

Report Public Assistance Fraud

Reporting Fraud

Public Assistance programs (e.g., Medicaid, SNAP, and TANF cash assistance and publicly funded child care), are government programs for individuals and needy families that meet specified eligibility requirements. Different states and different programs have different qualifications which can be based on; income, family size, and the number of children in a household. In some instances, the system can be abused by people submitting fraudulent claims or not adhering to government regulations. If you have witnessed public assistance abuse in Franklin County, you should report the fraud to Franklin County Job and Family Services.

**24-hour Fraud hotline is available by calling
614-233-2095**

- Fraud awareness (what is Public Assistance fraud?)
- Who handles fraud complaints (Duties & responsibilities of the Overpayment Recovery staff)
- Fraud Detection (what should be reported to the fraud investigation unit ?)
- What you need to know before reporting Fraud
- SNAP Eligible Food items / Ineligible Food Items
- Policies
- Fraud referral form

Fraud Awareness

What is Public Assistance Fraud?

Public assistance fraud occurs when a person knowingly makes false statements, withholds information or fails to report information necessary to determine eligibility for benefits. The term “Public Assistance fraud” refers to the taking advantage of public assistance benefits improperly or illegally in order to receive assistance when it should not be given.

Who Handles Fraud Complaints

Duties & Responsibilities of the Overpayment Recovery Staff

The Quality Support Services/Overpayment Recovery staff of Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services is empowered to prevent, detect, investigate and eliminate public assistance fraud and abuse directed at the programs of the department on behalf of the citizens of Franklin County.

The Overpayment Recovery staff is also responsible for the investigation of alleged persons suspected of defrauding agency programs (Medicaid, SNAP, OWF, PRC) and for enforcement of the rules and laws pertaining to public assistance as well as collection of any overpayment that may have occurred.

It is everyone’s responsibility to report fraud. Whether it’s a family member, a neighbor, friend or someone you don’t know... be part of the solution to stopping fraud!

Examples Public Assistance Fraud

1. Altered or forged paperwork.
2. Concealed, misrepresented or withheld eligibility information.
3. Failed to report required changes.
4. Speak or write false or misleading statements.
5. Falsified household compositions and sizes.
6. Purposely not reporting income and/or employment updates.
7. Purposely not reporting other public assistance in which someone is receiving benefits.
8. Using false names to collect multiple benefits
9. Claimed public assistance benefits in multiple states when not authorized to do so.
10. Unauthorized purchase, selling or exchange of Food Assistance benefits.

Fraud Detection

What should be reported to the Fraud Investigation unit?

A variety of situations may be considered as fraud. Following are some frequent examples of fraud in public assistance that you should report:

- Providing false income information to our agency;
- Reporting less income than they or another household member earns;
- Inflating the number of dependents;
- Applying for benefits under a false name or false social security number;
- Exchanging their Food Assistance benefits for cash, either at a location that accepts the (EBT) Electronic Benefit Transfer or with another individual.

Solicitation attempts may be made on social networking sites such as Craigslist, Facebook, or eBay. This is called Trafficking.

Trafficking is a **felony** in Ohio!

SNAP Eligible Food items / Ineligible Food Items

Eligible Food Items:

- Breads & Cereals
- Fruits & Vegetables
- Meats, Fish & Poultry
- Dairy Products
- Seeds & Plants Which Produce Food to Eat

Ineligible Food Items:

- Beer, wine, liquor, cigarettes or tobacco
- Pet foods
- Soaps, paper products
- Household supplies
- Vitamins & Medicines
- Hot Foods
- Grooming Items
- Cosmetics

Know Before You Report

Legal Repercussions & Evidence

Before you start the reporting process, you should think about why you are considering reporting possible public assistance fraud. Public Assistance fraud is often a criminal offense, meaning if someone is found to be engaged in fraud, they could be sent to prison.

You should only report suspected public assistance fraud if you truly believe the person you are reporting has committed fraud.

