way To Verify Social Security And Supplemental Security Income Benefits](#)

[U.S. Citizen/Adult – Replacement Social Security Card](#)

[U.S. Citizen/Child – Replacement Social Security Card](#)

[Non-U.S. Citizen/Adult – Replacement Social Security Card](#)

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Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income Programs

The Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income programs provide assistance to people with disabilities.

While these two programs are different in many ways, only individuals who have a disability and meet medical criteria may qualify for benefits under either program.

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HEAP - HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



HEAP is a federally funded program that assists low-income New Yorkers with the cost of heating their homes. HEAP also offers an emergency benefit for households in a heat or heat related energy emergency.

Regular HEAP

The 2015-2016 HEAP season has ended.

New York residents with medical conditions aggravated by heat will soon be able to apply for a state-funded air conditioner. Beginning May 2, New Yorkers can apply to Jefferson Co. Department of Social Services for the HEAP cooling assistance funding. The program provides up to \$800 for the purchase and installation of an air conditioner to households that meet income eligibility and have a person with a documented medical condition made worse by heat.

Your household may be eligible if you and your household members are U.S. citizens or qualified aliens, the household includes an individual with a documented medical condition that is exacerbated by heat, and:

- Your household's gross monthly income meets income guidelines. For example, a household of four must have a maximum gross monthly income of \$4,316.
- Or the household receives Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, temporary assistance, Code A Supplemental Security income, or a regular HEAP benefit greater than \$21 in the current heating season.

Applicants must provide documentation of a medical condition signed by a physician, physician's assistant or a nurse practitioner, and it must be dated within the previous 12 months.

Cooling assistance will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Local departments of social services will accept applications through August 31, or until funding runs out, whichever comes first.

Information on where to apply in each county can be found here: <http://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/HEAP-contacts.pdf>.

MORE INFORMATION

More information on the HEAP program may be found on the OTDA website at www.otda.ny.gov/programs/heap

Additional Information can be found at:
<http://getenergysmart.org/lowincome/empower.aspx>

Need Help To Pay Your National Grid Bill?

Below are some links to possible solutions from National Grid:

Billing and payment options

MORE INFORMATION

More information on the HEAP program may be found on the OTDA website at www.otda.ny.gov/programs/heap

Additional Information can be found at:

<http://getenergysmart.org/lowincome/empower.aspx>

Jefferson Co. DSS Financial Programs

HEAP - HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM CONTINUED



Printable Application

When the HEAP application acceptance period is open, the [HEAP application](#) is available to download and print. Follow these instructions to download, print and submit an application:

- ◆ Open and print the [HEAP Application](#) with included instructions
- ◆ Read the instructions
- ◆ Complete the fields using blue or black ink
- ◆ Sign your name on page 5
- ◆ Submit to the [HEAP certifier](#) in your county

HEAP Certifiers for Jefferson County:

Jefferson County Department of Social Services
250 Arsenal Street
Watertown, NY 13601
(315) 785-3000

County Office for the Aging
(those 60 years of age and older can apply here)
(315) 785-3191

After Hours Emergency Contact:
JCDSS Housing Program
(315) 786-6721



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Jefferson Co. DSS Financial Programs

I N V E S T I G A T I O N S



Duties of Unit: Investigating and Determining Welfare Fraud/Verify information

The Jefferson County Investigations Job Duties Include:

- Investigating referrals received with alleged Welfare Fraud
- Verifying current case situations which meet the FEDS criteria
- Contacting other Social Services Agencies in and out of New York State to ensure duplication of benefits does not occur
- Contacting local law enforcement to verify if client has any warrant for his/her arrest
- Conducting case reviews and collecting evidence
- Referring cases for criminal action to the District Attorney's Office
- Speaking with clients to verify/clarify their current situation

Liaison from the District Attorney's Office. This liaison is a Police Officer.

Their duties include:

- Accompanying the Investigator with home visits and interviews
- Assisting in the decision making if criminal charges are pursued
- Contacting law enforcement to verify if a client has any warrant for his/her arrest



To Report Suspected Fraud in a Social Services Program
 Call 315-785-3353
 or go to www.otda.ny.gov/resources/welfare-fraud/ to complete the Report Welfare Fraud Online Form.

