

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
APPEALS OFFICE

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

V.

DOCKET No. 26-2965

[REDACTED]

DECISION

I. INTRODUCTION

An Administrative Disqualification Hearing Officer conducted a telephonic hearing on the above-entitled matter on June 23, 2026. The Department of Administration, Office of Internal Audit, Fraud Detection and Prevention Unit (Agency), on behalf of the Department of Human Services (DHS), initiated this matter for an Administrative Disqualification Hearing to examine the charge that the Respondent, [REDACTED], had committed an Intentional Program Violation (IPV) of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The Agency charges that the Respondent was receiving benefits from both Massachusetts and Rhode Island simultaneously. The Agency is seeking that the Respondent be charged with an IPV for the period of January 16, 2026, and April 30, 2026, and be disqualified from SNAP for a period of ten years. For the reasons discussed in more detail below the Administrative Disqualification Hearing has been decided in the Agency's favor.

II. JURISDICTION

The Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) is authorized and designated by RIGL §42-7.2-6.1 and EOHHS regulation 210-RICR-10-05-2 to be the entity responsible for appeals and hearings related to human services. The Administrative Hearing was held in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act, RIGL §42-35.1 et. seq., and EOHHS regulation 210-RICR-10-05-2.

III. ISSUE

The issue is whether the Respondent committed a SNAP IPV between January 16, 2026, and April 30, 2026, due to Duplicate Participation of SNAP benefits.

IV. STANDARD OF PROOF

The Administrative Disqualification Hearing Officer is required to carefully consider the evidence and determine by clear and convincing evidence if an IPV occurred. The Agency's burden to support claims with clear and convincing evidence requires that they present clear, direct, and convincing facts that the Hearing Officer can accept as highly probable. 7 C.F.R. § 273.16(e)(6) & 218-RICR-20-00-1.9(B).

V. PARTIES AND EXHIBITS

Present for the Agency was Internal Fraud Auditor Brittny Medeiros, (Auditor Medeiros) who investigated the Respondent's case and provided testimony based on the facts established in determining an IPV of the SNAP regulations. The Agency offered the following evidence as exhibits at the hearing:

- Agency Exhibit #1 – Massachusetts SNAP renewal form, dated April 12, 2024.
- Agency Exhibit #2 – Massachusetts SNAP renewal form, dated September 26, 2025.
- Agency Exhibit #3 – Massachusetts SNAP renewal form, dated April 3, 2026.
- Agency Exhibit #3A – Case Note, dated April 3, 2026.
- Agency Exhibit #4 – Rhode Island Department of Human Services, Self Service Statement of Need, dated January 17, 2026.
- Agency Exhibit #5 – Rhode Island DHS Case Note, dated January 22, 2026.
- Agency Exhibit #6 – Rhode Island Benefits Decision Notice (BDN), dated January 22, 2026.
- Agency Exhibit #7 – Massachusetts EBT records, dated January 1, 2026-April 3, 2026.
- Agency Exhibit #8 – Rhode Island EBT records, dated January 16, 2026-April 30, 2026.
- Agency Exhibit #9 – PARIS Match, dated April 3, 2026.

- Agency Exhibit #10 – eDRS query results, dated April 16, 2026.
- Agency Exhibit #11 – SNAP IPV Packet, dated April 29, 2026.

VI. RELEVANT LAW/REGULATIONS

7 C.F.R. §273.16, entitled “Disqualification for Intentional Program Violation (IPV)” (c), defines an IPV as intentionally making false or misleading statement, or misrepresenting, concealing, or withholding facts; or committing any act that constitutes a violation of SNAP, SNAP regulations, or any State statute “for the purpose of using, presenting, transferring, acquiring, receiving, possessing or trafficking of SNAP benefits or EBT cards.” To determine whether an intentional program violation has occurred, 7 C.F.R. §273.16(e)(6), requires the State Agency to conduct an administrative disqualification hearing and to determine whether there is clear and convincing evidence that an IPV occurred.

Furthermore; Code of Federal Regulations 7 C.F.R. §273.3 states “A household shall live in the State in which it files an application for participation. The State agency may also require a household to file an application for participation in a specified project area or office within the State. No individual may participate as a member of more than one household or in more than one project area, in any month”.

