

## Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) – COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

Updated March 23, 2021

### Q: What is P-EBT?

A: Pandemic- Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) is a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) program designed to provide cash benefits on an EBT card to be used to purchase food. This program is in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The purpose of the program is to provide benefits to children on free and reduced-price meals who lost access to food due to school closures and adjusted schedules during the 2020-2021 school year.

### Q: Who is eligible for P-EBT?

A: Nebraska families are eligible for P-EBT benefits if:

- Children have been determined eligible by their school for free or reduced-price meals during the 2020-2021 school year; and,
- The child did not receive free or reduced-price meals at the school because the school was closed or was operating with reduced attendance or hours for at least five consecutive days.

### Q: What is the P-EBT benefit amount?

A: Nebraska is utilizing the average number of school days for all Nebraska schools to determine monthly benefits. The benefits will be \$116 per student for each eligible month for full-time (100%) remote learners and \$62 per student for each eligible month for hybrid learning environments.

### Q: Is the \$116/\$62 a total amount for the 2020-2021 school year?

A: The \$116/\$62 is the monthly amount per child. Eligibility for P-EBT will be determined monthly. Issuances will be monthly and will include two months of benefits. Example: A child who is a full-time remote learner in October and November will receive \$232 for the first issuance in April.

### Q: How will the benefits be issued?

A: P-EBT benefits will be issued monthly based on data received from Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) and the school districts. The first issuance will occur on April 15. This will go to families with an active EBT card at the time of the issuance and P-EBT cards will be mailed to non-SNAP households. Benefits will be available once the P-EBT card is received.

### Q: Will non-SNAP households receive a new P-EBT card?

A: Yes. Anyone who has received P-EBT in the past will receive a new P-EBT card if they are not currently on SNAP benefits. All remaining issuances will go on the P-EBT card received with the April 15, 2021 issuance. If they are determined eligible after the first issuance, a new P-EBT card will be mailed with the initial issuance and then ongoing benefits will continue on that card.



**Q: How will families receive P-EBT benefits?**

A: If they have an existing EBT card with active SNAP benefits, P-EBT benefits will be automatically added to that card. If they do not have active SNAP benefits, an all-white P-EBT card will be mailed to them, even if they have received P-EBT benefits previously. Important: They must have their address registered with the post office to receive the P-EBT card, just like the regular EBT cards.

**Q: Is there an application process?**

A: No. P-EBT benefits will be issued from information received directly from NDE.

**Q: Are families that currently receive free breakfast and lunch from the school going to be eligible for this program?**

A: Many families are receiving free meals for the current school year through the extension of the Summer Food Program. Households eligible for P-EBT must have been determined eligible for free or reduced meals through the National School Lunch Program at their school and must meet the other eligibility factors.

**Q: Will this affect a family's ability to receive other benefits?**

A: No, it will not. These benefits replace school meals and are for families that receive free and reduced-price school meals.

**Q: Does this count against families under the public charge rule?**

A: No, it does not. These benefits replace school meals and are for families that receive free and reduced-price school meals.

**Q: Will there be an application just like the SNAP application?**

A: No, benefits will be issued to households determined eligible by the schools and reported to the agency by NDE.

**Q: How long do families have to spend P-EBT benefits?**

A: Families can use P-EBT benefits for one year. That year starts when the family makes their first purchase. If a purchase is never made, the year starts when the benefits are issued.

**Q: Are P-EBT benefits based solely on free and reduced-price meals through the schools or will there be additional income guidelines?**

A: There are no additional income guidelines.

**Q: How can I tell if my children are eligible for P-EBT benefits?**

A: You may check the Launch Nebraska site, <https://www.launchne.com/status/>, to see what has been reported as the classroom learning mode for your school. Only students reported eligible from their school district will receive P-EBT benefits. If the majority of the students where their child is enrolled were attending school in-person and their student opted for remote learning this school year, have the parent contact the school district to clarify why their student did not receive benefits. If their child did not participate in remote learning during the 20/21 school year, they are not eligible for P-EBT benefits.

### Q: If the family did not receive P-EBT benefits and they feel they were eligible, who can they contact?

A: Benefits are for students eligible for free and reduced-price meals that have been affected by a school closure or adjusted school schedule for at least five consecutive days. Students who are attending school in-person full-time would not be eligible for P-EBT, as they are receiving meals at the school. Home-schooled students are not participating in the National School Lunch Program and are not eligible. Since eligibility is not determined by DHHS, parents should contact their School District with questions on why they were not eligible.

### Q: What can families buy with P-EBT benefits?

A: Your P-EBT benefits can buy food at grocery stores and farmer's markets that accept SNAP EBT and to purchase groceries online at Amazon and Walmart.

Use your P-EBT card like a debit card:

- Select "EBT".
- Swipe the card.
- Enter your private PIN number.

### Q: When and how will benefits be issued?

A: The chart below provides additional details regarding the issuance of P-EBT benefits:

Months of eligibility reported by NDE	Dates benefits issued to EBT and P-EBT Cards	100% Remote Learners. Per child, per month	Part-time Remote Learners. Per child, per month
October – November	April 15	\$116	\$62
December – January	May 15	\$116	\$62
February – March	June 15	\$116	\$62
April – May	July 15	\$116	\$62
All months	August 15	\$116	\$62

- This benefit schedule will be followed if DHHS receives the information from the schools on eligible students. If the reports are not received timely from NDE, benefits will be issued on the next issuance date.

### Q: What about benefits for those students who were missed with the August/September issuance in September?

A: Students who were missed with the first issuance in September for the months of August and September will receive an additional payment before the first issuance on April 15. Students eligible for this payment have been identified by each school.

### Q: Will the children in child care be receiving P-EBT benefits?

A: DHHS is developing the plan for children in child care. Additional information will be provided once the plan has been finalized and approved.

**Q: Can P-EBT cards be sold for cash?**

A: P-EBT benefits cannot be sold or traded. Selling P-EBT benefits could cause you to be ineligible to receive benefits in the future.

**Q: How do I activate my P-EBT card?**

A: Call the number on the back of the P-EBT card, 877-247-6328, to activate the card and set your four-digit pin.

