

Oregon Trail Card Replacement Line Frequently Asked Questions for Staff Updated 1/14/14

More information and resources available online at:
<http://www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/ebt-card-replacement.htm>

Q1: What is changing?

The past year was a pilot phase for the Oregon Trail Card Replacement Line and it was optional for local offices to participate. During the pilot phase, customers in some locations could obtain replacement cards in their local offices. Participation in the Oregon Trail Card Replacement Line will now be a statewide requirement. *All AAA, APD and SSP field offices will be required to refer all non-exception replacement card requests to the Oregon Trail Replacement Card line **effective January 15, 2014**.* This process involves customers requesting a replacement card by calling a toll-free phone number and receiving the replacement card by U.S. Mail.

Q2: Why are we centralizing the Oregon Trail Card replacement process?

We replace more than 10,000 cards each month statewide. Oregon Trail Card replacement is being centralized to:

- Reduce workload and decrease traffic in local office lobbies; and,
- Reduce the overall number of cards replaced, which not only saves the agency staff time and money, but has potential to reduce the risk for fraud.

Q3: How does the new process work?

To replace a lost or stolen card, customers must call the Oregon Trail Card Replacement Line at 1-855-328-6715. The Replacement Line is available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Pacific Time.

Customers can call using their own phones or a phone in an office lobby, if one is available for customer use. The Oregon Trail Card Replacement Line in Salem will take the calls, cancel the current card, and issue and mail the replacement card.

After business hours or during weekends, customers should be encouraged to immediately call the Oregon EBT Customer Service Help Line toll-free at 1-888-997-4447 to cancel their card to prevent someone else from spending their benefits. The Help Line is open 24/7. The customer would then need to make a second call to the Oregon Trail Card Replacement Line during its business hours to request a replacement card be sent by mail.

Q4: Does this affect all DHS customers who use an Oregon Trail Card?

Yes. The new process applies to any customer who needs a replacement card and doesn't meet the exception criteria as outlined in the Field Business Procedures Manual or on the Oregon Trail Card Replacement website at <http://www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/ebt-card-replacement.htm>. The new process applies to anyone that receives DHS benefits, including SNAP and TANF.

Q5: What are the exceptions to the new replacement process?

There are few exceptions to the new process. Those who meet the exception criteria can have their cards replaced in the local branch office. The exceptions are as follows:

Exceptions requiring support staff approval with supervisor review of issuance at a later time:

1. The card is damaged **and** the customer brings the card to the office for replacement.

2. A household member must be removed from a case and a new card is necessary to access benefits.
3. The customer reports card was stolen and has the police report number & officer name to validate. (This changed 1/22/2013)
4. The customer is hearing impaired. The accommodation is for the local branch to issue these cards.

Exceptions requiring supervisor approval prior to issuance:

1. The card is destroyed in a natural disaster or fire.
2. The customer is not able to access the card due to domestic violence.
3. In situations where a delay in issuing the card would jeopardize the health and safety of a household member.

Q6: Will there also be a change to how we issue initial Oregon Trail Cards?

No. The change does not affect how we issue initial cards as part of a new application or intake appointment. An initial card is being defined as any card issued when a new application for benefits is processed. This would include a customer that does not recertify timely and has a break in benefit. The initial card also includes the first card issued to household members or alternate payees. For offices that do a lot of intakes via phone, remember the Field Business Procedures Manual outlines how to issue a card via mail.

Q7: Will damaged cards continue to be replaced in local offices?

Yes. Damaged cards are an exception. These will continue to be replaced in the field offices; however, customers must bring the damaged card to the office in order to have it replaced. If the customer does not bring the damaged card to the office, the card can't be replaced in the office and the customer must call the Oregon Trail Card Replacement Line to request a card be mailed to them.

If the customer brings in a damaged card that is either not their card or not the most recently activated one, it is considered a lost card as they do not have the card they were using. Branch staff should keep, cancel, destroy and log that card on their destroyed card log as it belongs to someone else. The customer would still need to call the Oregon Trail Card Replacement Line.

Q8: Can cards be cancelled in local branches?

Yes. Policy was recently revised in the Field Business Procedures Manual and it clarifies that branches can cancel cards. The policy reads: "If a card holder comes to a branch office to report a lost, stolen or damaged card, the branch should cancel the card in the EB system, even if the customer will be referred to the Replacement Line for issuance of a replacement card."

