

Kentucky Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer Frequently Asked Questions

What is Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT)?

Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) provides assistance to households with children eligible for free or reduced-price school meals while schools are closed due to COVID-19. P-EBT provides a benefits card families can use to replace school meals while schools are closed.

Who is eligible for P-EBT?

All public and private school students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals and students who attend schools that provide free meals for all students are eligible for P-EBT.

How and when will I get my benefits?

- P-EBT benefits will be added to existing EBT cards beginning May 22, 2020.
- Households currently receiving public assistance (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps; TANF; Foster/Kinship Care and/or Medicaid) with income less than the federal income limit will be enrolled automatically.

Other eligible households must complete a simple application. Once approved for P-EBT, these households will receive a card within 10 business days with activation and card use instructions. Benefits for March and April will be on the card when activated. May benefits will be added approximately three weeks later. Approved households may call toll free (888) 979-9949 for assistance activating their cards and for more information.

Can schools continue to provide meals through traditional summer feeding programs?

Yes. Summer feeding programs should continue to operate and families should continue to receive these meals for their children. Children may participate in more than one nutrition assistance program.

Can P-EBT benefits be issued retroactively?

Yes. Benefits will date back to school closure on March 13, 2020. All eligible students will receive the full benefit amount unless they became eligible after March. Households at non-CEP schools that become eligible due to losing their employment from COVID-19 are encouraged to apply for free lunch status to become eligible for P-EBT.

Why is the benefit beginning after March 13 and ending on May 30, 2020?

Average statewide closure dates were used to set the benefits period.

How much is the P-EBT benefit?

P-EBT benefits are based on the current federal free and reduced-price meal program reimbursement rates. The maximum rates provided in Kentucky are used including the severe need rates. Weekends are not included.

Rates per student

Daily Rate - \$5.70

March Total - \$68.40

April Total - \$125.40

May Total - \$119.70

P-E BT Total \$313.50

Students will receive the full benefit amount unless they only became eligible after March. In those instances, the student will receive the full month amount beginning in the month they became eligible.

Are students who become eligible for free or reduced lunch after March 13, 2020, eligible to receive P-EBT?

Yes. Students who become eligible before the end of the regular school year are eligible to receive P-EBT. Examples:

- Student enrolls in a school that provides free meals for all students after March 13 and before the end of school.
- Student completes an updated application for free/reduced lunch at a school that provides free and reduced-price meals to students based on eligibility after March 13 and prior to the end of the school year and is determined to be eligible for the program.

(**Note:** The newly eligible student should wait one week after becoming eligible to apply to allow time for systems to record student status.)

Will Head Start students receive P-EBT benefits?

Head Start students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch at schools offering the national lunch program are eligible to receive P-EBT.

I have more than one child eligible for free or reduced lunch. Will I receive one card or individual cards for each child?

In most cases a household will be issued only one card with total benefits for all children.

Is there a deadline to apply?

The deadline to apply is June 30, 2020.

Can student benefits be split between households?

No. Benefits are issued per student and only to one household. Two students in split households may choose to have one student apply at each household address separately. All decisions for split households must be made before applying. If more than one household apply for the same student, the first approved application will receive the funds and all other applications will be denied.

What can I buy with P-EBT benefits?

Any food for the household, such as:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Meat, poultry, fish
- Dairy products

- Breads and cereals
- Snack foods and non-alcoholic beverages
- Seeds and plants which produce food for the household to eat

Households **may not** use P-EBT benefits to buy:

- Beer, wine, liquor, cigarettes, tobacco
- Vitamins, medicines, supplements - Items with a supplement facts label are considered supplements and not eligible for P-EBT purchase.
- Live animals (except shellfish, fish removed from water and animals slaughtered prior to pick-up from the store)
- Prepared food fit for immediate consumption
- Hot foods
- Nonfood items such as:
 - Pet foods
 - Cleaning supplies, paper products and other household supplies
 - Hygiene items, cosmetics

Can I purchase items online?

You may use your P-EBT card to make online purchases at Amazon.com and Walmart.com. Please refer to these retailer websites for more information.

How long do I have to spend my P-EBT benefits?

Your P-EBT benefits will remain on your card for one year.

I did not get a P-EBT card and believe I should have. What do I do?

If you applied online and were denied you will be given a reason. For more information contact the P-EBT Information hub at pebt.info@ky.gov.

If you currently are enrolled in SNAP, TANF, Kinship or Medicaid and believe you should have received P-EBT benefits, contact the P-EBT Information hub at pebt.info@ky.gov.

If I receive P-EBT benefits will it affect my eligibility for other public assistance programs?

No. P-EBT is an additional benefits program and will not affect your eligibility for other public assistance programs. We encourage families to continue using free school and community meal sites for nutritious meals for children. Families can go online to Meals for Kids Interactive Map at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/meals4kids> for local sites where kids can get free meals.

Does this cost anything? Do I have to pay back these benefits? Do I have to claim P-EBT benefits on my taxes?

There is no cost to P-EBT recipients. Families who receive P-EBT benefits will not have to pay back the benefits. Benefits are not taxable.

Who do I contact if I have a question not answered in this FAQs?

Contact the P-EBT Information hub at pebt.info@ky.gov, please do not call your local DCBS office or school as they will not be able to assist you.