

Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) Supplemental Payments

Under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCR)(P.L. 116-127) the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) approved the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide households with children eligible for free and reduced-priced meals under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or the School Breakfast Program (SBP) with P-EBT benefits due to the COVID-19 outbreak and related school closures. DHS will work with the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) to identify eligible children and issue P-EBT.

Please note: The FFCR Act specifically limits P-EBT benefits to only children receiving free or reduced price meals through the NSLP. If a child is attending a school that provides meals through private funding or a different government grant, then the child is not eligible for P-EBT. Home schooled and cyber schooled children are also not eligible for P-EBT benefits.

Children that attend a school that provides free or reduced price meals through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the NSLP are eligible for the P-EBT benefit. CEP is when a certain percentage of the school children are eligible for free or reduced price meals due to their household's income, so every child in the school receives free or reduced price meals.

Benefits will be provided to all eligible children whether or not they currently receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. This is meant to ensure that all children who would normally receive meals at school do not go hungry while schools are closed.

- To see a list of schools that participate in the NSLP, please click [here](#).

The benefit amount is \$5.70 per school day per child through the average end of the school year, covering the weekdays the child missed due to school closures. The benefit period for which P-EBT benefits can be issued is March 16, 2020 to June 12, 2020, as schools were closed statewide on March 16, 2020. June 12, 2020 is the date at which over half of the affected children would have started summer break and has been selected as the best average end date of school for determining the benefit amounts.

The total number of days for which a child can receive benefits is based on the child's eligibility start date for NSLP or SBP. P-EBT benefits will be issued as a One Time Issuance (OTI) for a pre-determined number of days based on when the child became eligible for NSLP or SBP. These days are as follows:

- If the child was determined eligible for meals on or before March 31, 2020, the benefit is issued for 65 days to cover the period from March 16, 2020, through June 12, 2020. **These children receive \$370.50 total.**
- If the child was determined eligible between April 1 and April 30, the benefit is issued for 53 days.
These children receive \$302.10 total.
- If the child was determined eligible between May 1 and May 31, the benefit is issued for 31 days.
These children will receive \$176.70 total.
- If the child was determined eligible between June 1 and June 12, the benefit is issued for 10 days.
These children receive \$57.00 total.

Benefit issuance for open SNAP and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) households

Children who are identified as part of an open TANF or SNAP household will receive their P-EBT benefit directly on the household's current EBT card the same way current SNAP benefits are received.

Please Note: The data being used to issue the P-EBT benefit is being provided by PDE and DHS is using the information to issue the P-EBT. Children who qualified for free or reduced price meals through their eligibility for Medical Assistance (MA) will receive their benefits on a special P-EBT card. Children who receive or have received MA only or whose TANF or SNAP benefits are closed will also receive their benefits on a special P-EBT card. The P-EBT card will be white in color and cannot be used for anything other than P-EBT benefits. (See the section below for more information.)

A situation has been observed that children who are attending a CEP school and have been recently approved for TANF, SNAP, or MA benefits since March have a new eligibility start date attached to their NSLP record because of the approved DHS benefit, resulting in these children receiving a pro-rated benefit based on the new eligibility start date. DHS and PDE are aware of this issue and will be taking steps to issue the remaining balance due to children affected by this issue before the end of June. Any benefits that have been received so far may be used.

Benefit issuance for households not receiving SNAP or TANF benefits

Households with children who are not identified as part of an open SNAP or TANF household will be issued a white P-EBT card. For households receiving P-EBT cards, it

is possible that some information such as Head of Household or household composition may be unavailable.

- The P-EBT card will be issued in the name of the head of household when the information is available.
- If the children can be determined to be in the same household, but the Head of Household name is missing, the P-EBT card will be issued in the name of the oldest child.
- If household composition cannot be determined, a P-EBT card will be issued in the name of each child, so the household will receive multiple P-EBT cards.

Please note: P-EBT cards are non-transferrable. If you do not wish to participate in this program, simply shred and dispose of this card.

While the card is in the name of the head of household or one of the children in the household, the person listed does not need to be present when using the card.

Important information for pinning and use of your P-EBT card

• How do I activate the card?

Call the phone number on the back of the card. You will need the EBT card number on the front of the card, your zip code, and the date of birth of the oldest child in the household. If the card is in the name of your child, you will need the date of birth for that child. You will need to enter the last four digits of your zip code when prompted for the last 4 digits of the Social Security Number. You will need to set a four-digit pin number.

• How do I use the card?

Once activated, the card can be used to purchase eligible food items anywhere SNAP/EBT cards are accepted. While the card is in the name of the head of household or one of the children in the household, the person listed does not need to be present when using the card.

To check your EBT card balance, please call 1-888-EBT-PENN ([1-888-328-7366](tel:1-888-328-7366)) or view it online at www.ConnectEBT.com [Opens In A New Window](#).

SNAP benefits

P-EBT will have no impact on your regular TANF or SNAP benefits.

For other questions about your SNAP benefits, please call the Statewide Customer Service Center at [1-877-395-8930](tel:1-877-395-8930) or your [local county assistance office](#).

When will benefits be issued?

P-EBT is being issued in three waves:

- **Wave 1** included households with children who received free or reduced price meals due to their SNAP, TANF, or MA benefits. Wave 1 was completed on June 1, 2020. If you are active for TANF or SNAP benefits and did not receive a benefit to your EBT card, then you have been mailed a white P-EBT card.
- **Wave 2** included households with children who received MA only and attended a school in the School District of Philadelphia, as well as households with children who received the free or reduced price meals through any other eligibility determination. Wave 2 also included children from Wave 1 that had duplicate records that required additional review. Wave 2 was completed on June 8, 2020.
All benefits being issued to EBT cards were completed on June 8. If you are active for TANF or SNAP benefits and did not receive a benefit to your EBT card, then you have been mailed a white P-EBT card.
- **Wave 3** includes households with children who are only eligible due to the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), where a certain percentage of the children in the school are income eligible for free or reduced price meals, so all children in that school receive free or reduced price meals. Wave 3 also includes households with children who became eligible for free or reduced price meals after the Wave 1 and Wave 2 lists were provided by PDE. Wave 3 will be completed on June 26.

The white P-EBT cards started being mailed when Wave 1 was completed during the first week of June. Due to the large number of cards that must be mailed, it will take a few weeks for all cards to be sent. Wave 1 and Wave 2 households should get their card by the end of June. Wave 3 households should get their card by July 10. If you haven't received your P-EBT benefit or card by the end of June, or by July 10 if your household is in Wave 3, please use the emergency meal survey link below.

Contact US

- If you have additional questions about Pennsylvania's P-EBT, send an email to RA-PWPEBTQuestions@pa.gov.
- If you would like to report a specific problem with your P-EBT benefits, such as not receiving the benefit, not receiving for every eligible child, receiving the

incorrect amount for a child, or having a lost or damaged P-EBT card, please visit www.emergencymealsurvey.com/PAOpens In A New Window.