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HEALTHY INCENTIVES PROGRAM REPORT

May 2024



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE HEALTHY INCENTIVES PROGRAM REPORT

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OVERVIEW

Line Item 4400-1004 of the FY24 GAA (Chapter 24 of the Acts of 2023) requires the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) to submit a report containing a description and usage data of the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP).

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE MISSION

DTA's mission is to assist and empower low-income individuals and families to meet their basic needs, improve their quality of life, and achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency. To do this, DTA offers a comprehensive system of programs and supports, including food and nutritional assistance, economic assistance, and employment services and supports. DTA serves one out of every six residents in the Commonwealth including working families, children, older adults, and people with disabilities.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

HIP is an innovative tool in the Commonwealth's efforts to promote food security and economic development. The program incentivizes Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) clients to purchase fresh, local fruits and vegetables at participating agriculture retailers, including farmers' markets, farm stands, mobile markets, and community supported agriculture (CSA) farm share programs. Administered by DTA, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR), HIP has garnered the support of a broad, diverse coalition of statewide community partners, including SNAP clients, the farming community, and public health organizations.

The Healthy Incentives Program credits clients' Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) accounts for purchases made with the EBT card on fruits and vegetables at participating SNAP/HIP retailers, up to a monthly maximum amount. HIP incentives are calculated and instantly applied to the card at the time of purchase. The maximum HIP incentive that can be earned each month is based on household size (Table 1).

TABLE I HIP MAXIMUM MONTHLY INCENTIVES EARNED	
Number of Household Members	HIP Monthly Cap
1 -2 people	\$40
3-5 people	\$60
6+ people	\$80

HIP was originally created through an award from the federal Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grant program, which was implemented in April 2017. The FINI grant was

expected to sustain the program for three years; however, participation in the program was higher than expected and required supplemental state funding to sustain the program. The state's federal FINI grant ended in 2019 and the program has since been funded through the state's annual GAA.

OUTREACH AND PROGRAM EXPANSION

In 2020, the Commonwealth invested additional funds for HIP as recommended by the state's COVID-19 Command Center's Food Security Task Force. Thirty-nine new vendors were added to the program through a Notice of Opportunity (NOO) to help combat food insecurity and equitably expand support for the local food supply system.

In 2022, DTA and MDAR opened a second NOO that facilitated program expansion in a strategic and equitable way, utilizing a data-informed approach. HIP serves as a tool to achieve economic mobility for both SNAP recipients and HIP vendors, and as such DTA took a strategic approach to the NOO evaluation process. This involved a comprehensive quantitative and qualitative review resulting in the selection of 123 new vendors in Fall 2022. The selection process prioritized accessibility and equity, innovative strategies to provide culturally relevant foods to SNAP clients, and support for farmers who live and work in the high-need, priority communities they serve.

In developing the NOO, DTA used internal and external quantitative data sources from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) to identify priority communities and priority populations. Priority communities were defined by relation to or prevalence of Food Deserts, classification as an Environmental Justice community, and/or are a city or town with less HIP access relative to their SNAP population. Priority populations were defined as historically experiencing lower access to HIP locations and/or higher rates of diet-related chronic disease. Priority populations specifically identified as part of the NOO to increase access to were Black SNAP recipients and SNAP recipients with disabilities. DTA also reviewed the qualitative portion of vendor applications for their ability to serve identified priority populations, including demonstrated capacity and commitment to serve SNAP clients in culturally appropriate ways.

During the 2023 calendar year, DTA and MDAR continued the process of onboarding the cohort of vendors selected in Fall 2022. The new vendors onboarded in 2022-2023 represent an expansion of HIP access to 41 towns that previously had no HIP access and to 67 towns that had very low HIP access relative to their SNAP client population. Selected vendors collectively offer HIP access in 25 languages and serve 25 Gateway Cities.

Since 2019, DTA has expanded the department's evaluation capabilities by matching EBT transaction data to geolocated HIP transaction data. This allowed DTA to identify areas with low HIP access and informed the selection of priority communities for vendor selection processes.

