



School Administration Frequently Asked Questions 2022-2023 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. How do I know if our district/school is eligible?

- Each school building within the district is considered for eligibility separately
- To be eligible, a school must meet all the following criteria:
 - Be closed or have reduced in person learning for 5 consecutive school days in the current school year due to COVID-19 (school closures due to staffing shortage do not count toward 5 Day threshold) **AND**
 - Be a provider of the National School Lunch or Breakfast Program or be a CEP school or participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

2. Modality Hierarchy

- If 10% or more of the student population are in-person for the entire month the school will report **In-Person** and no benefits will be issued automatically
 - NOTE: In this situation, individual students who have a modality other than **In-Person** will have the opportunity to request a reconsideration
- If more than 90% of the student population is fully remote for the entire month the school will report as **Primarily Remote** and benefits will be issued automatically to eligible students
- Changes made mid-month:
 - Schools will report **Hybrid** if both of the following circumstances are met in a month and benefits will be issued based on number of instructional days primarily remote
 - School level circumstance changes in the month: modality, closure (closures due to staffing shortage do not count), 5-Day threshold met, **AND**

- More than 10% of the student population attended partially in-person and partially remote for the entire month
- **Please Note:** When reporting Hybrid, schools will need to report the number of instructional days a school building participated in primarily remote learning or was closed due to COVID-19 (school closures due to staffing shortages do not count)

3. What is the 5-Day Threshold?

- For a school building to be eligible they must have 5 consecutive school days of reduced in-person learning due to COVID-19 this school year (school closures due to staffing shortages do not count toward 5-Day threshold), refer to the 5-day threshold work sheet (insert link once worksheet is posted online)
- The 5-day threshold only needs to be met once per building during the school year

4. What is Attendance Type?

- Attendance type is how students receive instruction.
- Refer to the Attendance Type Worksheet (insert link once posted online) for more detail
- Attendance Type needs to be entered for each month of the school year beginning the month the 5-day threshold is met

5. What is a COVID-19 related absence?

- **School Initiated**
 - School directs student(s) to stay home for a COVID-19 related reason
 - A school ordered quarantine of a student, a group of students, a classroom, or a school
 - Stay-at-home order mandated by the school, whatever its duration, if it is part of the school's or the state's protocol for managing COVID-19 outbreaks, positive tests, and/or potential exposure
 - School closures due to staffing shortages do not count
- **Parent Initiated**
 - 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
 - If a district is not tracking COVID related absences, any unplanned illness absence lasting 5 or more school days will qualify

6. Free/Reduced Meal Eligibility Changes

- There will be no retroactive benefits for households newly determined eligible during the 2022-2023 School Year
- When applications for Free/Reduced Meals are approved after the start of the school year; eligibility will begin on the submission date of the approved application

7. How do I know which students are eligible?

- Eligibility starts if the student was:
 - Enrolled at a school that met the 5-day threshold **AND**

- 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 COVID-19 **OR**
 - If attending fully in-person, meals were not provided and eaten at school during the instruction day due to COVID-19
- 8. My school is a CEP school, are these students eligible?**
- Students at a CEP school are eligible once the school building meets the 5-day threshold and the student receives reduced in-person instruction due to COVID-19
- 9. My school reported primarily in-person, but some students attend remote. Are the remote students eligible?**
- Once the school building meets the 5-day threshold, and the building reports primarily in-person or hybrid, a parent may request a Reconsideration for students that attend fully remote
- 10. Are students that reside in a residential institution eligible for P-EBT benefits?**
- No

Reporting

1. Overview

- Local school districts will complete a spreadsheet indicating the school level attendance type for each building within their jurisdiction.
 - Data will be requested monthly to collect attendance type for previous month(s). Initial benefits will be issued based on those responses.
 - If a district reports that a school building went fully remote mid-month, the district will report the number of instructional days the school building participated in primarily remote learning or was closed due to COVID-19 (school closures due to staffing shortages do not count for P-EBT benefits)
- Districts will report a primary attendance type by building based on the following hierarchy:
 - If 10% or more of the student population are in-person for the entire month the school will report “Primarily In-Person” and no benefits will be issued.
 - NOTE: In this situation, individual students who have a specific schedule other than fully in-person will have the opportunity to request a reconsideration.
 - If 90% of the student population is fully remote for the entire month the school will report as “Primarily Remote” and benefits will be issued based on the number of days remote
 - Changes mid-month: schools will report “Hybrid” if both of the following circumstances are met in a month and benefits will be issued based on the number of days remote. School level circumstance changes in the month: attendance type, closure, threshold met, **and**

