

Pandemic EBT

Parent/Guardian Frequently Asked Questions 2021-2022 School Year

What is P-EBT

1. What is Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT)?

- P-EBT provides supplemental food assistance benefits to students who have temporarily lost access to free or reduced-price school meals due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of the program is to make sure no qualified student goes hungry by missing out on school meals.

Eligibility

1. Does my student qualify for Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT)?

- Eligibility starts if the student is/was:
 - Enrolled at a school that participates in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Program, or the Child and Adult Care Food Program **AND**
 - Is approved to receive free or reduced meals at their school (including directly certified students and CEP schools) **AND**
 - Did not receive instruction in-person for some or all the month due to a [COVID 19 related absence](#) **OR**
 - If attending fully in-person and meals were not provided and eaten at school during the instruction day due to COVID-19

2. Some school districts qualify for a Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) where all students are eligible for free meals, regardless of income. Are those students eligible for P-EBT?

- Students at a CEP school are eligible once the following conditions are all met:
 - the school they attend meets school eligibility guidelines **AND**
 - the student receives reduced in-person instruction due to [COVID-19 related absence](#) **AND**
 - the student missed free or reduced meals meant to be served and eaten during the instruction day due to COVID-19
- CEP should not be confused with the Extended Summer Food Service Program that provides free meals to all students attending school in person this school year.

3. Do Early College students qualify for P-EBT?

- Students in early college programs may qualify for P-EBT if:
 - They meet the Free or Reduced-Price Meal Eligibility guidelines **AND**
 - Meal funding for the program must be through the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Program, or the Child and Adult Care Food Program **AND**
 - Have reduced in-person learning due to [COVID-19 related absence](#) **AND** missed free or reduced meals meant to be served and eaten during the instruction day due to COVID-19
- 4. We pick up “Grab-and-Go” meals from the school. Do we qualify for P-EBT?**
- Meal pick-up or “Grab-and-Go” lunches do not affect P-EBT eligibility
- 5. My student gets free lunch right now, do they qualify for P-EBT?**
- Your student may qualify for P-EBT if:
 - They meet the Free or Reduced-Price Meal Eligibility guidelines **AND**
 - Meal funding for the program must be received through the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Program, or the Child and Adult Care Food Program **AND**
 - Have reduced in-person learning due to [COVID-19 related absence](#) **AND** missed free or reduced meals meant to be served and eaten during the instruction day due to COVID-19
- 6. Do I need to apply for P-EBT?**
- No, there is no P-EBT application process.
 - MDHHS and MDE are working directly with school districts to obtain information that allows direct issuance of benefits to eligible students
- 7. Do I need to reapply each month?**
- No, benefit eligibility is automatically determined
- 8. When will my student receive P-EBT benefits?**
- We anticipate the first benefit cycle to begin in April.
 - If you do not receive benefits by mid-May and your student was
 - Free or Reduced meal eligible **AND**
 - Did not receive instruction in-person for some or all the month due to [COVID-19 related absence](#) (school closures for staffing shortages do not qualify for P-EBT benefits) **AND**
 - Their school participates in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Program, or the Child and Adult Care Food Program **AND**
 - Their school has met the 5-day threshold
 - Then please complete the Reconsideration Form found at www.michigan.gov/pebt
- 9. My student was approved for free or reduced meals after the school year started, will they get benefits for the full school year?**
- P-EBT benefit eligibility will begin on the submission date of an approved application for Free or Reduced – Price Meals

Benefits and Payment Info

1. How will I receive P-EBT benefits?

- Any eligible student on an active Food Assistance case will receive their P-EBT benefits on the EBT/Bridge card attached to that case
- All other eligible students will receive a new P-EBT card in the mail. A separate card will be sent for each eligible student not on an active Food Assistance case
- Be sure to keep your address updated with both MDHHS and your school (both the office and the school lunch program)