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What You Need To Report

1. If you are reporting income falsification; the name of the suspect, and the name and address of the employer will be beneficial.
2. When reporting hidden assets, you will want to provide the bank's name and address where the hidden assets are located, or potentially the address of a piece of property, if that is what is being hidden.
3. For unreported family compositions, the name of the individual who moved in or out, when the move took place, the relationship of the individual to the case, and the approximate age of the individual(s).
4. For Food Assistance trafficking, name of the suspect(s), location(s) of transactions, date(s) of transaction(s), and any other information you are able to report.

Ohio Revised Code 2913.46, Illegal use of Food Assistance or WIC program benefits.

(A)

(1) As used in this section:

(a) "Electronically transferred benefit" means the transfer of supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits or WIC program benefits through the use of an access device.

(b) "WIC program benefits" includes money, coupons, delivery verification receipts, other documents, food, or other property received directly or indirectly pursuant to section 17 of the "Child Nutrition Act of 1966," 80 Stat. 885, 42 U.S.C.A. 1786, as amended.

(c) "Access device" means any card, plate, code, account number, or other means of access that can be used, alone or in conjunction with another access device, to obtain payments, allotments, benefits, money, goods, or other things of value or that can be used to initiate a transfer of funds pursuant to section [5101.33](#) of the Revised Code and the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), or any supplemental food program administered by any department of this state or any county or local agency pursuant to section 17 of the "Child Nutrition Act of 1966," 80 Stat. 885, 42 U.S.C.A. 1786, as amended. An "access device" may include any electronic debit card or other means authorized by section [5101.33](#) of the Revised Code.

(d) "Aggregate value of supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits, WIC program benefits, and electronically transferred benefits involved in the violation" means the total face value of any supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits, plus the total face value of WIC program coupons or delivery verification receipts, plus the total value of other WIC program benefits, plus the total value of any electronically transferred benefit or other access device, involved in the violation.

(e) "Total value of any electronically transferred benefit or other access device" means the total value of the payments, allotments, benefits, money, goods, or other things of value that may be obtained, or the total value of funds that may be transferred, by use of any electronically transferred benefit or other access device at the time of violation.

(2) If supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits, WIC program benefits, or electronically transferred benefits or other access devices of various values are used, transferred, bought, acquired, altered, purchased, possessed, presented for redemption, or transported in violation of this section over a period of twelve months, the course of conduct may be charged as one offense and the values of supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits, WIC program benefits, or any electronically transferred benefits or other access devices may be aggregated in determining the degree of the offense.

(B) No individual shall knowingly possess, buy, sell, use, alter, accept, or transfer supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits, WIC program benefits, or any electronically transferred benefit in any manner not authorized by the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) or section 17 of the "Child Nutrition Act of 1966," 80 Stat. 885, 42 U.S.C. 1786, as amended.

(C) No organization, as defined in division (D) of section [2901.23](#) of the Revised Code, shall do either of the following:

(1) Knowingly allow an employee or agent to sell, transfer, or trade items or services, the purchase of which is prohibited by the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq. or section 17 of the "Child Nutrition Act of 1966," 80 Stat. 885, 42 U.S.C. 1786, as amended, in exchange for supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits, WIC program benefits, or any electronically transferred benefit;

(2) Negligently allow an employee or agent to sell, transfer, or exchange supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits, WIC program benefits, or any electronically transferred benefit for anything of value.