Rhode Island regulation 218-RICR-20-00-1 §1.9 entitled “Intentional Program Violations” (A) provides that the Office of Internal Audit is responsible for investigating any case of alleged intentional program violation and ensuring that appropriate cases are acted upon through an Administrative Disqualification Hearing whenever there is sufficient documentary evidence to substantiate that an individual has committed an IPV. Like its federal counterpart, section §1.9(B) requires that “clear and convincing evidence” demonstrates that the household member(s) committed or intended to commit an IPV, as defined in §1.9(C). Per Rhode Island regulation 218-RICR-20-00-1 §1.9(A)(3)(g) Individuals found by the Department of having made, or convicted in a Federal or State court, of having made a fraudulent statement or representation with respect to their identity or place of residence in order to receive multiple benefits simultaneously under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program shall be ineligible to participate in the program for a ten (10) year period.

VII. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The Agency received a field referral from the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) from a PARIS match notification identifying duplicate participation in the SNAP program by [REDACTED].

2. The Respondent was an active recipient and simplified reporter.

3. DTA confirmed the client had been continuously receiving SNAP since 2022.

4. DTA Reevaluation, dated April 12, 2024. Respondent's address on the application was [REDACTED].

5. DTA Reevaluation, dated September 26, 2025. Respondent's address on the application was [REDACTED].

6. DTA Reevaluation, dated April 3, 2026, and a Case Note, dated April 3, 2026, a phone interview was conducted with the Respondent, who reported residing at [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. with a friend.

7. Respondent filed a RI SNAP application on January 20, 2026. Respondent provided an address [REDACTED]. On Page 6, Question "Applied for benefits in Rhode Island or in another state?" Respondent checked "No" box. Next question, "Is any applicant receiving SNAP for another state? Respondent did not answer. On Page 33, "An individual found to have made a fraudulent statement or representation with respect to identity and residence in order to receive multiple benefits at the same time will be disqualified from the SNAP for a ten (10) year period. Page #33 continues to say "Do Not give false information or hide information to get or continue to get SNAP benefits"..... "I understand the questions on this application and the penalty for hiding or giving false information or breaking any of the rules listed in this Penalty Warning." On Page #34, Under Penalty of Perjury, the Respondent signed the application.

8. A RI DHS Case Note, dated January 22, 2026, outlined a conversation that was held between an eligibility technician and the Respondent. According to the note, the Respondent confirmed her contact information and agreed to voter registration as she reportedly just moved to Rhode Island.

9. The Respondent was approved for SNAP benefits as of January 20, 2026. On Page #4, under Responsibilities, "You have the RESPONSIBILITY to supply accurate information about your income, resources and living arrangements on this application. On Page #6, An individual found to have made a fraudulent statement or representation with respect to identity and residence in order to receive multiple benefits at the same time will be disqualified from the SNAP for a ten (10) year period. On Page #6, "DO NOT Lie or hide information to get or continue to get SNAP benefits that your household should not get."

10. MA EBT transactions, outlined the Respondent's card activity between January 1, 2026, to April 2, 2026.

11. RI EBT transaction, outlined the Respondent's card activity between January 22, 2026, to April 20, 2026.

12. 12. On April 3, 2026, an email was sent from MA Fraud Investigation Unit to Auditor Medeiros, following a PARIS match on the Respondent. The email included the Respondent's name and children's names. It also stated that the Respondent has been receiving benefits from 2022.

13. An eDRS search which was conducted on April 16, 2026, showed no records found.

14. On April 29, 2026, a SNAP packet was sent to the Respondent's address of record, indicating an IPV occurred between January 16, 2026, and April 30, 2026. However; the Respondent submitted her application on January 17, 2026, therefore; the IPV start date was modified to reflect the Respondent's submission date. The IPV end date was determined to be April 30, 2026, as this was when the MA benefits ended.

15. On March 15, 2026, Auditor Medeiros contacted the Respondent via telephone. Case details, waiver option, hearing process, disqualification period and potential recoupment, were discussed.

The Respondent admitted to Auditor Medeiros that she was using both Rhode Island and Massachusetts's EBT cards.