2. If parents do not live together which household receives the P-EBT benefits?

- If your student is active for Food Assistance with MDHHS the P-EBT benefits will be issued to the bridge card associated with the active Food Assistance case
- If there is no active Food Assistance case but the student has an active medical benefits case with MDHHS the P-EBT benefits will be issued on a new P-EBT card and mailed to the address of that active medical assistance case
- If the student has no active MDHHS case a new P-EBT card will be sent to the address that is currently on file with the student's school Free or Reduced Meal Program
- Be sure to keep your address updated with both MDHHS and your school (both the office and the school lunch program)

2. What months does the P-EBT program cover?

- September 2021 through June 2022

3. When will my card be loaded?

- Benefits are expected to begin being issued in April
- The following chart is the anticipated issuance schedule and may be subject to [change](#)^[CK(1)][ML\(2\)](#)

ATTENDANCE MONTHS	SCHOOL REPORTS	ISSUANCE MONTH
September 2021 - December 2021	March	April
January 2022 – February 2022	April	May
March 2022 – April 2022	May	June
May 2022 - June 2022* <i>*June benefits will be issued based on May's reported modality</i>	June	July

4. How much P-EBT will I get?

- Benefit amount depends on the type of instruction your student received for each month and the number of days missed due to COVID-19
 - In-Person – No benefit Payment
 - Remote – Benefit payment based on number of days missed due to COVID-19^[ML(3)]

5. What if I received only a partial payment or no payment at all for a month?

- Initial automatic payment is based on how the school reports overall school attendance for the month
- Parents/Guardians may submit a Reconsideration Form if they can verify that the attendance type reported by the school did not match the student's attendance due to [COVID-19 related absence\(s\)](#)
- The P-EBT Reconsideration Form is available on the State of Michigan P-EBT website www.michigan.gov/pebt

6. How can I check my balance or activity?

- Call the EBT customer service number (888) 678-8914
- Or navigate to this link: www.ebtedge.com

7. How long do I have to use my P-EBT benefits?

- The card must be used at least once in twelve months, or the benefits will be expunged
- Once expunged, benefits cannot be redeposited or reissued

Card Questions

1. Will I receive a new P-EBT card if I previously had one?

- Yes. Past P-EBT cards will not be re-used
- Remember, if your student currently has active Food Assistance their P-EBT benefits will be loaded onto the Bridge Card associated with that case

2. How do I activate my card?

- Call the number on the back of the card - (888) 678-8914
 - First choice is language
 - 1 for English
 - 2 for Spanish
 - Second choice
 - Choose 1 for Food Stamps and Cash
 - Enter 16-digit card number from front of card
 - Enter "0000" (four zeroes) for the social security number when prompted.
 - Enter the birthdate of the student whose name is on the card
 - Choose 4-digit Pin (any 4 numbers you choose) and enter
 - Enter your 4-digit Pin again to confirm, card is now active
- Or visit www.ebtedge.com
 - This option will also allow you to verify deposits, see transactions and check your balance quickly
 - On the left-hand side of the webpage click "Cardholder Login"

- Next to “First time logging in” click “Register Here”
 - Enter required Information
 - User ID – You choose - User ID must be between 4-35 characters in length and contain at least one alphabetical character
 - Password with Confirmation - The Password can be 6-8 characters and must contain at least one upper case alphabetical character, one lower case alphabetical character, and one number. Special characters such as @, #, and \$ can be used
 - First Name
 - Last Name
 - Email Address
 - Phone Number
 - Once the User ID and Password have been successfully created, the application will redirect the cardholder to setup challenge questions
 - Select and answer challenge questions from the dropdown menu
 - At this point you will be prompted to link your card to your account, click “Add Account” and follow prompts
- 3. How do I use my P-EBT card? What can I buy? Where can I use my P-EBT Card?**
- The P-EBT card is used the same way as a traditional EBT card or “Bridge Card”
 - Please visit <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/eligible-food-items> for more information
- 4. I lost my card. How do I get a replacement?**
- Contact customer service toll-free at (888) 678-8914. They are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
 - Your replacement card will be mailed within 3 to 5 business days
 - You will not have to activate this card
 - The PIN you used on your old card will work with your new card
 - Once you order a replacement card your old card will no longer work
- 5. I received a card for a student that is not in my home. What should I do?**
- Mark the envelope as “Return to Sender - Not at this Address”
 - Close securely and return

