

# STATE OF NEW MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT 300 DON GASPAR SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 87501-2786 Telephone (505) 827-5800

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KURT A. STEINHAUS SECRETARY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM GOVERNOR

March 10, 2021

#### **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** School Superintendents, Charter School Directors, Business Managers,

School Boards, Governing Councils and Regional Education

Cooperatives

FROM: Michael Chavez, Director | Student Success and Wellness Bureau

**RE:** P-EBT Issuance for Missed School Meals Due to COVID

Families of about 14,000 New Mexico students will receive retroactive benefits starting the week of March 14 to cover the cost of free and reduced-price school meals their children missed in August and September due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Benefits for missed school meals in October and November will be distributed in April.

It is important that families understand that these Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfers (P-EBT) will cover only meals an eligible student missed under these conditions:

- The student missed at least five straight days of school.
- The absences were due to COVID-19 -- either the student tested positive or the student was a close contact to a student who tested positive.
- The absences were due to the student's district/school being shut down due to positive COVID cases.

The Human Services Department first issued benefits under these eligibility rules in January to cover meals K-12 students missed in April and May 2021 after schools returned to in-person learning. Prior to April 2021, every child who was eligible for a free or reduced price lunch received the benefit because most schools were in remote learning. After they reopened in April, only students with qualifying absences were eligible.

Benefits since April 2021 are allocated based on attendance data reported by schools to the Public Education Department through the STARS system. Some schools and districts did not collect or report the required attendance data last spring, and that impacted the late January issuance of benefits for April and May 2021. Since the start of the 2021-22 school year, STARS has been updated to collect the required data. It is imperative that schools and districts record student absences in the STARS system and whether absences were related to COVID to assure that families receive every benefit for which they are eligible.

New Mexico's Human Services and Public Education departments worked closely to identify eligible students and manage and distribute the benefits.

The P-EBT program was authorized by the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act to provide assistance to families with children who are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.

The Human Services Department has two hotlines for individuals to inquire about the status of their P-EBT benefits. The Human Services Department P-EBT Hotline at 1-833-415-0569 or they can call the Customer Service Center is 1-800-283-4465. Individuals can also email and reach out by email at: hsd.pebt@state.nm.us.



### NEWS RELEASE

#### STATE OF NEW MEXICO Human Services Department Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham

David R. Scrase, M.D., Cabinet Secretary Angela Medrano, Deputy Cabinet Secretary Kari Armijo, Deputy Cabinet Secretary Nicole Comeaux, J.D., M.P.H., Medicaid Director

**Contact:** Jodi McGinnis Porter jodi.mcginnis-porter@state.nm.us

March 11, 2022

#### New Mexico to deliver over \$1 million in food assistance

Benefits allocated for 14,250 school students

SANTA FE – Families of about 14,250 New Mexico students will receive benefits on March 14, to reimburse them for free and reduced-price school meals missed due to COVID-related absences.

Approximately, \$1,083,694 in Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) will be issued to cover meals that K-12 students missed last year in August and September, after schools returned to in-person learning.

The federal government adjusted the guidelines for receiving P-EBT benefits when schools returned to in-person learning in April, resulting in fewer benefits. Previously, allocations were based solely on eligibility for free and reduced lunches, but the return to in-person learning now requires the additional consideration of individual student attendance records to determine that an absence was related to COVID-19.

Some districts and schools weren't collecting cause-of-absence data last spring, but the Public Education Department updated its data collection system for the current school year to assure every eligible student receives P-EBT for qualified absences.

To offset any potential inconsistencies in reporting, New Mexico's Human Services and Public Education Departments continue to work closely to identify eligible students, manage and distribute the benefits.

Under the new guidelines, a student is eligible for school aged P-EBT if they were eligible for free or reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch Program <u>and</u> missed school for five (5) consecutive days or more due to COVID. Each school and school district is responsible for keeping track of student absences, and every student's COVID-related absence must have been reported by the school to the Public Education Department, in order for the child to be eligible for P-EBT. This includes:

- Missing school if the student tested positive for COVID and/or was in close contact with a student who tested positive and quarantined.
- If the student's district/school was shut down due to positive COVID cases.

