

### **1. *What is Pandemic EBT (P-EBT)?***

Federal law allows States to implement a temporary program called Pandemic- Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT), which provides eligible children with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps) benefits. Preschool (Pre-K) through 12th grade students within eligible school buildings who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP) may be eligible for P-EBT benefits. The program is administered by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and the Department is partnering with the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to ensure eligible children receive this important benefit.

### **2. *How does a school qualify for P-EBT?***

Due to COVID and for at least 5 consecutive days, a school must be closed, operating remote learning, operating with reduced attendance or hours (includes hybrid schedules) or has at least one student sick with COVID-19 or quarantined. COVID sick days and quarantine days are based on your child's school policy for identifying COVID sick days and whether a child has to quarantine and remain home.

Once the school P-EBT criteria has been met, the school must look at each child's potential eligibility for P-EBT.

Please note some schools have an online school for remote learners; however, not all online schools meet P-EBT requirements because they do not offer the NSLP or SBP to students. If your child is enrolled in virtual school or is homeschooled, please see the Questions and Answers Document for Virtual and Homeschool Students that will be available in mid-February 2023.

### **3. *How is a child in school eligible for P-EBT if the school qualifies?***

A free or reduced-price meal eligible child in school may receive P-EBT benefits for the days he or she does not attend school in person due to remote learning, sick quarantined because of COVID, or attends school in person but does not receive a meal at school to eat at school because of reduced hours. Children are not eligible for P-EBT benefits for days they attend school in person and receive meal(s) at school.

### **4. *How much will an eligible child receive?***

Each child will receive **\$8.18** (the combined daily federal reimbursement rate for breakfast and lunch for school year 2022-2023) for each day the child does not receive free or reduced-

price meals at the school because the school is closed, operating remote learning, is operating with reduced attendance or hours due to COVID-19. This also includes days a child is not at school in-person because they are having to quarantine due to COVID-19. Weekends, holidays or school breaks are not included.

#### 5. **How are P-EBT benefits issued?**

*If the child is a current SNAP recipient:*

- The P-EBT benefits may be added to the account on which the child is active.
- If the child was unable to be matched to his or her active SNAP account, you will be sent a P-EBT card in the child's name.

*If the child is not a current SNAP recipient:*

- If the child has received a P-EBT card since February 2021, benefits will be loaded to that card. If you need a replacement card, please call 1-866-386-3071.
- If the child has not received a P-EBT card since February 2021, you will receive a preloaded P-EBT card in the mail.
  - The card will be in the child's name, not the parent or guardian's name.
  - Instructions on how to activate the card will be included (also see instructions below).
  - **You must keep this new card as it will be used for any future P-EBT benefits your child is eligible for.**

Each child will receive a P-EBT card; benefits of siblings will not be grouped onto one card.

The benefits are used just like SNAP benefits. Go to <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/eligible-food-items> for a list of eligible food items than be bought with SNAP benefits.

#### 6. **How often will this benefit be issued?**

If your child meets the P-EBT criteria, benefits for August, September, October, November and December 2022 will be issued by the end of January 2023. After January, benefits will be issued to eligible children by the end of the following month. For example, benefits for January will be issued by the end of February, February will be issued by the end of March, etc.

In order for local grocery stores to be better stocked, P-EBT benefits are issued over multiple days in the last two weeks of the month rather than on a single day. Your child's benefit will be issued on a certain day based on the first letter of their last name. For example, last names beginning with A-D may receive their benefits on the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month, then E-G on the 21<sup>st</sup>, etc. This day will vary each month.

Please note, not every child will receive the P-EBT benefits on the same day, but every child will receive their benefits **by the end of the month.**

**7. Can a family apply for P-EBT benefits?**

No. P-EBT does not have an application for children enrolled in traditional “brick and mortar” schools.

**8. How long will a family have access to the P-EBT benefits?**

The P-EBT benefits will be available for 9 months. If after 9 months the P-EBT benefits have not been spent, they will be removed (expunged) from the account. Current SNAP households will still have access to their remaining SNAP benefits.

**9. Who should a family contact if they have questions regarding P-EBT?**

For general program questions, questions about your child’s benefits, please call the P-EBT customer service line at 1-866-244-0071 Option 1.