

# PHOTOS ON EBT CARDS YOUR RIGHTS

As of July 1, 2014, the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) started putting photos on some EBT cards statewide. This means that if you get Food Supplement (Food Stamps) benefits you may be asked to come into a local DHHS office for review or recertification. You may then be asked to have your picture taken.

## You do not have to have your picture taken.

- You will not lose your Food Supplement benefits if you refuse to have your picture taken.
- If you do not want your picture taken, you can say "no."

## DHHS will not ask you to have your picture taken if you are in a household headed by:

- A person over age 60
- A person with a disability
- A victim of domestic violence

## You have the right to a "hardship" waiver if you cannot come in to the office for your review.

Federal law says that DHHS must tell you that you have the right to a telephone interview if you cannot travel to a local office because you have a "hardship." Hardships include:

- Illness
- Transportation difficulties
- The need to care for a household member
- You live in a rural area and that makes it hard (or expensive) to get to a local office
- Your work or education or training schedule prevents you from getting to an office while the office is open

## Who can use your card.

- Any household member (or other "authorized representative") can continue to use your family's EBT card if they have the correct PIN number.
- You can put photos of up to two household members on your EBT card.
- Even if a household member's photo is not on the card, that member can still use the card.
- You can also authorize a non-household member to use your card as long as you fill out a form at DHHS making that person an "authorized representative" and give them your PIN number.
- When you go to the store to buy food, the store must allow you or your representative to use your card, even if the picture on the card does not match you or your representative.

## What will happen when you try to use your card.

You must be treated the same as any other customer at the store. This means that a store cannot ask to look at your card unless they also ask to look at every other customer's credit, debit or EBT card.

## If you have ANY of the following problems:

- You were not told that you could request a "hardship" waiver
- You asked for a "hardship" waiver but were refused
- You lost your Food Supplement benefits, or were told that you would lose them because you do not want a photo on your EBT card
- You had any trouble using your EBT card because the grocer did not think you had the right to use that card

**Please contact Preble Street Maine Hunger Initiative at 207-775-0026 or [MHI@preblestreet.org](mailto:MHI@preblestreet.org).**