For each day a child does not attend school in person due to COVID, the daily rate is \$7.10, an increase from \$6.82, which was issued for the 2020-2021 school year. Beginning, March 18, 2022, parents and guardians will be able to check whether their child qualified for the latest P-EBT issuance at VERIFY PEBT Information: <a href="https://www.ves.state.nm.us/vesnm/pandemic/pebt?execution=e1s1">https://www.ves.state.nm.us/vesnm/pandemic/pebt?execution=e1s1</a>

If your child has a P-EBT card, please keep the card and do not destroy it. If a new address or guardian was reported to the school, a new P-EBT card will be sent to the new address. For questions regarding your child's P-EBT card, you can contact NM PEBT Hotline directly at 1-833-415-0569.

For frequently asked questions, please visit: <u>Help Feed Your Children with Pandemic EBT | New Mexico</u> Human Services Department (state.nm.us)

The Human Services Department provides services and benefits to 1,091,026 New Mexicans through several programs including: the Medicaid Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Child Support Program, and several Behavioral Health Services.

We talk, interpret and smile in all languages. We provide written information to our customers in both English and Spanish and interpretation services are available in 58 languages through our provider, CTS Language Link. For our hearing, and speech impaired customers, we utilize Relay New Mexico, a free 24-hour service that ensures equal communication access via the telephone to individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or speech disabled.

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## CHILDCARE PANDEMIC EBT (P-EBT)



#### VERSION DATE 01/12/2022

UPDATES AND ADDITIONS WILL BY HIGHTLIGHTED

	**Questions and Answers will be updated as new information is received**
Question	Answer
What is the P-EBT Childcare issuance?	The P-EBT Childcare issuance is for children who were a member of a household that received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) at any time since October 1, 2020, under the age of 6 and *enrolled in a childcare center as defined by Food and Nutrition Services (FNS).  *FNS considers all children ages 5 and under in some sort of childcare when considering eligibility for P-EBT. This includes those that are not enrolled in a certified child care facility. For example, being cared for by family and/or friends.
What are the	To be eligible, the child must meet all these criteria:
eligibility	1. Be under 6 years of age
requirements for	2. Received SNAP benefits during the timeframe of October 2020 – May 2021
P-EBT Childcare	<ul> <li>Must receive SNAP in the month to be eligible for P-EBT. Each month is looked</li> </ul>
from October	at for eligibility.
2020-May 2021?	3. Reside in a county with a school or childcare center that was closed due to COVID-19
What are the	To be eligible, the child must meet all these criteria:
<mark>eligibility</mark>	1. Be under 6 years of age
<mark>requirements for</mark>	2. Received active SNAP in the last month of the school year
P-EBT Childcare	3. Out of this population, the State identified those children who remained active on
for June, July and	SNAP during the summer period which is June, July and August 2021.
August 2021?	
	For any of these children that were identified in 1-3, the State will issue a one-time payment of \$375.
What is the	Previously for school year 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 all school aged children that were eligible
difference	for free or reduced lunch through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) were eligible for
between the P-	P-EBT. The newest P-EBT that is being issued on October 24, 2021 is for children 5 and younger
EBT that was	on SNAP and enrolled in a childcare center as defined by Food and Nutrition Services (FNS).
previously issued	
and the P-EBT	
Childcare	
issuance?	
What months will	The P-EBT Childcare issuance is approved for children 5 and younger for only the months that
my child receive	they received SNAP benefits any time between October 1, 2020 through August 2021. There

