The Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) has announced that they are accepting applications for new HIP access points. This includes new businesses joining the HIP program and also existing HIP businesses adding terminals to accept payment. The deadline to apply is July 1, 2020 at 4PM. Farms, farmer’s markets, delivery routes (mobile farmers’ markets), nonprofit buying cooperatives, and fruit/vegetable specialty vendors can apply to accept HIP.

The steps you have to take to have a viable application depend on a few factors. Follow the flowchart below to see what you have to do in order to successfully apply to become a new HIP vendor or get additional HIP processing equipment.

All the URLs are fully written out on the next page.

I already am able to accept SNAP. (I have an FNS number)

Do you use Conduent DirectConnect?

No

Do you use TotilPay (formerly Mobile Market Plus) to process SNAP?

Yes

First, apply to be a HIP vendor. Apply here. (URLs written out on next page). Deadline is July 1!

In the application, you will be asked what kind of devices/ equipment setup you would like. Descriptions of each can be found here. Applications will be evaluated based on these criteria. Read over the criteria so you can create a competitive application! *

For resources to help you write an application that fits with the criteria, see next page.

No

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For resources to help you write an application that fits with the criteria, see next page.

I am not yet eligible to accept SNAP.

In order to accept HIP, you need to register with the USDA to accept SNAP. Apply here.

Do this quickly! It can take up to a week for your application to be processed. If you do get accepted into the HIP program, you need to have applied and be accepted to accept SNAP by July 31. Follow these instructions to ensure that your application gets processed as quickly as possible.

You will also be asked for your FNS number. This is the number you get when you are approved to accept SNAP. If you go on to the next step below and submit your application, you will be given a seven digit FNS/ confirmation number as soon as you submit your application, and you can use that number in your HIP application. If you cannot complete that step before July 1, that is okay - just put in seven zeros (“0000000”) into this box. Read more in next step.

Applications will be evaluated based on these criteria. Read over the criteria so you can create a competitive application! *

For resources to help you write an application that fits with the criteria, see next page.

No

Do you use TotilPay (formerly Mobile Market Plus) to process SNAP?

Yes

You need equipment that accepts HIP. Many machines accept SNAP, but only TotilPay and Conduent DirectConnect accept HIP.

Luckily, there’s state funding that you can apply for to cover the cost of this equipment. “Equipment” includes printers, card readers, and receipt printers. “Equipment” also includes rebuilding existing equipment to accept HIP.

Great! You’re all set. TotilPay & Conduent are the only processing systems that can accept HIP payments. You don’t need to procure any additional equipment if you get accepted into the HIP program.

No

Do you need a machine that you can bring with you places? (To farmer’s markets, events, etc.)

Yes

TotilPay is the only system that can accept HIP (and SNAP) and is mobile. It operates as an app on a smart device.

If you get approved for additional HIP access points, you’ll need additional equipment to accept transactions at those access points.

Now that you are all set to accept SNAP, (and hopefully HIP!) you need equipment to process transactions.

Since you have signed up to accept SNAP for the first time ever, you are eligible for subsidized SNAP equipment, and potentially even free equipment. See here for details.

Great! You’re all set. TotilPay & Conduent are the only processing systems that can accept HIP payments. You don’t need to procure any additional equipment if you get accepted into the HIP program.

If you are not accepted as a HIP vendor, there is also state funding potentially available to you for machines that process only SNAP.

Great! You’re all set. TotilPay & Conduent are the only processing systems that can accept HIP payments. You don’t need to procure any additional equipment if you get accepted into the HIP program.

If you are not accepted as a HIP vendor, there is also state funding potentially available to you for machines that process only SNAP.

You don’t need to apply for this, but you can apply for the state to help you cover the cost of this equipment! AFTER you hear back from DTA on whether or not you got into the HIP program, follow these instructions to apply for equipment. If you are not accepted as a HIP vendor, there is also state funding potentially available to you for machines that process only SNAP.

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Questions? Reach out to Zoey at zoey@buylocalfood.org or 774-535-5129.
There are a number of criteria that the state is looking for in these applications. (If you haven’t already, see the HIP evaluation criteria and the full details at the link above). Below are each of the seven evaluative criteria as written by the state, along with links on where you can find the data to support each criterion.

