

From: Texas Health and Human Services Commission <txhhs@public.govdelivery.com>
Sent: Friday, December 1, 2023 7:57 AM
Subject: Holiday OT Blitz(en): Kicking off 6 Days of Merry Service! A Message from Interim Associate Commissioner Gracie Perez

Team Texas:

Holidays bring thoughts of being with family and enjoying meals together. We know there are Texans in need who are waiting for their food benefits, hoping to have them in time for the holidays. Our workload has been relentless, with lead days growing for all our programs. TW Grey Track, for example, is filled with SNAP applications.

Serving Texans is what we do, and we have already put 250 team members exclusively working Grey Track tasks to cut down our backlog in SNAP + TW Medicaid applications. We recently completed our first three Medicaid trainings for Advisors, which allows 42 additional team members to work the SNAP + TW Medicaid applications. More of those classes will be starting soon, so hundreds more team members will be added to that group.

During the month of December, AES will be hosting the Holiday OT Blitz(en) to bring our lead days down! You can work as much voluntary overtime as you want to in December beyond the mandatory overtime.

Our hope is that we can take our lead days, which are currently around 120, all the way down to somewhere between 50 and 70. Granted, 50 to 70 is still higher than we'd like, but cutting our lead days in half would be an amazing feat and help so many this holiday season.

To kick off our Holiday Blitz(en), I would like to introduce the **"6 Days of Merry Service Challenge"** – a unique way for us to make a lasting impact on those we serve in December.

We will also have prizes, rewards, and incentives for those who go above and beyond this month.

The 6 Days of Merry Service Challenge:

- **The challenge will run for six consecutive days, going from December 4th to December 9th.** We understand that everyone has different availability, so you can choose any days within this period to participate. Clerical team members are also authorized for overtime to keep the tasks coming and those EBT cards going out!
- **During the challenge, we encourage you to push yourself and your team members to help as many Texans as possible.** This can be done by extending your workday or coming in on Saturday, December 9th. TIERS is also available until 8:30 p.m. from December 4th through December 8th. Our regional and state office leaders will be visiting offices in their regions to offer any kind of support as you're doing amazing work.
- **We believe in celebrating hard work.** Anyone who works 15 or more hours of overtime during the week will be placed in a drawing for amazing prizes!

This month, we are also encouraging you to **spread the joy** and share your daily experiences and highlights with your AES teammates. I will be sharing some of your heartwarming stories and festive photos, so please feel free to email me.

I know we've been asking you to go above and beyond for some time now. And this ask is to go above and beyond even more. Please know this is not a request to burn yourself out at the expense of your well-being. You're encouraged to plan your time effectively and prioritize self-care.

Get ready to embark on a collective journey of giving, compassion, and service. I challenge you to see how many Texans you can connect to food benefits this month!

We'll be checking in throughout the week to let you know about our progress and share other things we've completed and have planned behind the scenes to help reduce the workload and provide you some relief. Your commitment and dedication do not go unnoticed. Thank you, thank you, thank you for all you do.

Gracie Perez
Interim Associate Commissioner, Operations
Access & Eligibility Services