the P-EBT	are later issuances that will occur for September 2021 ongoing. Dates and eligibility
Childcare	requirements are still being determined.
issuance for?	
If my child is not	No, your child must have received SNAP in any of the months between October 1, 2020
on SNAP but is 5	through August 2021 to receive P-EBT.
or younger and in	
childcare will they	
be eligible for the	
P-EBT Childcare	
issuance?	
How much will	The issuance depends on the physical address for the child's SNAP household and the child's
<mark>my child receive</mark>	county of residence. The average days of remote learning for the county's school district are
for the P-EBT	the number of days the child will be eligible for benefits. The amount is \$6.82 per day per
<u>Childcare</u>	child. Link to see how many days for each county and month located here.
issuance?	
	For June, July and August (Summer 2021) issuance, there will be a one time payment of \$375.
When will the P-	10/24/2021.
EBT Childcare	
issuance occur for	
months October	
2020 through	
May 2021?	
Will my child	HSD will issue new P-EBT cards only to those children eligible for the P-EBT Childcare
receive an EBT	Assistance and who do not already have an older sibling on the school aged P-EBT with the
card if eligible for	same address and guardian. If there are more than one child ages 0 through 5 in a household,
the P-EBT	the card will be mailed to the oldest child and all the eligible benefits will go onto that card. In
Childcare	case your child continues to qualify for P-EBT Childcare, keep your childs P-EBT card. Do not
issuance?	destroy.
My child was 5	For April and May there were no school closures in New Mexico, the eligibility was based off of
and younger, on	childcare closures and what county they were located. There were only half of the counties in
SNAP but only	NM that had childcare closures during those months and your child must live in that county.
was eligible for	Link here to see if the physical county you live in had closure for April and May.
months from	<u> </u>
October 1, 2020	
through March	
2021. Why did	
they not get for	
April and May	
2021?	
If I am the	No, only the adults listed on the SNAP case where the child is active can change the address to
guardian to a	receive a lost P-EBT card or to inquire about the case.
child that is	
eligible for the P-	
EBT Childcare	
issuance but not	
on the SNAP case,	
can I change the	
Jan I Grange the	

address to receive a lost P-EBT card or inquire about the case?	
Where can I use P-EBT?	Use it the same as SNAP benefits. This benefit is used to purchase SNAP-eligible foods. These are sold at hundreds of grocers across the country. They are at convenience stores. They are at farmer's markets. They are at other businesses that take SNAP. You can also use your card where you see the Quest logo. You can search for retailers that take SNAP. Find them near you. Go to SNAP Retailer Locator (arcgis.com)
Whom do I contact to see if my child is eligible for P-EBT Childcare?	Call P-EBT Customer Service. Call 1-833-415-0569.
How do I order a replacement P-EBT card through the FIS number?	<ul> <li>Call FIS Customer Service. Call 1-800-843-8303.</li> <li>Press 2 for Spanish.</li> <li>Prompt will ask for the 16-digit card number.</li> <li>If replacing a card, you can press 2 right away. Or you can wait for the next voice prompt to direct you. This is if your card is lost, stolen, or damaged. This is if it needs to be replaced.</li> <li>Once you press 2, you will be redirected to a customer service rep. They will confirm your identity. Once that is confirmed, your current card will be deactivated. They will order you a new card. That goes to the current address in the system.</li> <li>If the client wants the card mailed to a new address, they will be directed back to the state to update the address. If directed back to the state, guardian must call P-EBT Customer Service at 1-833-415-0569</li> </ul>
Who can I call if I did not get a P- EBT card for the P-EBT Childcare issuance?	Please call P-EBT Customer Service. Call 1-833-415-0569.
What do I do if I only got funds for one child and not my other children for the P-EBT Childcare issuance?	Call P-EBT Customer Service. Call 1-833-415-0569.
How can I check the balance of my child's P-EBT card?	Call FIS Customer Service. Call 1-800-843-8303. Or check online. Go to <a href="http://www.ebtedge.com">http://www.ebtedge.com</a> .
What do I do if I need a replacement P- EBT card?	Call FIS Customer Service. Call 1-800-843-8303.

What dates was	You can find issuance dates for Childcare P-EBT here.
the Childcare P-	
EBT issued?	
<mark>Can I place a</mark>	Yes. A security code may be placed on the card status to protect legal guardians, parents, or
security code on	foster parents.
my P-EBT card to	
protect my	
benefits?	