JEFFERSON CO. DSS FINANCIAL PROGRAMS

MEDICAID MANAGED CARE



What is Managed Care?

Managed Care is a comprehensive health care program which integrates the services of doctors, hospitals and health care specialists into a health plan network whose goal is to manage the health care of its enrollees.

Under managed care, Medicaid beneficiaries are entitled to the same benefits as fee-for-service Medicaid, but receive them through their managed care plan.

Jefferson has two health plans available to Medicaid beneficiaries - **UNITED HEALTH CARE** and **EXCELLUS**.

Who can join a health plan?

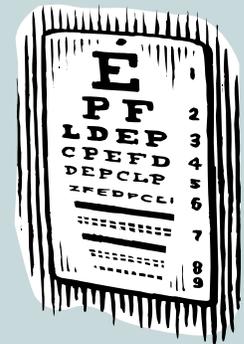
- **Temporary Assistance** recipients
- **Safety Net** recipients
- **Medicaid** recipients without a spend down
- **SSI** recipients

Who are mandated (required) to join a health plan?

- **Temporary Assistance** recipients
- **Safety Net** recipients
- **Medicaid** recipients without a spend-down
- **SSI** recipients

Will Medicaid benefits change?

No. But the client will need to use their Medicaid card for certain services that are not included in the plan's benefit package. Jefferson County uses the services of an enrollment broker, who is responsible for informing the consumer about their health plan option, educating them about their rights and responsibilities and assisting them to enroll in a health plan.



Related Links:

[New York Department of Health Managed Care](#)

How does one enroll in a health plan?

- Once a plan is chosen, an enrollment form must be completed.

Where can enrollment forms be obtained?

- Call New York Medicaid Choice to request an enrollment packet (1-800-505-5678)
- Call the Jefferson County Department of Social Services at (315) 779-5916 or (315) 779-5915 to request an enrollment packet.

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M E D I C A I D

Click here to read about: [Important Changes in the Medicaid Program!](#)



What is Medicaid?

Medicaid is a program for New Yorkers who can't afford to pay for medical care.

Medicaid provides access to recipients to participating providers for a wide range of medical services.

The income and resources of applicants are compared to varying standards, dependent upon household circumstances, age of applicants and medical condition.

How do I know if I qualify for Medicaid?

You may be covered by Medicaid if:

- You have high medical bills.
- You receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
- You meet certain financial requirements.



You can request an application for Medicaid by contacting a [Navigator](#).

A Navigator is a community agency trained to assist with Medicaid applications.

Individuals who are over the age of 65, certified blind or disabled, not certified disabled but chronically ill, or in need of Medicaid coverage of nursing facility services, should go to Jefferson Co. DSS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information regarding Medicaid, frequently asked questions, Medicaid updates, local departments of Social Services, statistics, and a host of related links, please visit the [New York State Department of Health website](#).

There are programs through the State of New York to help people who are not eligible for the Medical Assistance Programs: [Healthy New York](#)



You and your family have many new low cost, quality health insurance options available through the Individual Marketplace.

You can quickly compare health plan options and apply for assistance that could lower the cost of your health coverage.

Go to:

www.nystateofhealth.ny.gov or call 1-855-355-5777



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Transportation to Medical Appointments for Medicaid Recipients

Jefferson Co. MA Transportation

1-866-558-0757

Fax: 315-299-2786

Website:

www.medanswering.com

JEFFERSON CO. DSS FINANCIAL PROGRAMS



SNAP-SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM - FORMERLY KNOWN AS FOOD STAMPS

The **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** issues monthly electronic benefits that can be used like cash to purchase food at authorized retail food stores.

Visit myBenefits.ny.gov and click "Am I eligible?" to check your eligibility for SNAP benefits and other human services program benefits.

SNAP Eligibility

Eligibility and benefit levels are based on household size, income and other factors.

"Income" means your household's total gross monthly income before taxes and withholdings are subtracted. Benefits from other assistance programs such as Unemployment Insurance Benefits, public assistance payments, Social Security or SSI benefits count as income.

Certain household expenses, such as monthly Child Support payments paid by a member of your household for a child who does not live with you, can be deducted from your household's gross income.

A SNAP budget must be calculated for your household in order to determine eligibility and benefit amount. The only way to determine if your household is eligible for SNAP benefits is to apply.