In 2023, DTA released new animated videos in multiple languages explaining how HIP works and published these to www.mass.gov/hip.

HIP Utilization Data: Overview

HIP has been continually operating since March 2020, with the highest rates of vendor and client participation during the peak growing months of June to November. DTA publishes [publicly available data](#) every month that include the number of households who participate, high-level demographics of participants, and geographic data on usage by county.

TABLE 2 NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS UTILIZING HIP		
	Dates	Number of Households
All time	April 1, 2017 to December 31, 2023	276,471
Calendar Year 2023	January 1, 2023-December 31, 2023	90,729

TABLE 3 NUMBER OF HIP TRANSACTIONS		
	Dates	Number of Transactions
All time	April 1, 2017 to December 31, 2023	3,144,618
Calendar Year 2023	January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023	793,534

TABLE 4 NUMBER OF HIP VENDORS WHO PROCESSED TRANSACTIONS , BY USDA BUSINESS		
	Dates	Number of Vendors
Calendar Year 2023	January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023	285

TABLE 5 NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS UTILIZING HIP BY SNAP HOUSEHOLD SIZE	
Household Size	Number of Households
1	56,279
2	17,412
3	8,441
4	5,104
5	2,157
6	797
7+	539

TABLE 6

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS UTILIZING HIP BY AGE OF SNAP HEAD OF HOUSEHOLDS	
Age	Number of Households
19 and Under	162
20-29	7,877
30-39	15,027
40-49	12,816
50-59	13,366
60-69	18,073
70-79	14,409
80-89	7,278
90 and Above	1,721

TABLE 7 NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS UTILIZING HIP BY RACE/ETHNICITY OF SNAP HEAD OF HOUSEHOLDS	
Race/Ethnicity	Number of Households
American Indian or Alaska Native	291
Asian	13,115
Black or African American	7,805
More than 1 race	1,781
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	214
White	40,849
Information Unavailable	26,674

TABLE 8 NUMBER OF HIP CLIENTS AND VENDORS BY LOCATION*		
Municipality	Number of Vendors* (USDA registered address)	Number of Clients (residence address)
ABINGTON		98
ACTON		114
ACUSHNET		94
ADAMS	2	231
AGAWAM	1	1841
AMESBURY		165
AMHERST	4	417
ANDOVER		360
ARLINGTON		455
ASHBURNHAM	2	52
ASHBY		44
ASHFIELD		53

ASHLAND		106
ATHOL		325
ATTLEBORO		434
AUBURN		202
AVON		44
AYER		86
BARNSTABLE	1	188
BARRE	1	99
BECKET		35
BEDFORD		63
BELCHERTOWN	2	339
BELLINGHAM		89
BELMONT		175
BERKLEY		58
BERLIN	1	32
BERNARDSTON	2	68
BEVERLY	2	342
BILLERICA		136
BLACKSTONE		54
BLANDFORD		32
BOLTON	1	15
BOSTON	3	22360
BOURNE		82
BOXBOROUGH		21
BOXFORD	1	30
BOYLSTON		34
BRAINTREE	1	494
BREWSTER		43
BRIDGEWATER		194
BRIGHTON	2	
BRIMFIELD	1	82
BROCKTON	3	3646
BROOKFIELD	1	84
BROOKLINE		680
BUCKLAND		17
BURLINGTON		91
CAMBRIDGE	1	920
CANTERBURY	1	

CANTON	1	148
CARLISLE	1	16
CARVER		51
CHARLEMONT	1	63
CHARLTON		115
CHATHAM		17
CHELMSFORD		221
CHELSEA		311
CESHIRE	1	80
CHESTER		17
CHESTERFIELD	2	15
CHICOPEE	2	6499
CHILMARK		3
CLARKSBURG	2	
CLINTON		267
COHASSET		25
COLRAIN		77
CONCORD	3	54
CONWAY	2	57
CRANSTON	1	
CUMMINGTON		22
DALTON	1	134
DANVERS		101
DARTMOUTH		229
DEDHAM		196
DEERFIELD	3	121
DENNIS	1	114
DIGHTON	2	157
DORCHESTER CENTER	4	
DOUGLAS		170
DOVER	1	8
DRACUT	3	454
DUDLEY	3	124
DUNSTABLE		9
DUXBURY		26
EAST BOSTON	2	
EAST BRIDGEWATER	2	119
EAST BROOKFIELD		45