## SCHOOL AGED PANDEMIC EBT (P-EBT)



VERSION DATE 03/08/2022

#### UPDATES AND ADDITIONS WILL BY HIGHTLIGHTED

	**Questions and Answers will be updated as new information is received**
Question	Answer
Why am I getting School Aged P- EBT?	The P-EBT benefit was enacted with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. Your child can get School Aged P-EBT if they qualify for free or reduced-price school meals through the National School Lunch Program <b>and</b> missed school for 5 consecutive days due to COVID-19.
What is School Aged P-EBT for?	The P-EBT benefit supplements the free or reduced-priced meals your child would get if their school were not closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
What school year is this benefit for?	For school year 2019–2020, P-EBT benefits were issued for the months of March to June 2020.
	For school year 2020–2021, P-EBT benefits were issued for the months of August 2020 to Summer 2021.
	For school year 2021-2022, P-EBT benefits will be issued for August 2021 to June 2022.
When were the P-	For current years school aged P-EBT Issuances see below:
EBT issuances for	10/2020-11/2020 – Issuance 2/27/2021
<mark>School Aged</mark>	12/2020-01/2021 – Issuance 3/27/2021
Students?	02/2021-03/2021 - Issuance 05/05/2021 04/2021-05/2021 - Issuance 01/23/2022 Summer 2021 - Issuance 08/08/2021
	08/2021-09/2021 – Issuance 03/14/2021
	October 2021-June 2022 – Issuance dates to be determined.
How can I get this benefit?	Your child can get School Aged P-EBT if they qualify for free or reduced-price school meals through the National School Lunch Program <b>and</b> missed school for 5 consecutive days due to COVID-19. This includes:
	<ul> <li>Missing school if the student test positive for COVID and or in close contact with a student who test positive and were quarantined.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>The student also qualifies if the student's district/school was shut down due to positive COVID cases.</li> </ul>
How much will	The benefit amount will vary from child to child. It is calculated at \$7.10 per day for each day the
the benefit be for?	student missed school due to COVID-19 reasons.
	Note: for issuances that occurred in 2020 and 2021 school years, the daily rate was \$6.82.

Where can I use P-EBT?	Use it the same as SNAP benefits. This benefit is used to purchase SNAP-eligible foods. These are sold at hundreds of grocers across the country. They are at convenience stores. They are at farmer's markets. They are at other businesses that take SNAP. You can also use your card where you see the Quest logo. You can search for retailers that take SNAP. Find them near you. Go to <a href="https://usda-fns.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e1f3028b217344d78b324193b10375e4">https://usda-fns.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e1f3028b217344d78b324193b10375e4</a>
Whom do I	You can go online at <a href="https://www.yes.state.nm.us/yesnm/pandemic/pebt?execution=e1s1">https://www.yes.state.nm.us/yesnm/pandemic/pebt?execution=e1s1</a>
contact at my school to see if my child is eligible?	Or You can contact your school directly.
My child goes to a private school. He/she gets free meals. Can he/she get School Aged P-EBT?	Your child can get School Aged P-EBT if they qualify for free or reduced-price school meals through the National School Lunch Program <b>and</b> missed school for 5 consecutive days due to COVID-19.
Can children who are homeschooled get School Aged P-EBT?	Only children in National School Lunch Program (NSLP) schools can get School Aged P-EBT. That means they must go to a school in NSLP and be eligible.
Can I still pick up meals from my kid's school while I have P-EBT?	Yes
My child is not a citizen but gets free or reduced-price meals. Can they get School Aged P-EBT?	As long as a child would get free or reduced-price school meals through NSLP and missed 5 or more consecutive days of school due to COVID-19, they can get School Aged P-EBT. Their immigration status does not matter. School Aged P-EBT does not fall under Public Charge.
Will this impact me becoming a citizen?	P-EBT does not fall under Public Charge.
How are P-EBT cards issued? How are P-EBT benefits issued?	If you have a P-EBT card, the funds will go on the card. That means the card you got before. A new P-EBT card is issued for every distinct combination of address and guardian name. Kids in different families with the same guardian name will get benefits on a single card. This is because the address is the same. In case your child continues to qualify for school aged P-EBT, keep your child's P-EBT card. Do not destroy.
What if I have more than one child? Will I get more than one P- EBT card?	Most households will get one card. It will be issued in the eldest child's name. It will include P-EBT benefits for all eligible children within the household. But this depends on the address. It also depends on guardian information on file with your child's school. You might get more than one card. If you have questions about this, call 1-833-415-0569.
I have my child. Someone else got the School Aged	The School Aged P-EBT benefits are issued based on what your school district has on file for your child. If you did not get the benefit, please contact your school directly to see if your child's