NOTE: In the application, you will submit one three-paragraph response on how your proposal adheres to all the criteria below. This is short; space is important. So, know that the majority of your response should focus on criteria 4-7. Here’s why:

Criteria 1-3 are about where you are selling, and criteria 4-7 are about how you are selling. The DTA has expressed that they will be reviewing data about the needs of various communities and how well-served they are, so you don’t have to go into extensive detail or give a full analysis about how your area has more SNAP recipients than other places in the state, has more COVID-19 cases, etc. In other words, don’t spend too much time on criteria 1-3 (criteria about the where you are selling). Do give some detail using the sources below, but no more than a few sentences. Spend the majority of your application going into criteria 4-7.

TIP: The application contains a long-form response, in which you are expected to explain how you will adhere to the criteria below in three paragraphs. Go through the application to see what the questions are, write out your responses separately in a Word document, and then copy/paste them into the form when you are ready to submit.

1) Ability to establish HIP access points(s) in vulnerable communities during the COVID-19 pandemic, as defined by a number of criteria including but not limited to:
   a. COVID-19 cases per capita
   b. Decreases in SNAP utilization
   c. SNAP applications per capita
   d. Unemployment insurance (UI) claims per capita

2) Ability to establish HIP access points(s) in regions designated as food deserts, lower income, low access census tracts by USDA or environmental justice neighborhoods.

3) Ability to establish HIP access points(s) in areas where the rate of HIP utilization and/or number of HIP access points is disproportionately low compared to the number of SNAP clients living in the region-level information in “HIP households by client location.”

4) Ability to reach SNAP client populations vulnerable during the COVID-19 crisis, including, but not limited to:
   a. Seniors
   b. People with disabilities
   c. People confined to their residences during COVID-19 due to illness or chronic medical issues
   d. People of color
   e. People who speak languages other than English as their primary language

5) Feasibility of action plan for serving populations who are especially vulnerable to food insecurity during the COVID-19 crisis. This action plan may include but is not limited to:
   a. Home delivery models
   b. Online/phone ordering and curbside pickup models
   c. Mobile Farmers’ Markets
   d. CSA shares transported automatically via the CSA Pilot
   e. Coordination with local community partners and government agencies who can help identify areas and vulnerable communities

6) Demonstrated client demand for HIP access points

7. Demonstrated capacity and commitment to serve SNAP clients in culturally-appropriate ways, including but not limited to:
   a. Cultural competence and cultural humility of business owner and staff
   b. Ability to provide service in languages spoken by community members
   c. Historical presence and familiarity with community
   d. Hiring staff from or living in the community
   e. Cultural relevance of produce for community served

You can find information to support these criteria here:

- COVID-19 cases per capita: [See link in evaluation criteria for high-level data put out by the DTA.]
- SNAP applications per capita: [See link in evaluation criteria for high-level data put out by the DTA.]
- Unemployment insurance (UI) claims per capita: [See link in evaluation criteria for high-level data put out by the DTA.]
- Seniors: [See link in evaluation criteria for high-level data put out by the DTA.]
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- People confined to their residences during COVID-19 due to illness or chronic medical issues: [See link in evaluation criteria for high-level data put out by the DTA.]
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- People who speak languages other than English: [See link in evaluation criteria for high-level data put out by the DTA.]
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- Coordination with local community partners and government agencies: [See link in evaluation criteria for high-level data put out by the DTA.]
- Cultural competence and cultural humility: [See link in evaluation criteria for high-level data put out by the DTA.]
- Historical presence and familiarity with community: [See link in evaluation criteria for high-level data put out by the DTA.]
- Hiring staff from or living in the community: [See link in evaluation criteria for high-level data put out by the DTA.]
- Cultural relevance of produce: [See link in evaluation criteria for high-level data put out by the DTA.]

You can determine these rates and percentages using the following sources:

- [Mass. governmental data](https://www.mass.gov/doc/hip-notice-of-opportunity/download) for ratio of HIP locations to SNAP clients.
- [Historical presence](https://www.fooddesertfinder.org) or familiarity with community
- [Hiring staff](https://fooddesertfinder.org) from or living in the community
- [Cultural relevance of produce](https://www.fooddesertfinder.org) for community served

Use anecdotal / qualitative justification here.

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