EAST LONGMEADOW	2	228
EAST TAUNTON	2	
EASTHAM		16
EASTHAMPTON	3	354
EASTON		166
EDGARTOWN	1	29
ERVING		46
ESSEX	1	29
EVERETT	1	334
FAIRHAVEN		134
FALL RIVER		1589
FALMOUTH		129
FEEDING HILL	3	
FITCHBURG	2	1274
FLORENCE	1	
FOXBOROUGH		93
FRAMINGHAM		380
FRANKLIN	2	124
FREETOWN		87
GARDNER		465
GEORGETOWN		74
GILBERTVILLE	1	
GILL	1	45
GLOUCESTER	1	342
GOSHEN		12
GRAFTON		265
GRANBY	3	258
GRANVILLE		17
GREAT BARRINGTON	1	77
GREENFIELD	2	1132
GROTON	2	33
GROVELAND		53
HADLEY	6	100
HALIFAX	1	27
HAMILTON		33
HAMPDEN	1	84
HANOVER		45
HANSON		27

HARDWICK	1	60
HARVARD		30
HARWICH		26
HATFIELD		38
HAVERHILL	3	1871
HAWLEY	1	
HEATH		12
HILLSDALE	1	
HINGHAM		44
HINSDALE		30
HOLBROOK		66
HOLDEN		100
HOLLAND		43
HOLLISTON	3	39
HOLYOKE	3	2921
HOPEDALE		25
HOPKINTON	1	46
HUBBARDSTON		37
HUDSON		92
HULL		37
HUNTINGTON		97
HYDE PARK	1	
INDIAN ORCHARD	1	
IPSWICH	2	215
KINGSTON		32
LAKEVILLE	1	226
LANCASTER	2	96
LANESBOROUGH	2	86
LAWRENCE	1	10264
LEE	1	46
LEICESTER	3	299
LENOX		34
LEOMINSTER	4	819
LEVERETT		48
LEXINGTON	1	292
LINCOLN	2	26
LITTLETON		59
LONGMEADOW		192

LOWELL	1	6868
LUDLOW		677
LUNENBURG	5	217
LYNN	2	4118
LYNNFIELD		19
MALDEN		1848
MANCHESTER		24
MANSFIELD		98
MARBLEHEAD	1	51
MARION		31
MARLBOROUGH	1	190
MARSHFIELD	1	109
MASHPEE		21
MATTAPAN	2	
MATTAPOISETT		22
MAYNARD		39
MEDFIELD		20
MEDFORD		351
MEDWAY	1	67
MELROSE		159
MENDON		51
MERRIMAC		131
METHUEN		1657
MIDDLEBOROUGH	2	573
MIDDLETON		19
MILFORD		137
MILLBURY		248
MILLIS	2	49
MILLVILLE		39
MILTON		121
MONROE		10
MONSON		182
MONTAGUE	3	457
MONTEREY		5
MOUNT WASHINGTON		1
NAHANT		17
NANTUCKET		1
NATICK		216

NEEDHAM		189
NEW BEDFORD	4	1564
NEW BRAINTREE	2	1
NEW MARLBOROUGH		3
NEW SALEM		15
NEWBURY		23
NEWBURYPORT		74
NEWPROT	1	
NEWTON		709
NEWTON CENTER	1	
NORFOLK		24
NORTH ADAMS	1	336
NORTH ANDOVER		291
NORTH ATTLEBOROUGH		99
NORTH BROOKFIELD		134
NORTH DARTMOUTH	1	
NORTH DIGHTON	1	
NORTH EASTON	1	
NORTH READING		30
NORTHAMPTON		557
NORTHBOROUGH	2	115
NORTHBRIDGE	1	637
NORTHFIELD		72
NORTON		115
NORWELL		24
NORWOOD		224
Not Available		17
OAK BLUFFS		20
OAKHAM		26
ORANGE	3	408
ORLEANS	2	30
OTIS		17
OXFORD		221
PALMER		349
PAXTON	1	65
PEABODY	2	300
PELHAM	1	
PEMBROKE		63

