



March 20, 2026

Virginia Plans New Mandate on All Locations that Accept SNAP Benefits

This week we were contacted by the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) to inform us that it is preparing an “important update” to its Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Beginning September 2026, VDSS will start issuing chip-enabled Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards. The department has informed us that in order to ensure the new cards can be read and “customers” can access their benefits, **“retailers must update their point-of-sale systems”**. They have supplied no information on how these mandated updates will be funded, and whether the private sector will be expected to bear the costs associated with their announced policy change. Typically, state agencies work with impacted industries in developing such modifications before new mandates are released - but that was not the case here.

According to Social Services, information from other states indicates that updates, certification, and testing may take up to nine months to complete. They offer no explanation as to why this notice is being sent out to impacted Virginia businesses just six months before their new mandate is scheduled to take effect.

A copy of the Department of Social Services letter and agency contact information may be [found here](#). We will stay on top of this and will keep you informed of further developments.

EMA Washington Conference and Day on the Hill – May 13-15, 2026: Please Make Your Hotel Reservation and Register Now

EMA's annual Washington Conference and Day on the Hill will be held in Washington, DC from May 13-15 at [The Mayflower Hotel](#). Our industry continues to have many important legislative and regulatory issues to discuss and the Day on the Hill remains the primary focus of this conference for you to meet with your members of Congress and network with other marketers from across the country!

Hotel reservations will close April 30 at 6:00 pm Eastern or when the room block is sold out.

[Click here to Register and Book your Hotel Room for EMA's DC Conference and Day on the Hill](#)

2026 VPCMA Scholarship Applications Now Accepted

We are pleased to announce that applications are now being accepted for the VPCMA 2026 Scholarship Program. This program is open to VPCMA members, their employees, and the children of VPCMA member company employees. Awards are made after review by the Association's scholarship committee, which considers need as well as academic achievement in their evaluations. Recipients **must be Virginia residents**, high school graduates by June of this year, and attend a post secondary institution of higher education in the fall of 2026. You can view the [application here](#). Complete applications must be received by May 15. You may also distribute or post [this flyer](#) for your employees.

Sincerely,

Mike O'Connor
President, VPCMA



VPCMA | 7275 Glen Forest Drive Suite 204 | Richmond, VA 23226 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!