



# PANDEMIC ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFER (P-EBT) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS 2021-2022 P-EBT Updated: 3.15.2022



## **ELIGIBILITY: SCHOOL LEVEL**

### **If a preschool student was gone for five consecutive days due to COVID, has the school level eligibility requirement been met?**

The preschool student would need to be enrolled and also served meals that are then claimed through the school meals program for that school building to qualify. Preschool students who do not meet this requirement (I.E. are enrolled but are not served and/or claimed through the school meals program) would not qualify their school for P-EBT benefits.

### **Is a school required to meet the school level eligibility requirement (at least one student being absent for five consecutive days due to covid) every month?**

No. Once a school meets the school level eligibility requirement, eligible students can receive P-EBT benefits for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year.

### **A school's school-level eligibility (student covid-related absence for five consecutive days) was met by a student who is no longer enrolled at the school. Can students at this school still receive P-EBT benefits?**

Yes. since the student was enrolled in your district during the time of their absence, it qualifies the other enrolled students of that school building to receive P-EBT if they are F/R eligible and have a COVID-related absence.

### **If a student's five consecutive covid-related absences span two months (I.E. absent from 9/30 through 10/6), does it still meet the school level eligibility requirement?**

Yes. The five days can be in two different months as long as they are consecutive. Weekends, pre-planned school holidays, and snow days do not qualify as covid-related absence days.

## **ELIGIBILITY: STUDENT LEVEL**

### **Do students have to qualify for Free or Reduced-priced meals to receive P-EBT benefits?**

Yes. Students must qualify for either free or reduced- priced meals to receive P-EBT. School Food Authorities (SFAs) should use the most accurate, up-to-date income application and direct certification data to determine if a student can receive P-EBT benefits.

### **Can students whose families have refused free and reduced-price meal benefits (i.e. have chosen to pay for their child's meals) be issued P-EBT funds?**

No, these students are not eligible for P-EBT funds. Families must have accepted free or reduced-price meal benefits for their students to qualify for P-EBT.

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**Once the school level eligibility is met, do individual students need to have a five consecutive day covid-related absence to qualify for P-EBT benefits?**

No. Only the initial student who meets the school level eligibility requirement needs to have five consecutive absence days due to covid. F/R eligible students enrolled at that school can be issued P-EBT benefits for covid-related absences of any duration.

**If while absent for a covid-related reason students had access to meals (I.E. sack lunches for remote learners), can those students still receive P-EBT benefits?**

Yes. If the eligibility requirements (school and student) were met, students can be issued P-EBT benefits even if they were provided access to a meal.

**Is justification required for covid-related absences?**

No. SFAs need only report the number of covid-related absence days eligible students have to receive benefits. Any kind of documentation (I.E. test results, quarantine status, etc.) is NOT required for benefit distribution.

**An eligible student qualified for P-EBT benefits but has since transferred out of the district. Should they still be included in the data upload?**

Yes. All eligible students who qualified for benefits in the selected month should be included in the data upload. NDE and DHHS will work to ensure benefits are issued to the correct address for eligible students that have transferred during the school year.

**PORTAL UPLOADS**

**If no students qualified for P-EBT benefits in a given month, should SFAs still upload a file into the NDE Portal?**

No. Portal uploads are only required for month(s) that your SFA has a student/students eligible to receive P-EBT benefits.

**Can SFAs round covid-absence days when submitting the data in the NDE Portal?**

Yes. Rounding can be used at the SFA's discretion for covid-absence days. NDE advises that SFAs utilize consistent rounding procedures to ensure equality in benefit issuance.

**Can multiple months of P-EBT data be uploaded at the same time into the portal?**

Yes. Multiple months of eligible student data can be uploaded into the portal at the same time as long as each month is contained in a separate .CSV file.

**DATA COLLECTION AND SUBMISSION**

**Do PowerSchool or Infinite Campus (two commonly used Student Information Systems) have reports to generate this data?**

SFAs are currently working with these software providers to find data collection solutions. Nutrition Services intends to host an information-sharing session over the coming weeks for SFAs to discuss how to access P-EBT data using reporting and other software functions.

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### **Are SFA's required to submit P-EBT data?**

Nutrition Services and DHHS strongly recommend that SFAs make every attempt to provide their eligible students with P-EBT benefits. These funds not only benefit the households that receive them but also provide a financial influx to the community. If your school district will not be submitting P-EBT data, it is recommend that you communicate this intent and reasoning behind it to households with enrolled students. This pre-emptive work will hopefully reduce P-EBT inquiries.

## **BENEFIT DISTRIBUTION**

### **If a student lives in two different households, where will their P-EBT card be delivered?**

Benefits will be distributed via a P-EBT card to the primary guardian/primary address on file with the school district. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the primary guardian and address on file with the school is accurate.

### **A family's P-EBT card has not yet arrived. Who should they contact?**

The family should reach out to DHHS directly at 800-383-4278 option 5 or [DHHS.NebraskaPEBT@nebraska.gov](mailto:DHHS.NebraskaPEBT@nebraska.gov). Reminder: P-EBT cards are mailed from out of state so the mail time can be up to 14 days.

## **COMMUNICATION AND AVAILABLE RESOURCES**

### **How will households be notified of P-EBT benefits?**

It is the responsibility of SFAs to notify households about P-EBT benefits they might be receiving. Please find communication templates available for use in notifying families on the Nutrition Services Homepage under 2021-2022 P-EBT Resources.

### **A previous round of P-EBT included administrative costs paid out to SFAs. Will those funds be available for 2021-2022 P-EBT?**

FNS anticipates that P-EBT Administrative Funds will be awarded for 2021-2022 P-EBT. These funds reimburse SFAs for administrative costs related to the distribution of P-EBT benefits. SFAs are encouraged to track staff hours spent on P-EBT for possible reimbursement.

### **NDE offered a webinar on 2021-2022 P-EBT for school districts. Was it recorded?**

Yes, the 2021-2022 P-EBT webinar was recorded and is available along with a PDF of the slides on the [Nutrition Services Homepage](#).