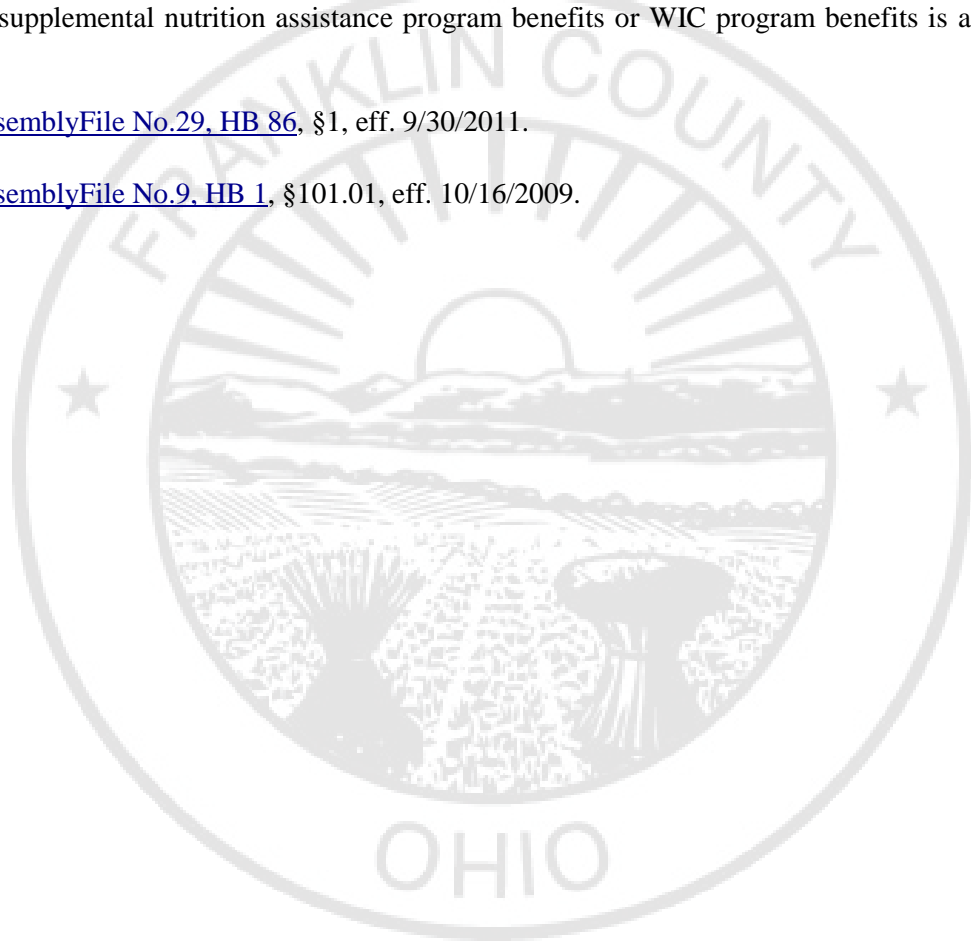
Ohio Revised Code 2913.46, Illegal use of Food Assistance or WIC program benefits.

(D) Whoever violates this section is guilty of illegal use of supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits or WIC program benefits. Except as otherwise provided in this division, illegal use of supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits or WIC program benefits is a felony of the fifth degree. If the aggregate value of the supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits, WIC program benefits, and electronically transferred benefits involved in the violation is one thousand dollars or more and is less than seven thousand five hundred dollars, illegal use of supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits or WIC program benefits is a felony of the fourth degree. If the aggregate value of the supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits, WIC program benefits, and electronically transferred benefits involved in the violation is seven thousand five hundred dollars or more and is less than one hundred fifty thousand dollars, illegal use of supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits or WIC program benefits is a felony of the third degree. If the aggregate value of the supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits, WIC program benefits, and electronically transferred benefits involved in the violation is one hundred fifty thousand dollars or more, illegal use of supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits or WIC program benefits is a felony of the second degree.

Amended by [129th General Assembly File No. 29, HB 86](#), §1, eff. 9/30/2011.

Amended by [128th General Assembly File No. 9, HB 1](#), §101.01, eff. 10/16/2009.

Effective Date: 09-26-1996 .



Fraud Referral Form

The following information is for the suspected person or persons you believe are committing Public Assistance Fraud. Provide as much information as possible in order to correctly identify the suspected person.

Suspect Information

Full Name: _____		DOB: _____
<i>Last</i>	<i>First</i>	<i>M.I.</i>
Address: _____		_____
<i>Street Address</i>		<i>Apartment/Unit #</i>
_____	_____	_____
<i>City</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>ZIP Code</i>
Mobile Phone: _____	Email: _____	
Home Phone: _____	Work Phone: _____	

Please Give A Brief Explanation As To Why You Are Reporting The Above Person For Fraud:

Your Information (Voluntary)

Full Name: _____		DOB: _____
<i>Last</i>	<i>First</i>	<i>M.I.</i>
Address: _____		_____
<i>Street Address</i>		<i>Apartment/Unit #</i>
_____	_____	_____
<i>City</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>ZIP Code</i>
Phone: _____	Email: _____	