P-EBT benefit.	absences due to COVID were reported and if they were eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch
Why? What can I do to get the	through the National School Lunch Program.
benefit?	
Why did I not get	Please call P-EBT Customer Service. They can check your child's information. Call 1-833-415-
a card for my	·
child? I know they	0569. Here are some possible reasons:
are eligible.	Benefits may have been paid to the eldest sibling's card.  The card may have been mailed to enother listed guardian's address. That address would
are engible.	<ul> <li>The card may have been mailed to another listed guardian's address. That address would be from the school. If so, please work with that party to get your child's benefits.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Benefits may have gone to a child outside of your household. This is if the school had</li> </ul>
	your child listed as living at that address. That address had other eligible kids. If this is
	the case, please work with that party to get your child's benefits.
	<ul> <li>We cannot separate a benefit that has already been paid out.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Benefits cannot be paid retroactively.</li> </ul>
	***For School Aged P-EBT, benefit is paid based on information the school has for the child. If
	that has changed, then the info needs to be updated with the school.***
Does the P-EBT	P-EBT benefits will be expunged after no activity within 274 days of the initial date of benefit
card expire?	activity. Once expunged, the child loses all rights to expunged benefits. This is automatic. Do not
	throw away your card. If your child is eligible for P-EBT, the benefits will go on that card.
If I do not use the	The P-EBT benefit will stay on the card for 274 days. You do not have to use it all at once. If you
P-EBT card, do I	do not use it, the benefit will be recouped for lack of use after 274 days. This is automatic.
send it back to	
HSD?	
I got a P-EBT card,	The P-EBT card is a benefit for the family. Your child's benefits can be used for all other
<mark>but I do not need</mark>	members in your household. The card and benefits cannot be transferred to another family
<mark>it. Can I give it to</mark>	or household. The P-EBT benefit will stay on the card for 274 days. If you do not use the
<mark>a family who</mark>	benefit, it will be recouped for lack of use. This is automatic.
does?	
I have never	Follow these steps:
activated an EBT	When the household gets its P-EBT card, call FIS at 1-800-843-8303 to create a PIN. You must
card. What steps	do this before the card can be used. The phone number is located on the back of the P-EBT
do I take?	card. During the call, you will be asked for the following:
	16-digit EBT card number  Prime and account holders date of high to be entered as NAA/DD (0000).
	<ul> <li>Primary account holders date of birth to be entered as MM/DD/YYYY</li> <li>Note: Spanish speakers enter DD/MM/YYYY</li> </ul>
	Primary account holders 5-digit zip code
	Requested 4-digit PIN
	Confirmation of the 4-digit PIN
	_
14/1	Once this is done, the card will be active. The PIN is set. The card can be used right away.
When setting up	Please call P-EBT Customer Service. Call 1-833-415-0569.
the P-EBT card,	
what do I do if the zip code does not	
work? What do I	
do if the zip code	
is different?	
When setting up	Please call P-EBT Customer Service. Call 1-833-415-0569.
the P-EBT card,	
what do I do if the	

