

Dear School Nutrition Partners:

On August 2, 2022, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved the California Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) State plan for school age children in School Year (SY) 2021–22. The USDA also recently approved the California Summer 2022 P-EBT plan. This communication provides eligibility information, timeline for benefit issuance, and communication and resources for households. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is the lead state agency for P-EBT benefits with data support from the California Department of Education (CDE).

Note: P-EBT is a federal program that gives eligible households food benefits to replace in person school meals that children missed due to the pandemic. **P-EBT benefit levels are based on the amount of time a student missed school meals because they attended school through independent study (IS), or attended school in-person but were absent presumed due to COVID-19.** Therefore, the number of students that qualify for P-EBT in SY 2021-22 and corresponding benefit levels may be **significantly lower than in prior P-EBT issuances.**

SY 2021–22 P-EBT Eligibility and Benefits Timeline

SY 2021–22 P-EBT benefits will be provided to school age children that meet **all** the following requirements:

- Attended a school that participated in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), or Seamless Summer Option (SSO), in SY 2021–22
- Student eligibility:
 - Determined eligible in SY 2021–22 or SY 2020–21 for free or reduced-price meals through meal application, alternative income form, direct certification, or designation as homeless, migrant, or foster; **or**
 - Attended a school that participates in Provision 2 or the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), regardless of individual student eligibility
- Missed in-person instruction through excused absences **for five school days or more in a month**, or **attended school virtually** through an IS program

Eligible children **do not need to apply for SY 2021–22 P-EBT** to receive P-EBT benefits. The CDE will use eligibility data and end of year absence data already maintained in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) to identify eligible children. The CDE will collect attendance and IS data in September using a separate collection tool. More detailed information on data needs have been communicated both to student information system vendors and local educational agency (LEA) CALPADS Administrators.

The amount of benefit each student will receive is based on the daily rate of \$7.10 multiplied by the number of days of IS attendance or excused absences of five or more days in a month, as reported by the LEA in CALPADS and by the data collection tool. The CDE will provide the necessary data to the CDSS in October.

Distribution of P-EBT cards to school age children will occur in November through December 2022. Cards mailed during this timeframe will have SY 2021–22 P-EBT benefits for the months of August 2021 through December 2021. Cards will be

automatically reloaded with a second issuance of benefits in late November and December 2022 with P-EBT benefits for the months of January 2022 through May 2022. **P-EBT cards will be mailed to the mailing address in CALPADS on October 1, 2022.** The CDE requests that LEAs populate either the school or district address for any student records where no address is available, such as for students experiencing homelessness or otherwise having no permanent address.

Summer 2022 Benefits and Timeline

Summer 2022 P-EBT will be provided to school age children that meet **all** the following requirements:

- Enrolled for at least one day in May 2022 in a school that participated in the NSLP, SBP, or SSO in SY 2021-22
- Student eligibility:
 - Determined eligible in SY 2021–22 for free or reduced-price meals through meal application, alternative income form, direct certification, or designation as homeless, migrant, or foster; **or**
 - Attended a school that participates in Provision 2 or CEP, regardless of individual student eligibility

In addition, students not enrolled as of May 2022 (such as new transfer students) may be eligible for Summer 2022 P-EBT. Students newly eligible with a CALPADS eligibility start date on or before August 15, 2022, will receive Summer 2022 P-EBT.

The Summer 2022 P-EBT is for the period from June through August 2022, and has a set benefit amount of \$391. Students that qualify will be mailed cards in November and December 2022, or benefits will be loaded on to existing cards for students that qualified for SY 2021–22 P-EBT.

Note: There are several situations in which students may not qualify for Summer 2022 P-EBT, which include the following:

- Exited school or graduated prior to May 1, 2022
- Transferred out of state
- Transferred to a school not participating in NSLP, SBP, or SSO before May 1, 2022
- Enrolled as a new kindergarten student in SY 2022–23 (kindergarten students may still qualify for Summer P-EBT if they received CalFresh during the Summer under the California P-EBT childcare-aged plan)

- Not eligible in May 2022, and adds a school site with new participation in CEP or Provision in SY 2022–23 that did not participate in CEP or Provision in SY 2021–22

Communications and Resources for Eligible Households

The CDSS will send communications about the upcoming availability of SY 2021–22 P-EBT benefits to eligible households prior to card distribution and the second issuance of SY 2021–22 P-EBT benefits. In addition, the CDSS has resources for eligible households and partners available in multiple languages on a new P-EBT web page at <https://capandemic-ebt.org/>.

The CDSS created the P-EBT Helpline to assist eligible households with questions about P-EBT. The P-EBT Helpline can assist with PIN set-up, address changes, request for replacement cards, or general questions about eligibility and benefits.

In addition, the P-EBT Helpline is more equipped to assist with inquiries and address individual cases. A new live chat feature will be available on the P-EBT website to provide general support. The contact information for the P-EBT Helpline is below.

Private Schools

Private schools are not required to keep student eligibility information in CALPADS. Therefore, private schools will be provided a separate process to report eligible student information for P-EBT benefits. The eligibility, benefits, and timeframes are the same and should not be impacted. The CDE will provide private schools more information in a separate communication.

Contact Information

Households that require assistance with P-EBT cards can call the P-EBT Helpline at 877-328-9677 (Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.)

For more information about P-EBT, please visit the CDSS P-EBT web page at <https://capandemic-ebt.org/>.

For **LEAs** with questions about P-EBT, please email the CDE at PEBT@cde.ca.gov.

Thank you.

Nutrition Services Division

California Department of Education

COVID-19 Guidance in CNPs | <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/cnpcovid19guidance.asp>

NSD Customer Service Survey | <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/nsdcs.asp>

Twitter | [@CDENutrition](https://twitter.com/CDENutrition)

Course Catalog | www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/ed/cnpcoursecatalog.asp