



To: EFTA Members
From: Bob Bucceri, Senior Director, eGPC
Date: April 18, 2012
Subject: April 17th Meeting with HHS on TANF Blocking

Yesterday, Kurt Helwig and I met with officials from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regarding a section of the recent payroll tax holiday law that requires states to block access to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits at liquor stores, casinos and adult entertainment establishments.

DHHS is responsible for developing regulations to enforce the law. As many EFTA members know, a number of states have already passed their own laws restricting various benefits at specified businesses. Typically, states have attempted to block access to funds at ATMs. However, this effort has met with limited success.

Among those meeting with us yesterday were Mark Greenberg, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy at the DHHS Administration for Children and Families (ACF), and Earl Johnson, Director, Office of Family Assistance at DHHS. We used the opportunity to relay the eGovernment Payment Council's (eGPC) concerns about the soon to be developed regulations. These concerns included allowing states the flexibility to craft solutions to comply with the law, refraining from being overly prescriptive on technical solutions, and avoiding regulations that mandate exclusively "systemic" compliance solutions.

EFTA has devoted a great deal of attention to this issue since late 2011. The eGPC conducted a survey of state EBT directors earlier this year and will soon release a white paper on the results of the survey and state experiences with blocking TANF transactions. Last month, EFTA met with the General Accountability Office (GAO) during the eGPC spring meeting in Washington, DC to discuss their study of this issue. The eGPC has also has launched a task force to develop an EBT community wide response. We are currently working with other similarly interested groups like the National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL) and American Public Human Services Association (APHSA).

On April 25 EFTA will host a compliance webinar on the TANF mandate. Mr. Greenberg will be among those presenting at the webinar. To date we have over 100 people signed-up to participate. To register for the event, which is free to EFTA members, visit the [EFTA website](#).