



# Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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Governor

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## Informational Letter

### Section 1

<b>Transmittal:</b>	25-INF-07
<b>To:</b>	Social Services District Commissioners
<b>Issuing Division/Office:</b>	Employment and Income Support Programs
<b>Date:</b>	December 2, 2025
<b>Subject:</b>	Utilizing Allowances for Infant Safe Sleep Essentials
<b>Suggested Distribution:</b>	Temporary Assistance (TA) Directors, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Directors, Employment Coordinators, Staff Development Coordinators, Fair Hearing Staff
<b>Contact Person(s):</b>	Temporary Assistance Bureau: (518) 474-9344 or <a href="mailto:tabureau@otda.ny.gov">tabureau@otda.ny.gov</a>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<a href="#">Attachment 1 - DOH Safe Sleep Brochure</a>

### Filing References

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
		18 NYCRR 352.7 (a) 18 NYCRR § 352.3 18 NYCRR § 900.18			Temporary Assistance Source Book Chapter Section B. 1.c.(4), 2.d., Chapter 16, Section A., Chapter 21, Section B.4. <a href="#">24DC049</a>

### Section 2

#### I. Purpose

The purpose of this Informational Letter (INF) is to advise local Social Services Districts (districts) that families with infants may be eligible to receive a Public Assistance (PA) allowance to assist them in obtaining essential items needed for safe sleep under Office Regulation 18 NYCRR § 352.7(a) as initially described in [24DC049](#), and encourage the

distribution of the attached New York State Department of Health (DOH) Safe Sleep brochure.

## II. Background

More than 120 infants die each year in New York State from sleep-related causes. Infant death due to unsafe sleep practices is largely preventable. Unsafe sleep practices occur when infants sleep in places other than cribs, bassinets, or pack-and-plays, such as adult beds, baby slings, car seats, couches, or armchairs. Infants sleeping with other children or adults, blankets or other loose bedding, is also considered unsafe. Many families may not have the resources necessary to obtain items that would ensure infants are sleeping alone, such as a crib or pack-and-play.

## III. Program Implications

If all other requirements are met, districts may provide eligible families with an allowance to assist them in obtaining essentials needed for safe sleep, including a crib or pack-and-play, fitted sheets for a crib or pack-and-play, and a wearable sleep sack/blanket. This is allowable under Office Regulation 18 NYCRR § 352.7(a)(2). Districts may issue a “Bedroom with a single bed” allowance to meet this need.

When providing eligible families with a furniture allowance, Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA) strongly recommends districts pay the furniture vendor(s) directly to prevent the misuse of funds and assist the family in successfully locating a vendor(s) who will supply furniture at the approved furniture allowance rate. However, if a district does not have a vendor(s) to supply the needed furniture, the furniture allowance may be issued to the eligible family. There is no requirement for the district to obtain verification that the allowance was spent on furniture. A furniture allowance is not a recoupable payment.

For individuals residing in temporary housing, 18 NYCRR § 900.18 requires operators of shelters for families with children to furnish each infant resident under the age of two with a suitable crib compliant with federal and State safety standards. They must also provide a Safe Sleep brochure with crib safety information published by the DOH to each resident family with an infant; and post infant safe sleep signage, also available from DOH, in each sleeping area in which a crib is placed for an infant resident. Additionally, safe sleeping information must be reviewed with the family at the time of admission as well as posted above the crib in the sleeping area. Similarly, 18 NYCRR § 352.3 requires that a suitable crib is provided for each infant under the age of two in a commercial hotel/motel serving recipients of temporary housing assistance. If the hotel/motel operator does not have a crib available, the district must supply a crib for eligible families. The costs associated with cribs and safe sleep compliance may be included within the shelter budgets or hotel/motel rates submitted to OTDA.

OTDA is also strongly encouraging all districts to distribute the attached DOH Safe Sleep brochure to all PA and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) households that include expectant parents and/or children under 2 years of age. The district should consider distribution via the lobby or waiting room, other in-person points of contact (e.g., reception desks, service counters), or mail. OTDA will also post this link, [Safe Sleep Essentials](#), on the OTDA Resources for Working Families page as another point of access for families. The brochures can be ordered by contacting the New York State Department of Health and completing this [DOH Order Form](#). Please be sure to include the publication number, title, language, and quantity being requested.

The DOH Safe Sleep brochure publication numbers are listed below. Additional information regarding safe sleeping practices and ordering forms and posters can be found on the DOH website located here: [Safe Sleep For Baby \(ny.gov\)](https://www.health.ny.gov/topics/prevention/safe_sleep_for_baby.htm).

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## Issued By:

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**Division/Office:** Employment and Income Support Programs / Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance