

May 20, 2020

Dear Parent(s) and/or Guardians(s),

The District of Columbia (the District) remains committed to ensuring that families with children who receive free and reduced-price meals continue to have access to healthy meals during school closures. This letter is to inform you that the District received approval from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to implement the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) provision in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. P-EBT provides additional food assistance to the families of children who receive free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). These families will receive food benefits to subsidize the cost of meals they would have normally received while at school in response to this public health emergency. P-EBT benefits are intended to cover breakfast and lunch and are valued at \$28.50 per week, per child. P-EBT will deliver an estimated \$26 million in federal food assistance to more than 68,000 children in the District.

Any District child who qualifies for free or reduced-price school meals will receive P-EBT benefits. This includes children in a school that provides free meals to all students. **Children whose families have experienced a change in income may also qualify for P-EBT, even if they have not previously received free or reduced-price meals.** These families should contact their school to complete a Free and Reduced-price Meal (FARM) application as soon as possible to ensure they can receive P-EBT if FARM-eligible. Newly FARM-eligible families will receive P-EBT for the month they are certified through June 19. FARM applications certified after June 19 will not be eligible for P-EBT.

P-EBT benefits will start being issued in May. For District children whose family receives Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits, an additional payment, on top of regular monthly benefits, will be automatically loaded onto the household's Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card. For District children whose family does not receive SNAP or TANF, or does not have an active EBT card, an EBT card loaded with P-EBT benefits, will be mailed to them. This new EBT card will need to be activated to access the funds. If these families do not want to use P-EBT, they must destroy the new EBT card they received in the mail.

Similar to SNAP benefits, P-EBT benefits may be used to purchase food at SNAP authorized retailers or online for delivery at Amazon: [amazon.com/snap-ebt](https://amazon.com/snap-ebt). Residents who receive P-EBT benefits can find their nearest SNAP authorized retailer by visiting [fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer-locator](https://fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer-locator).

Enclosed, please find an FAQ and information flyer about P-EBT. In addition, more information on the District's P-EBT program can be found online at [dhs.dc.gov/p-ebt](https://dhs.dc.gov/p-ebt) or by calling the P-EBT Call Center at (202) 868-6663, Monday – Friday from 7:30 am – 4:45 pm.

**DC**DEPARTMENT of  
HUMAN SERVICES

## Updates and Frequently Asked Questions about Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) as of May 20, 2020

*Below is the most updated information on Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) available in the District. Please be aware that this guidance is based on the best information currently available and will be updated as needed. Thank you for your patience. If you have additional questions, please contact the P-EBT Call Center at (202) 868-6663, Monday – Friday from 7:30 am – 4:45 pm.*

**Q: What are Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT)?**

A: P-EBT is a new and temporary federal food benefit for families who have one or more child(ren) who receive free or reduced-price school meals under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) at their school.

**Q: Who is eligible for P-EBT benefits?**

A: All District families who have at least one child who qualifies for free and reduced-price school meals. This includes any child in a school that provides free meals to all children. Funds are non-transferable.

**Q: If eligible, how much money will I get?**

A: The amount for each family will depend on the number of children in the household who get free or reduced-price meals and the average number of weekdays that schools are closed. Families will receive \$5.70 per eligible child per day, or \$28.50 a week. P-EBT is intended to cover breakfast and lunch for five days each week.

**Q: My child has not previously received free and reduced-price meals, but we've had a change in our income level. Am I eligible, and how do I apply?**

A: Contact your child's school to complete a Free and Reduced-Priced Meal (FARM) application as soon as possible. If you are found to be eligible for free or reduced-priced meals, your information will be automatically transferred to the District Department of Human Services (DHS), and you will receive the P-EBT benefit. If determined FARM-eligible prior to June 19, P-EBT benefits will be automatically provided for the month of FARM certification through June 19.

**Q: My family needs food now. When will I get this?**

A: DHS will be issuing P-EBT throughout June. Below are resources if you are in need of food immediately.





	Phone	Website
District Food Resources		<a href="https://coronavirus.dc.gov/food">coronavirus.dc.gov/food</a>
Capitol Area Food Bank	(202) 644-9800	<a href="https://capitalareafoodbank.org">capitalareafoodbank.org</a>
So Other Might Eat (SOME)	(202) 797-8806	<a href="https://some.org">some.org</a>
Bread for the City	(202) 265-2400	<a href="https://breadforthecity.org">breadforthecity.org</a>

**Q: How often will I get P-EBT benefits?**

A: At this time, eligible District families will receive one-time payments for the months they are eligible for benefits. P-EBT benefits will be based on the average number of school days from March 16 through June 19, 2020.

**Q: Where can I use my P-EBT benefits? What can I buy with them?**

A: You can use your P-EBT benefits to purchase food at any store that accepts SNAP. Most retailers have signs stating they accept SNAP or EBT. You can also visit [fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer-locator](https://fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer-locator) to find Authorized SNAP Retailers. You can also visit [ebtedge.com](https://ebtedge.com) or download the EBT Edge Mobile app from the Apple or Google Play store to find retailers that accept EBT cards.

In addition, you can use your P-EBT benefits to purchase food online for delivery at Amazon. You can visit [amazon.com/snap-ebt](https://amazon.com/snap-ebt) for more information.

P-EBT benefits are not transferable. You cannot provide your card to someone else.

**Q: Do I have to use all my P-EBT benefits when I get them?**

A: No. The money will carry over from month to month. Benefits that are not used within 365 days will be removed from the card.

**Q: Will getting P-EBT impact my family’s ‘public charge’ status?**

A: No. Using P-EBT benefits does not impact your or your child's immigration status. The Public Charge rule does not apply to P-EBT benefits.

**Q: Who can I contact if I have more questions?**

A: Call the P-EBT Call Center at (202) 868-6663, Monday – Friday from 7:30 am – 4:45 pm.