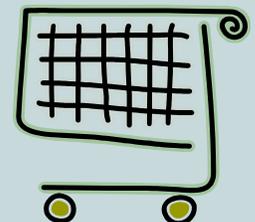
In New York State, SNAP now allows you to have more money in a checking or savings account, or even a retirement account or college savings account, without affecting your eligibility for SNAP benefits.

Most households applying for SNAP benefits no longer have to pass a savings/resource test in order to get SNAP benefits. This means that the household's assets (stocks, savings and retirement accounts, etc.) are not considered when determining eligibility.

Please note that if you apply for SNAP benefits, you may still be asked to provide information regarding such resources.

[Go to OTDA for an application](#)

<http://www.otda.ny.gov/programs/applications/>



"Am I Eligible?"

Click below to see the OTDA income levels [SNAP Benefits Eligibility Criteria](#)

[Lifeline Assistance](#)

is a program created by the federal government to help provide discounted or free telephone service to income-eligible consumers.

Click here [Affordable Wireless Services](#)

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JEFFERSON CO. DSS FINANCIAL PROGRAMS

SUMMER FOOD SERVICE



The Summer Food Service Program, SFSP, was created to reduce the likelihood of nutritional risk for low income children during the months when schools are closed for summer recess by providing free meals at participating summer meal sites such as schools, parks, pools, recreation centers, camps, housing authorities and other neighborhood locations.

Free meals, that meet Federal nutrition guidelines, are provided to all children 18 years old and under at approved SFSP sites in areas with significant concentrations of low-income children.

The Summer Food Service Program is coordinated in Jefferson County by the Community Action Planning Council (CAPC).

Children under the age of 18 and disabled persons under the age of 21 are encouraged to use the program. Breakfasts, lunches and/or snacks are available at a variety of locations throughout Jefferson County, including three sites on Fort Drum.

For information on locations, call CAPC at **(315) 782-4900**

Call 1-866-3-HUNGRY or 1-877-8-HAMBRE (for Spanish speakers) and a live operator will tell you where the closest sites serving free, nutritious summer meals are located . Or visit www.whyhunger.org/findfood to locate sites using an online map.

New York State Growing Up Healthy Hotline: 1-800-522-5006.

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TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE

Having a hard time making ends meet?

Temporary Assistance (TA) is temporary help for needy men, women and children. If you are unable to work, can't find a job, or your job does not pay enough, TA may be able to help you pay for your expenses.

Temporary Assistance is a financial assistance program that offers temporary help to individuals and families on a short-termed basis until the household is able to achieve self-sufficiency.

The programs are Family Assistance for families with minor children and Safety Net Assistance for individuals, childless couples, and households who have met their 60-month time limit.

- Family Assistance (FA) provides cash assistance to eligible families in need that have minor children living with a parent or caretaker. It operates under the TANF guidelines with time limits of five years.
- Safety Net Assistance (SN) provides cash assistance to individuals, couples, and families not eligible for FA due to time limits. Cash benefits are limited to two-year time limits. After two years, non-cash assistance vouchers are issued.
- Emergency Assistance to Families (EAF) and Emergency Safety Net Assistance (ESNA) provide assistance to families with crisis situations that are threatening the family such as: evictions, utility shut-offs, and diversion payments to prevent the household from applying for ongoing assistance.

To find out if you are eligible to receive Temporary Assistance, including help with an emergency, you need to file an application with our agency.

You must fill out the **application form** and file it at the Jefferson Co. Department of Social Services.



Check your eligibility for economic supports at:

myBenefits.ny.gov

<http://www.otda.ny.gov/programs/applications/>

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Lost your job? Looking for work?

Click Here:

[New York State
Department of Labor](#)

Some examples of an emergency are:

- You are homeless.
- You have little or no food.
- Your landlord has given you a written eviction.
- You do not have fuel for heating during cold weather.
- Your utilities are shut-off or are about to be shut-off, or you have a 72-hour disconnect notice.
- You or someone in your family has been beaten, abused or threatened with violence by a husband, wife, partner or other member of the household.