Address Help

- 1. Can I have my card sent somewhere else?**
 - No. When a card is mailed, it will be mailed to the students Medicaid case address or the address the school provided
- 2. Can cards be sent to PO Boxes?**
 - Yes, if the PO Box is the listed address for the student
- 3. I set up mail forwarding with the Post Office. Will I receive my P-EBT card?**
 - No. The P-EBT card will NOT be forwarded

- If the student is on Medicaid, make sure your address is updated with the Department of Health and Human Services by contacting your caseworker or update online at [MiBridges](#)
 - If the card was mailed to an address provided by the school, you must update your address at the school and with the school lunch program
 - Once the address has been updated with your school you will need to contact the P-EBT customer service call center, and they will work with you to have a new card issued
- 4. What should I do if I move to a new address?**
- Update your address at the school (both in the office and with food services) and with MDHHS if your student has an active Food Assistance or Medicaid case
- 5. Is there a deadline to update my address with the school?**
- There is no deadline to update address information with local [schools](#)^[ML(4)]
 - Whenever there is a change in address your school should be notified as soon as possible

Reconsiderations

- 1. Where do I get a Reconsideration Form?**
- The P-EBT Reconsideration Form is available at www.michigan.gov/pebt
- 2. When do I complete a Reconsideration Form?**
- A Reconsideration Form is completed if your child's attendance type is different than the attendance type the school reported **AND**
 - The absence is a [COVID-19 related absence](#) (school closures due to staffing shortages do not qualify for P-EBT benefits)
- 3. What do I need to complete the Reconsideration process?**
- A completed Reconsideration Form including:
 - Section 1 and 2 completed by parent or legal guardian
 - Section 3 "School Use Only" completed by school staff **or**
 - Verification letter from the school which includes:
 - All information from "School Use Only" section
 - Dates of [COVID-19 related absences](#)
 - Date of Free/Reduced Meal approval
- 4. How do I submit the Reconsideration Form?**
- Email completed form and school verification (only if school does not complete Section 3) to mdhhs-pebt@michigan.gov
 - Completed form and school verification (sent only if School does not complete Section 3) must be together in one email.
 - Mail completed form to: MDHHS/SPO PO Box 30037 Ste 1403 Lansing MI 48909
 - Reconsiderations must be received by June 30, 2022 to be processed
- 5. What is a COVID-19 related absence?**
- School or State mandated absence or closure
 - School directs student to stay home for COVID-19 related instance
 - Stay at home mandate ordered by state due to COVID-19

- School closures due to staffing shortages **do not** qualify for P-EBT benefits^[ML(5)]^[ML(6)]
 - Parent Initiated absence
 - An absence initiated by the parent that is recognized and accepted by school officials as COVID-19 related
 - A parent's decision to keep their child home after a positive test or possible exposure to COVID-19
 - A parent's decision to keep their child home after exposure to COVID-19 at school in cases where the school does not direct the child to stay home
- 6. When will Reconsiderations be processed and paid?**
- Reconsiderations will be processed in the order they are received
 - Reconsideration benefits, if approved, will be paid during the next eligible benefit issuance
- 7. Is there a Deadline for Reconsiderations?**
- Yes, Reconsiderations must be received by June 30, 2022 to be processed

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) does not discriminate against any individual or group because of race, religion, age, national origin, color, height, weight, marital status, genetic information, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, political beliefs, or disability.