child's DOB is	
incorrect?	
<mark>Who can I call if I</mark>	Call FIS Customer Service. Call 1-800-843-8303.
<mark>did not get a P-</mark>	
EBT card?	
What do I do if I	Your child can get School Aged P-EBT if they qualify for free or reduced-price school meals
<mark>only got funds for</mark>	through the National School Lunch Program <b>and</b> missed school for 5 consecutive days due to
<mark>one child</mark> and not	COVID-19. If you feel your child is eligible, contact your child's school to see if their absences due
<mark>my other</mark>	to COVID were reported and if they were eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch through the
children?	National School Lunch Program.
How can I check	Call FIS Customer Service. Call 1-800-843-8303. Or check online. Go to <a href="http://www.ebtedge.com">http://www.ebtedge.com</a> .
the balance of my	
child's P-EBT	
card?	
What do I do if I	Call FIS Customer Service. Call 1-800-843-8303.
need a	
replacement P-	
EBT card?	
How do I order a	Call FIS Customer Service. Call 1-800-843-8303.
replacement card	Press 2 for Spanish.
through the FIS	<ul> <li>Prompt will ask for the 16-digit card number.</li> </ul>
number?	• If replacing a card, you can press 2 right away. Or you can wait for the next voice prompt
	to direct you. This is if your card is lost, stolen, or damaged. This is if it needs to be
	replaced.
	<ul> <li>Once you press 2, you will be redirected to a customer service rep. They will confirm</li> </ul>
	your identity. Once that is confirmed, your current card will be deactivated. They will
	order you a new card. That goes to the current address in the system.
	<ul> <li>If the client wants the card mailed to a new address, they will be directed back</li> </ul>
	to the state to update the address.
My mailing	You will need to update your address with your child's school. Then you can contact the P-EBT
address is	Customer Service at 1-833-415-0569.
different from the	Customer Service at 1-055-415-0505.
one used to	For CCSC employees only: CCSC is responsible for Tier 1 calls for P-EBT information. If the P-EBT
register my	recipient calls CCSC prior to contacting the P-EBT hotline, the worker must answer all questions
children for	based on the P-EBT FAQ. Any questions they can't answer can be forwarded to the constituent
school. How do I	services email. CCSC workers must help P-EBT recipients. They must give the client the P-EBT
update this to get	hotline number for future reference.
the P-EBT card?	notable harmon for factor energy
The School Aged	Yes. Because you are the child's guardian, your child's school, FIS and P-EBT Customer Service
P-EBT card is	staff will work with you. They will try to address and alleviate any issues you may be having.
under my child's	otal. This is a with your filey will a y to address and alleviate any issues you may be maving.
name. Can I speak	
with Customer	
Service if I'm	
having issues with	
my card?	
If a child's	Yes. A new P-EBT card will be sent, only for those children that had the change in address and
address and	guardian.
guardian changes	Pagi gigi.
guaraturi ciluliyes	

for School Aged - P-EBT, will a new P-EBT card be sent out? If the eldest sibling has aged out or graduated during school year, will a new P-EBT card be sent out for any remaining children in the household?	Yes. A new P-EBT card will be sent in the name of the next eldest child.
Why does my P- EBT card show as lost/stolen? I hear this when I call the 1-800 number. I called to check the status of my child's School Aged P-EBT benefits.	<ul> <li>If a new or updated guardian and address were reported by the child's school, a new card was issued. It went to the new guardian. It went to the updated address. The original card will now have a lost/stolen or damaged status.</li> <li>If the eldest child is 18 and graduates, a new card will go to the next eldest child in the household that gets P-EBT. The original card issued to the eldest child will have a lost/stolen or damaged status.</li> <li>Other reasons can be checked with P-EBT Customer Service. Call 1-833-415-0569.</li> </ul>
Can I place a security code on my P-EBT card to protect my benefits?	Yes. A security code may be placed on the card status to protect legal guardians, parents, or foster parents.
How are school absences due to COVID reported for school aged students?	Each District/School keeps track of each of these absences to report this data to the PED for P-EBT eligibility for the time the student did not have access to school breakfast or lunch during April 2021 ongoing. This data must have been reported by the school in order for the school aged child to be eligible.