JEFFERSON CO. DSS FINANCIAL PROGRAMS

VITA - VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE



VITA is a free, IRS-sponsored program to help low and middle-income workers have their federal and State personal income taxes prepared and filed electronically at no cost. VITA also ensures that workers receive all the tax credits to which they are entitled.

Many people eligible for the **Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)** or **Child Tax Credit (CTC)** don't feel comfortable filling out tax forms themselves. However, commercial tax preparers charge significant fees to prepare a return and offer services that can otherwise be provided at no cost at a VITA site. People eligible for EITC and CTC have a no-cost option — they can have their returns prepared and filed at a VITA site.

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

The Federal, New York State and New York City Earned Income Tax Credits (EITCs) are refundable tax benefits for working people with low or moderate incomes. They have several important purposes: to reduce the tax burden on these workers, to supplement wages, and to provide a genuine incentive for working.

Workers who qualify for the EITCs and file Federal and State tax returns can get back some or all of the income tax that was withheld during the year. They may also get extra cash back from the IRS, New York State and New York City if their EITCs are higher than the taxes they owe.

For more information on EITC or the Federal Child Tax Credit go to:

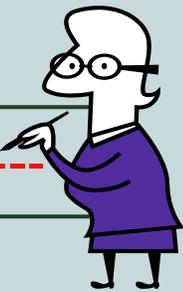
www.irs.gov/eitc



VITA ended on April 18, 2016.



Jefferson Co. DSS Financial Services Programs



WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU APPLY

HOW TO APPLY

When applying for assistance, you will be assessed to determine the reason for your visit and the correct program for which you need to apply. You will then be given an application, **LDSS-2921 Statewide Application**, for completion and scheduled an appointment to apply. If you have an emergency, the interview may be the same day as the assessment.

WHAT TO EXPECT

When you arrive for your appointment, you will be seen by an examiner. The examiner will review your application to ensure it is complete. The interview may take up to an hour.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

You will be required to provide supporting documentation. This documentation may include the following:

- Proof of Identification - birth certificate, driver's license, Social Security card
- Proof of residency – landlord statement, lease, rent receipt
- Proof of household expenses – utility bills, rent or mortgage
- Proof of all household income and resources – wage verification, bank statements, vehicles

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY-TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE

- During the interview you will be asked to complete a voluntary "Domestic Violence Screening Form." This format provides the options to seek additional assistance if you are experiencing any form of domestic violence.
- During the initial interview, all individuals between the ages of 18 and 60 will need to meet the requirements regarding the automated finger imaging system, unless they meet the exemptions of the program they are applying for.

If you do qualify, your benefits will be issued electronically through your Benefit Card at a participating grocery store.

Click here to link to [EBT page](#).



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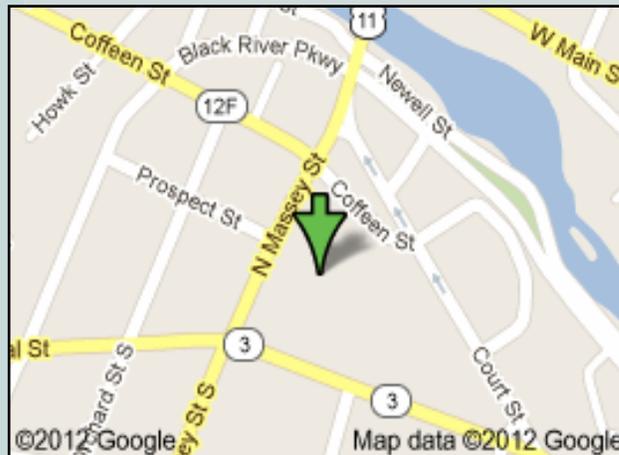
Electronic Benefit Transfer-EBT
 EBT is the method by which the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) delivers cash and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to New York State's recipient population. Cash and SNAP benefits are deposited into electronic benefit accounts which can be accessed using a Common Benefit Identification Card (CBIC) and Personal Identification Number (PIN).

JEFFERSON CO. DSS FINANCIAL PROGRAMS

CONTACT US



Our parking Lot is located behind our office building on N. Massey St.



JEFFERSON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

250 Arsenal St
Watertown NY 13601
Phone: 315-785-3000

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Office Hours
Monday - Friday
9:00 a.m. - 5:00
p.m.
(8:30 a.m.-4:00
p.m. in July and
August)