VIII DISCUSSION

The issue to be decided is whether the Respondent committed a SNAP IPV by intentionally making a false statement(s), misleading statement(s), making misrepresentation(s), concealing fact(s), withholding fact(s), or committing any act(s) that constitutes a violation of SNAP regulations. The evidence clearly establishes that [REDACTED] received SNAP benefits simultaneously in Massachusetts and Rhode Island beginning January 17, 2026. The Respondent applied for both and received Rhode Island SNAP while remaining active on Massachusetts SNAP and used both EBT cards in Rhode Island, from January 2026 to April 2026.

On January 17, 2026, when the Respondent applied for SNAP in RI, she signed under penalty of perjury, that her answers were true and accurate. On that application she denied ever applying for benefits in RI or in any other state. The Respondent's Rights and Responsibilities were clearly outlined on both the SNAP application and the BDN. They clearly advised not to hide information, or lie, to obtain benefits she wasn't eligible for. By doing this, the Respondent committed a SNAP IPV of the SNAP regulations by intentionally concealing and/or withholding facts about her income.

Based on the evidence the state submitted, it has been well established that an intentional program violation occurred between January 17, 2026, and April 30, 2026.

IX. CONCLUSION OF LAW

After careful review of the testimony and evidence present at the administrative hearing, this Appeals Officer concludes:

1. Upon applying for SNAP benefits in RI, on January 17, 2026, she was aware of the responsibility to provide accurate information about her income and not lie or hide information in order to receive SNAP benefits she was not eligible for, as well as the penalties for intentionally breaking a SNAP rule.

2. Upon receipt of January 20, 2026, BDN, the Respondent, was aware of her responsibility to provide accurate information about her income and not lie or hide information in order to receive SNAP benefits she was not eligible for, as well as the penalties for intentionally breaking a SNAP rule.

3. The Agency has demonstrated by clear and convincing evidence that the Respondent knowingly and intentionally applied for RI SNAP benefits while she was actively receiving benefits from MA. Therefore, the Respondent intentionally misrepresented, concealed, or withheld facts pertinent to her SNAP case.

4. The Agency has demonstrated by clear and convincing evidence that the Respondent committed an IPV of the SNAP Regulations from January 17, 2026, through April 30, 2026.

5. Consequently, the Respondent, as head of household, will not be able to participate in SNAP for ten (10) years.

X. DECISION

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, evidence, and testimony it is found that a final order be entered that the Agency's request for an IPV against the Respondent for ten (10) years is granted.

AGENCY'S INTENTIONAL PROGRAM VIOLATION CHARGE IS GRANTED

/s/ Jenna Vilardo

Appeals Officer

NOTICE OF APPELLATE RIGHTS

This decision is a final order under R.I.G.L. § 42-35-12. Under R.I.G.L. § 42-35-15, this Order may be appealed to court within thirty (30) days of the mailing of this decision. Such appeal, if taken, must be completed by filing a complaint in court. The filing of the complaint does not itself stay

enforcement of this order. The agency may grant, or the reviewing court may order, a stay upon the appropriate terms.

Appeals are generally filed in the Providence County Superior Court. However, appeals affecting or concerning children under the age of eighteen (18) and/or appeals of a DCYF action may need to be filed in Providence Family Court. If you have any questions about which court a complaint for appeal should be made, you should seek the advice of an attorney, Rhode Island Legal Services, or the clerk of the court where you wish to file your appeal. The courts' contact information can be found on the judiciary's website (<https://www.courts.ri.gov>). Copies of the appeal must be served upon all parties in your case within ten (10) days of the filing of your appeal.

If you exercise any of these appellate rights, please inform the EOHHS appeals office of this so we can prepare a copy of the record for the court. You can contact the Appeals Office at OHHS.AppealsOffice@ohhs.ri.gov, 401.462.2132 (Phone), 401.462.0458 (Fax), or at 3 West Road, Virks Building, Cranston, RI 02908.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that I mailed, via regular mail, postage prepaid, a true copy of the foregoing to [REDACTED]; copies were sent, via email, to Kimberly Seebeck, Brittny Medeiros, Iwona Ramian, Esq., Vania Rebollo, Kimberly Rauch, Jenna Simeone, Jessica Patroliia, on this 30th day of June, 2020.


