

P-EBT Frequently Asked Questions

Alaska Child Nutrition Programs

1. What is the Pandemic EBT program?

The Pandemic EBT program, or P-EBT, provides food benefits to eligible students to replace the cost of meals students would have received if not for the lack of in-person instruction or due to school closures during the 2020-21 school year.

2. How is this different from last school year?

The 2019-20 school year P-EBT program originally provided food benefits to eligible school-aged children for the months of March, April, and May 2020. Households applied for these benefits and if determined eligible, they received a standard benefit amount issued by lump sum on a P-EBT card.

Alaska was approved June 8, 2021 to issue P-EBT benefits to children because of school closures for the 2020-21 school year, from August 2020 to June 2021 *as applicable*. Alaska has not been approved for summer P-EBT benefits yet.

3. My child received lunches at school. Can I still qualify for P-EBT?

Maybe. P-EBT benefits are additional food benefits during remote learning. Children may have received grab-and-go meals at school or community sites, or emergency food at COVID-19 emergency feeding sites offered at community locations, and still be eligible for P-EBT benefits.

4. Who is eligible for P-EBT?

Children who normally have access to the National School Lunch Program, or NSLP, and School Breakfast Program, or SBP, and are registered/enrolled at a school in Alaska that:

- Has been in remote learning or has reduced attendance for five or more consecutive days as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency during the 2020-2021 school year, and
- Determined the child is eligible for free or reduced-priced school meals.

5. If my children attended a Community Eligibility Provision schools with access to breakfast and lunch at not cost, are they eligible for P-EBT?

All children attending a Community Eligibility Provision school may be eligible for P-EBT if the school the child attends has reduced in-person learning due to COVID-19.

6. I already receive food assistance. Do I automatically qualify for P-EBT?

Most children active on food assistance are automatically certified for free school meals, but they don't automatically qualify for P-EBT benefits. P-EBT eligibility will depend on the school the child attends and the learning model of the school.

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7. My child is home schooled. Do they qualify for P-EBT?

No. P-EBT is available only to children enrolled in and receiving education services in a school, and would normally receive free or reduced-price school meals through the NSLP or SBP if the school wasn't closed or had reduced attendance.

8. My child attended a school that does not participate in the National School Lunch Program. Do they qualify for P-EBT?

No. P-EBT is available only to children enrolled in and receiving education services in a school that is approved to participate in the National School Lunch Program, and would normally receive free or reduced-price school meals through the NSLP or SBP if the school building wasn't closed or had reduced attendance.

9. How do I find out if my child is eligible for P-EBT benefits?

Eligible children will receive a notice and a P-EBT card with their name on it. We anticipate the notice to be sent to eligible children this summer. The P-EBT card will be mailed shortly after. Families should keep their cards as more benefits may be added later if their school continues to be closed or have reduced hours.

10. How do I get P-EBT benefits for the 2020-21 school year?

Children must have been approved to be eligible for school meals, families will not need to separately apply to get P-EBT benefits for this school year. Each eligible child will receive a P-EBT card mailed directly to families without having to apply for P-EBT.

11. What address will the new P-EBT card be mailed to?

P-EBT cards will be mailed to the address on file with the school. Contact your school to ensure they have your current mailing address. If benefits were already mailed to the old address, you may contact the DPA Virtual Call Center at 1-800-478-7778.

12. Will my benefits be back-dated to the beginning of the school year?

Yes. If a child is determined eligible for school meals, P-EBT benefits will be issued to the beginning of the 2020-21 school year or the month the school became eligible based on school closures/reduction of hours. The amounts may vary for each child based on their respective school learning models.

13. We do not need these benefits. Can I decline them?

We encourage households determined eligible for P-EBT to use the benefits for your family and to help boost the local economy. Benefits are not transferrable and cannot be gifted or donated. If you still wish to decline the benefits, you may destroy the card or return the card to the address on the back of the card. You may also contact the DPA Virtual Call Center at 1-800-478-7778 to decline future benefit issuance.

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14. How much will I get in P-EBT benefits?

Meals are budgeted at a daily rate of \$10.99, which covers lunch, breakfast and a snack, for operating days reported per month reported as virtual learning days during the 2020-21 school year. The P-EBT benefit amount is based on the district reported learning model per school site and can vary from student to student, even within a family. Schools will report their learning model for the majority of students for the majority of each month. Each school is unique and may have modified their learning model several times since August 2020. Because of this, each child may receive a different benefit amount.

The table below provides the different benefit levels based on learning model using 20 instructional days as an estimate. Each district will report the number of instructional days per site as well as the learning model for each school site.

Weekly Learning Model	Monthly Calculation	Estimated Benefit
Fully Remote Learning	$\$10.99 \times 20$	\$219.80
1 Day In-Person	$\$10.99 \times 20 \times 80\%$	\$175.84
2 Days In-Person	$\$10.99 \times 20 \times 60\%$	\$131.88
3 Days In-Person	$\$10.99 \times 20 \times 40\%$	\$87.92
4 Days In-Person	$\$10.99 \times 20 \times 20\%$	\$43.96
5 Days In-Person	\$0	\$0
Summer P-EBT (<i>pending</i>)	$\$10.99 \times 55$	\$604

15. Why is the amount not based on my child's attendance?

To help the most children, we applied a statewide standard amount awarded to the children. We are unable to monitor individual student attendance. We are using the main learning model at the child's school as reported by the school.

16. Can P-EBT benefit amounts be changed or corrected?

The amount of P-EBT will be based on what the school reported as the main learning model for the entire school for each month. If you believe there has been an error on your child's P-EBT amount, you can call the DPA Virtual Call Center at 1-800-478-7778 to request they review your eligibility.

17. Will there be more P-EBT benefits?

Summer benefits and future school year benefits may be issued. Make sure to keep your card for potential future benefits.

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18. I am facing homelessness, how do I get my P-EBT card?

If your family is facing homelessness and your child is eligible for P-EBT, you can request your P-EBT card be sent to a different address that you can access (i.e. your child's school). Call your school to make necessary arrangements for pick-up of the P-EBT card.