PEPPERELL	2	131
PETERSHAM		4
PHILLIPSTON	1	
PITTSFIELD	2	1273
PLAINFIELD	1	16
PLAINVILLE		57
PLYMOUTH		362
PLYMPTON		14
PRINCETON		18
PROVINCETOWN	1	31
QUINCY		3751
RANDOLPH		469
RAYNHAM	2	142
READING		66
REHOBOTH	3	74
REVERE		566
RICHMOND		2
ROCHESTER	1	50
ROCKLAND		137
ROCKPORT	1	75
ROSLINDALE	1	
ROWE		17
ROWLEY	1	89
ROXBURY	2	
ROYALSTON		16
RUSSELL		85
RUTLAND		85
SALEM		581
SALISBURY		90
SANDISFIELD		4
SANDWICH		35
SAUGUS		205
SAVOY		13
SCITUATE		23
SEEKONK		48
SHARON	3	178
SHEFFIELD	1	13
SHELBURNE		160

SHELBURNE FALLS	6	6
SHERBORN	1	5
SHIRLEY		101
SHREWSBURY		336
SHUTESBURY		68
SOMERSET		129
SOMERVILLE	3	672
SOUTH BOSTON	1	
SOUTH DARTMOUTH	3	
SOUTH DEERFIELD	3	
SOUTH EGREMONT	1	
SOUTH HADLEY		466
SOUTH HAMILTON	1	
SOUTHAMPTON	1	73
SOUTHBOROUGH		35
SOUTHBRIDGE		549
SOUTHWICK	2	446
SPENCER	1	551
SPRINGFIELD	5	8752
STERLING	1	72
STOCKBRIDGE		5
STONEHAM		129
STOUGHTON		260
STOW	1	17
STURBRIDGE		67
SUDBURY	1	39
SUNDERLAND	2	67
SUTTON	1	85
SWAMPSCOTT		134
SWANSEA	2	141
TAUNTON	1	924
TEMPLETON		84
TEWKSBURY	1	261
TISBURY		46
TOPSFIELD		15
TOWNSEND	1	123
TRURO	1	10
TURNERS FALLS	2	

TYNGSBOROUGH		110
UPTON		61
UXBRIDGE		288
VINYARD HAVEN	3	
WAKEFIELD		106
WALES		50
WALPOLE		67
WALTHAM	1	392
WARE		272
WAREHAM		273
WARREN		104
WARWICK		50
WATERTOWN		429
WAYLAND		33
WEBSTER		484
WELLESLEY		146
WELLFLEET		20
WENDELL		103
WENHAM		14
WEST BOYLSTON		43
WEST BRIDGEWATER	1	76
WEST BROOKFIELD	1	91
WEST NEWBURY	1	16
WEST SPRINGFIELD	1	2514
WEST STOCKBRIDGE		14
WEST TISBURY		24
WESTBOROUGH		165
WESTFIELD	4	2715
WESTFORD	1	111
WESTHAMPTON	1	
WESTMINSTER		54
WESTON		31
WESTPORT	5	153
WESTWOOD		37
WEYMOUTH		376
WHATELY		5
WHITMAN		143
WILBRAHAM	2	217

WILLIAMSBURG		87
WILLIAMSTOWN	2	52
WILMINGTON		104
WINCHENDON		151
WINCHESTER	1	124
WINDSOR	1	22
WINTHROP		55
WOBURN		156
WORCESTER	6	6865
WORTHINGTON	1	29
WRENTHAM	2	54
YARMOUTH		215