

Pandemic EBT

Information about Pandemic EBT, or P-EBT

P-EBT is a federal food program. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS), in collaboration with the California Department of Education (CDE), received approval to operate the program in response to COVID-19 related school and child care closures. P-EBT provides food benefits to help families with young children (aged 0-6) who got CalFresh Food benefits between October 2020 and May 2021 and school age children who were eligible for free or reduced-price school meals through the federal School Breakfast or National School Lunch Program for School Year 2020-21, and assumed to have attended school via distance learning at least some of that time.

P-EBT 2.0 Eligibility & More Information

Young children are eligible for P-EBT 2.0 if between October 1, 2020, and May 31, 2021, they were:

- Age 0-6 years old; and
- Part of a household getting CalFresh food benefits; and
- Living in a county where at least one school facility is closed or is limiting in-person instruction.

School aged children are eligible for P-EBT 2.0 if they were:

- Enrolled at a school for school year 2020-21 that participated in the federal School Breakfast Program or National School Lunch Program; and
- Eligible to get free or reduced-price meals for school year 2020-21; and
- Assumed to have attended school via all distance learning or a hybrid of all distance learning and in-person learning at least some days of the week during school year 2020-21.

P-EBT 2.0 cards for eligible young children will be automatically mailed beginning early July 2021 through August 2021, while P-EBT 2.0 cards for eligible school age children will be automatically mailed beginning early August 2021 through November 2021.

Cards will be mailed by age group in alphabetical order based on the first name of the eligible child. *There is NO P-EBT 2.0 application.*

Children eligible for free school meals based on their attendance at a school where all children can get free breakfast, lunch, or both, are also eligible for P-EBT and will get a card automatically in the mail. This is true even if the child did not individually apply for free or reduced-price school meals. Families who feel they do not need P-EBT benefits can choose to not accept P-EBT benefits by destroying their card before using it.

Do not throw your card away as it will be reloaded with additional benefits. Each eligible child will receive their own P-EBT 2.0 card. The first issuance will provide benefits for the months of October 2020 to January 2021 and a second issuance coming later provides benefits for February 2021 to May 2021. If California is approved to provide Summer P-EBT benefits, a third issuance will provide benefits for June 2021 to August 2021.

P-EBT 2.0 does not:

- Require sign-up or an application;
- Affect other benefits you may be receiving;
- Impact immigration or make the recipient a public charge;

For more information, please visit the P-EBT website at <https://ca.p-ebt.org/>

Summer P-EBT

Recently, Congress extended P-EBT through the summer of 2021. If California is approved to provide Summer P-EBT benefits, eligible children will receive a standard Summer P-EBT benefit of \$375, which will be reloaded on their existing P-EBT 2.0 card. More information on Summer P-EBT is coming soon!

P-EBT Support

Families that have already received a P-EBT card and need assistance with PIN set-up, need to request a replacement card, or did not receive their card in the mail as expected, may contact the P-EBT Helpline at (877) 328-9677 for help.

Families that have not received a P-EBT card but have questions about their P-EBT eligibility can also contact the P-EBT Helpline at (877) 328-9677.

Program History

Before P-EBT 2.0, there was P-EBT 1.0 and the P-EBT extension.

P-EBT 1.0

P-EBT 1.0 benefits were provided to children who were eligible for free or reduced-price meals during the 2019-2020 school year at a school participating in the federal School Breakfast or National School Lunch Program. P-EBT 1.0 benefits have now been issued to all eligible children.

P-EBT Extension

California was also authorized to provide additional P-EBT food benefits for the months of August and September 2020. This is referred to as the "P-EBT Extension".

Children were eligible for P-EBT extension benefits if they:

- Previously received P-EBT benefits for the 2019-20 school year;
- Were attending a California school participating in the federal School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs for the 2020-21 school year; and
- Were assumed to be attending school virtually or via a hybrid model of virtual and in-person instruction for the 2020-21 school year.

Under the P-EBT extension, each eligible child received a new P-EBT card with P-EBT benefits for the months of August and September 2020. These new P-EBT cards were mailed directly to families in late October through late December. Eligible families did not need to apply to receive P-EBT extension benefits.

Families who received P-EBT Extension benefits will get a small supplement for the months of August and September 2020 for parity with children newly eligible for P-EBT 2.0. Families who did not receive P-EBT extension benefits, but have recently been determined eligible for P-EBT 2.0, will get benefits for August and September 2020 with their P-EBT 2.0 benefits for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year.