Q9: Can Oregon Trail Card Replacement Line staff issue a PIN?

No, the staff does not have the equipment to do so. The Replacement Line staff can cancel a PIN only if the PIN cancellation accompanies the issuance of a replacement card. A customer who needs only a PIN reset, should be referred to the local branch or should call the Oregon EBT Customer Service Help Line toll-free at 1-888-997-4447.

Q10: Does the Oregon Trail Card Replacement Line handle calls in both English and Spanish?

Yes. Upon calling the Replacement Line, callers may select English or the Spanish.

Q11: How are customers who speak languages other than English and Spanish helped?

The Language Link is used to provide services in languages other than English and Spanish.

Q12: How long will it take customers to get a replacement card?

Mail tests to different parts of the state show it can take up to five days for a customer to receive a replacement card by U.S. Mail.

Q13: How will homeless customers receive replacement cards?

Homeless customers will receive replacement cards by U.S. Mail at the mailing address specified by the customer or at the mailing address DHS has on file for them.

Q14: What should I be telling customers?

A small card with instructions for customers is available for download from the Staff Tools webpage at <http://www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/ebt-card-replacement.htm>. You can hand the instructions card out to customers. You can tell customers the following:

- In the past, if your Oregon Trail Card was lost or stolen you could go to any DHS office to get a replacement but that has changed. We are starting a new process for replacing cards. Now when you need a replacement card, you must call a toll-free number to get one sent to you by mail.
- To request a replacement card, you need to call the Oregon Trail Card Replacement Line at 1-855-328-6715. The Replacement Line staff will cancel your current card and mail you a replacement. The Replacement Line is available Mondays through Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- It could take about five calendar days to get a replacement card by mail.
- Offer customers the use of a lobby phone if your office has one available to customers.

Q15: How will “lost and returned” Oregon Trail Cards be handled?

The current “Lost and Returned” policy and mailing information will not change. All cards have the P.O. Box 14850 address in Salem printed on the back. A person who finds a lost card may use this address to return it by mail or may return the card to a local branch office.

Q16: How will “returned mail” be handled by the Oregon Trail Card Replacement Line unit?

The Oregon Trail Card Replacement Line unit has its own mailing address. Return mail will be sent to the work unit at its specific mailing address. Current business procedures will be followed regarding returned mail containing cards. These cards will be immediately destroyed.

Q17: What steps are being taken to get the mail to customers in a timely manner?

Cards are processed during each call and stuffed into addressed envelopes. Mail is taken directly to the mail room twice a day. Every Friday and the evening before every holiday all cards processed after the last mail run are hand-delivered to an open post office to ensure they are en route to customers .

Q18: What does a customer hear when the Oregon Trail Card Replacement Line is full?

If all members of the work unit are on calls, a caller goes into a hold queue. When the hold queue is full, the customer hears “*All operators are busy, please call again later.*” Customers put on hold hear an automated greeting and instructions to continue holding.

Q19: What happens if Oregon Trail Card Replacement Line staff can’t verify the identity of a customer during a call?

If the customer can't answer the security questions in order to verify identity, the customers will be asked to fax or e-mail a copy of their identification to the Replacement Unit. If they have no ID and can't answer the questions, the calls are directed to a member of the central office project team or leadership to resolve before any re-direction to the branch occurs. If the identity can't be verified centrally, the customer is referred to the branch and the reason for the referral is narrated in Access or TRACS.

Q20: What about cards for customers going into or coming out of residential treatment facilities?

Local offices issue cards for all scenarios related to the residential treatment facility. This includes when the center is the authorized representative or when a customer leaves treatment.

Q21: What about customers getting out of jail?

If the customer has been released from an Oregon Department of Corrections facility, Corrections usually issues a new card on the customers's EBT account that can be used to access any DHS benefits put in the account. This has not changed with the centralization of card replacements. If this was not the case, branch staff will need to assess the situation and determine the appropriate response:

- If the customer still has a deactivated Oregon Trail Card, the branch should reactivate the card.
- If the customer no longer has a card and there was a break in benefits, the card can be issued in the office as it would be for other customer with a break in benefits.
- If there is no break in benefits then the customer would call the Replacement Line.