



The Mass Cultural Council and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services' Department of Transitional Assistance

## EBT Card to Culture

Access the power of culture with your EBT Card

### REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

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#### Daily Operations

##### Requirements:

- Visitors use their Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card to identify they are eligible for the discount your organization has identified. The card is not for payment. If your institution is taking monies, they should be collected in the regular methods that your institution uses (cash, credit card).
- The discount must be offered through your regular admissions process, or redeemable in the same way other discounts at your organization are.

##### Recommendations:

It is a good idea to have some visual notice of the EBT Card to Culture discount at the point of sale, be it on your website, or in line at the admissions desk.

There should be information about the program visible for your sales and admission staff, so they are reminded about the program when patrons ask if they are eligible for any discounts.

Whenever a visitor asks what the cost of admission is, your staff should *always include* "and [ ] for families with EBT cards."

For online or phone sales, all EBT cards start with the same six digits... 600875. Places that require a code could say "enter the first six digits of your EBT Card Number." Please do not ask for the entire card number, as that must remain confidential per the contract with our card vendor.

We do not recommend you ask for a photo ID in addition to the EBT card. Not all Massachusetts EBT cards *have* photos on them, and there is only one card issued per family, so the name and photo on the card may not match with the person who shows up in person.

In cases of suspicions of fraud, please follow your own organization's policies. All cases of returns or refunds should follow your organization's policies.

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## Training

### Requirements:

- Organizations in the EBT Card to Culture program must train their box office or admissions staff to make the transaction and entry process as smooth as possible. There should be little to no difference in how our EBT cardholders are treated relative to other visitors.
- In order to ensure core concepts are incorporated into your staff training, someone at your organization must attend the "train the trainer" webinar the Mass Cultural Council will present in fall 2018.

### Recommendations:

You may incorporate information about the Card to Culture program into your regular staff training activities; you do not need to run a separate training specifically for this program. It is sufficient for one staff person to watch the webinar, and pass that information along to others at your organization.

Your staff should be knowledgeable about the particular discount and policies at your organization, *and* the EBT Card to Culture program as a whole. Keep a copy of the "Cheat Sheet for Staff" PDF in your box office, or at the point of sale, so your staff can reference the guidelines and FAQs there.

Staff and board at all levels should be aware of the EBT Card to Culture program. Visitors should feel welcomed equally by front desk staff, ushers and docents, and anyone else affiliated with your organization.

Consider scheduling a more in-depth training for your staff, with a representative from the Department of Transitional Assistance. Contact [kalyn.king@art.state.ma.us](mailto:kalyn.king@art.state.ma.us) to set up an in-person training with the DTA.

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## Tracking

### Requirements:

- Participating organizations will need to collect usage and attendance information, and report on it annually by July 15, 2019.

We will ask you:

1. How many times was this discount used at your organization?  
(The # of instances, of physical cards presented, of groups, ex. 100 in the last year)
2. How many adults attended?  
(The cardholder and their adult guests, ex. 300 in a year)
3. How many children attended?  
(The cardholder's child or youth guests, ex. 400)

### Recommendations:

Methods for tracking this information will vary dramatically depending on the size and capacity of your organization. You may have a set discount code that registers when tickets are scanned, or you may choose to track usage less formally using something like Google Drive.

Organizations with free admission should collect information on usage *if* they are already collecting visitor information. If there is no pre-existing touch point where you can ask visitors how they heard about your organization, you may estimate visitation or report on your total admissions.

If you collect other information on visitors, such as their zip code or email address, feel free to do so for visitors using the EBT Card to Culture discount. Treat them as you'd treat any other patron.

Jot down any feedback you hear from staff, or visitors! We'd love to hear stories and testimonials about what this program has meant to your organization and your community.

Tracking visitation on a monthly basis is not required, but may be good data to use in future grant applications or solicitations. Ex. "In the first six months of offering the discount, visitation increased by 30%."

## Signage & Communications

### Requirements:

- Participating organizations must agree to having their discount and visitation information listed on the Department of Transitional Assistance's website and in their printed materials.
- Organizations must commit to offering a discount until at least June 30, 2019, and must honor the discount they have listed on the DTA's site.

### Recommendations:

There should be information about the EBT Card to Culture program and your organization's specific discount on your website, and wherever else you regularly advertise discounts (i.e. in season announcements; in class and workshop listings).

Be sure the discount matches what is listed on the DTA's website for your organization. Articulate any additional policies around the EBT Card to Culture discount, such as restrictions about certain events or exhibits, and cancelation policies.

Reference the "EBT Card to Culture" program, the Mass Cultural Council and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services' Department of Transitional Assistance, and link back to the full list of participating organizations on [mass.gov/cardtoculture](https://mass.gov/cardtoculture)

You are welcome to use this standardized language:

"EBT Card to Culture is a collaboration between the **Mass Cultural Council** and the **Executive Office of Health and Human Services' Department of Transitional Assistance**.

Offer includes: *[[your discount here]]*

Did you know anyone with a Massachusetts-issued **EBT (Electronic Benefits Transfer) card** can get reduced or free admission into more than 150 cultural organizations across the Commonwealth? Access the power of culture with your EBT card - **see the full list of participating organizations online.**"

Or write your own, to fit the formatting of other discount opportunities you offer:

- **Zeiterion Theatre** – with details about restrictions
- **Hitchcock Center for the Environment** – how EBT Card to Culture applies across organization's programs
- **Handel + Haydn Society** – linked off "plan your visit" page

If your organization is part of the complementary **Museums for All** initiative, run by the Institute of Museum of Library Sciences and Association of Children's Museums, please mention and link back to the "EBT Card to Culture" program and [mass.gov/cardtoculture](https://mass.gov/cardtoculture) in addition to following the Museums for All's publicity requirements.

**Help promote the program overall:**

Print copies of the Card to Culture flyer, and give them to visitors who are utilizing this discount, along with whatever collateral materials you regularly give to visitors.

If you partner with organizations who serve families with EBT cards, consider giving them a stack of flyers and asking them to help get the word out about this program.

Advertise your participation. See [Shakespeare & Company's press release](#), and [Boston By Foot's blog post](#) for examples.

The hashtags used to promote the program are #ebtcardtoculture and #ThinkUP, as the EBT Card to Culture program is part of our Universal Participation Initiative. Mass Cultural Council is @masscultural, and the Department of Transitional Assistance is @DTA\_Listens

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