

Division of Benefit Programs

Frequently Asked Questions about P-EBT

Updated September 24, 2020

(This information will be updated as additional information becomes available.)

Page Link: <https://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/pebt.cgi>

1. What is the purpose of P-EBT?

The purpose of the P-EBT benefit is to supplement existing nutrition programs for low-income households during the COVID-19 pandemic. P-EBT benefits are calculated at the rate of \$5.86 per day per child for each day schools will be operating under a 100% virtual or hybrid model.

2. Who is eligible for the second release P-EBT benefits?

Students who are learning virtually for at least five consecutive days and are eligible for free or reduced-price meals at school may receive another P-EBT benefit this fall. Households that previously received P-EBT will have the new benefit automatically added to their card. If you have lost or no longer have your card, contact our third-party vendor, [ConnectEBT](#), at 1-866-281-2448 to request a replacement card. Please allow 7 - 10 business days for processing. If you are newly eligible, a P-EBT card will be mailed to you or funds will be added to your SNAP EBT card.

3. How do I know if I am eligible?

Participating schools will provide information for all eligible students directly to VDSS. Households do not have to apply for P-EBT. If you believe there are eligible students in your household but you do not receive P-EBT by the middle of October, please use the [P-EBT Inquiry Form](#) to submit your question.

4. My family needs food now, what can we do?

Many schools and community locations are distributing meals to school-aged children now. To find locations in your area, text FOOD or COMIDA to 877-877 or visit your local school division website. Students and families who receive P-EBT should continue to participate in other food assistance programs, such as meals provided by schools. P-EBT does not replace other assistance. If your family does not already receive [SNAP](#) benefits (food assistance), you should apply for assistance immediately by visiting [CommonHelp](#) or by calling 1-855-635-4370. For information about other food assistance in your area, call 2-1-1.

5. If eligible, how much P-EBT will I get?

The benefit amount will vary depending on when your school opened for the 2020-21 school year and if your school is operating under a 100% virtual or a hybrid model. P-EBT benefits are calculated at the rate of \$5.86 per day per child for each day the school will be operating under a 100% virtual or hybrid model.

6. When will P-EBT benefits be available?

If your family is currently receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and you are eligible for P-EBT, it will be added to your card no later than September 30th.

7. What will happen to my P-EBT card if my family has moved?

VDSS will use the current mailing address from your student's school record. If that address is not correct, the P-EBT card will be recorded as undeliverable in the VDSS system. VDSS will work with local school divisions and will attempt to contact you for corrected mailing address information. If possible, contact your school now to update the address in your student's school record. If you do not receive your P-EBT card by mid-October and you have not been contacted, please use the [P-EBT Inquiry Form](#) to submit your question.

8. Where can I use my P-EBT benefits?

You can use your P-EBT benefits at any store that accepts SNAP. Most retailers have signs stating they accept SNAP or EBT. P-EBT may also be used to purchase food through Amazon and Walmart's online platforms as part of Virginia's online food purchasing pilot program.

9. What can I buy with P-EBT benefits?

You can buy any SNAP-eligible food with P-EBT. Most foods are SNAP-eligible, except prepared foods and foods sold hot. A list of SNAP-eligible food is on the [USDA](#) website.

10. Do I have to use all my P-EBT benefits at once?

No. The money will carry over from month to month. After one year, unused P-EBT benefits will be removed from the card.

11. What should I do if I do not want the P-EBT benefits?

Households that do not want to use their P-EBT benefits must destroy the P-EBT card when they receive it. P-EBT benefits are not transferable. Do not give the card to anyone else. Destroy the card by cutting through the magnetic stripe and disposing of it securely. If you change your mind, the P-EBT benefits will be available to you for 365 days. You may call 1-866-281-2448 to access your P-EBT benefits for up to one year.

12. What do I do if my P-EBT card is lost?

There are three possible ways to request a replacement card. You may call 1-866-281-2448 to report your card lost and ask for a replacement; if you have registered through [ConnectEBT](#), you may order your card through your logon; or if you have downloaded the ConnectEBT app on your mobile device you may order after you log on. A replacement card may take 7 - 10 business days to reach you.

13. How do I PIN my card?

There are three ways to PIN your P-EBT card and manage your benefits account. You may call 1-866-281-2448; log on to [ConnectEBT](#); or download the ConnectEBT app on your mobile device. Secure information detailing how to PIN your card will be included in the envelope with your card.

14. Are Head Start children eligible for P-EBT benefits?

Head Start children are eligible for P-EBT ONLY IF they attend a Head Start program in a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Some Head Start programs receive meals through other funding sources and children attending those are not eligible. Head Start students who are not claimed under the NSLP/SBP are not eligible for PEBT.

15. Who receives the P-EBT benefit for eligible children?

The P-EBT benefits will be sent to the parent or guardian on the school division's file of children eligible for free or reduced meals.

16. Are home-schooled children eligible for P-EBT?

The program is for eligible students enrolled in the free and reduced school lunch program.

17. Does P-EBT count against me under public charge?

No, it does not. Using P-EBT benefits does not impact you or your child's immigration status. The public charge rule does not apply to P-EBT benefits. These benefits are for families with children who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.

18. Are non-citizen children eligible for P-EBT?

Non-citizen children are eligible if they are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.