- More than 10% of the student population attended partially in-person and partially remote for the entire month.
- Benefit issuance will be based on **the specific number of days that the school was primarily remote due to COVID-19.**
- School will need to report the number of instructional days the school building participated in primarily remote learning or was closed due to COVID-19 (school closures due to staffing shortages do not count for P-EBT benefits)

2. How do I know which months I should be reporting for?

- When you receive the reporting spreadsheet you will see the months for which we are collecting data
- It's important to note that even if you report available months prior to their collection month, the issuance month will remain as shown above.
 - For example; if you report February in March, benefit issuance for February will remain in May

ATTENDANCE MONTHS	COLLECTION MONTH	ISSUANCE MONTH
September 2022 - December 2022	March	April
January 2023 – February 2023	April	May
March 2023 – May 2023	May	June

3. I submitted my report and need to update it, what do I do now?

- If you discover an error, you can email MDHHS P-EBT Customer service at MDHHS-PEBT@michigan.gov please include “P-EBT Reporting Issue” in the subject line and we will contact you regarding the error

4. We had a student left off the list last year. How do we know the student is on the list this year?

- Review your MSDS record for the student
 - Ensure that the student(s) address and FRL status are entered correctly
 - Verify that student is listed as attending a school that participates with National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program
 - If not, you will need to do a student record maintenance (SRM) and update the information
- MDHHS is not able to add students to the eligibility list or make corrections/changes to MSDS
- Eligibility information is gathered by Michigan Department of Education (MDE) at Fall, Spring, and End of Year collection and supplied to MDHHS

5. My entire school district is CEP, do I still have to report?

- Yes, all districts will need to report and provide survey information for each school building

- Student eligibility cannot be determined for any building that fails to report on the P-EBT Eligibility survey, students in non-reporting districts are not eligible for P-EBT benefits

Free and Reduced-Price Eligibility and Michigan School Data System (MSDS)

1. Who decides student eligibility?

- Data entered in MSDS by the schools is used to determine student eligibility
 - MDE pulls that data from MSDS then supplies MDHHS with a list of eligible students following Fall Collection
 - MDHHS receives updates from MDE following Spring and End of Year Collection
- MDHHS cannot add students to the P-EBT program or change Free Reduced Lunch Status in MSDS

2. Address line one in MSDS is for residential addresses only, how will this effect mailing benefits?

- Students who are active on a Food Assistance case with MDHHS will receive benefits on the EBT (Bridge) card for the Food Assistance case
- For students on Medicaid (MA) but not Food Assistance, the address associated with their Medicaid case will be used
- For all other students, the MSDS address will be used
 - If a mailing address is available in MSDS that will be used
 - If no mailing address then the physical address will be used

3. When is the MSDS data pull taking place?

- Data will be pulled from MSDS at least three times on a cycle that corresponds with the P-EBT benefit delivery process discussed above
- Please note there may be a delay in benefit delivery for some students based on availability of data in the MSDS

4. Who should I contact with questions about school eligibility in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program?

- Information on National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program is available at: Michigan.gov/SchoolNutrition

5. Our Fall Collection data had two addresses for Homeless Students, is it too late to update with an SRM?

- It is never too late to update MSDS with correct address data
- If it is after the initial data drop from MDE to MDHHS that updated address data may be used later to change address information at MDHHS

6. Will there be a data validation check on the addresses used from the MSDS?

- MDE is doing some checks on address accuracy, but unfortunately MDE is unable to catch everything
- Please work with your staff to ensure the address data provided is the best possible information

Reconsideration Process

1. Will reconsiderations be the same as last year?

- Less reliance will be placed on school buildings meeting the 5-Day threshold for P-EBT benefits to be issued. Given the decrease in whole school building closure; most students will be eligible based on a request for a reconsideration
- Reconsiderations will be processed in the order they are received
- Reconsiderations must be received by June 30, 2023 to be processed
- Parents/guardians will be provided with an opportunity to request a reconsideration of the student's attendance type based on a COVID-19 related absence
 - This process will be a manual process
 - The Reconsideration Form will be publicly posted at www.michigan.gov/pebt
 - A parent/guardian must complete the reconsideration request and submit it along with verification to MDHHS
 - Parent/Legal Guardian completes Section 1 & 2
 - School completes Section 3
 - Verification letters must be included only if the school does not complete Section 3 and must include:
 - Student name and approval date for FRL
 - Employee Name, Employee Title, Employee Email or Employee Phone, and Employee Signature
 - Letter must be dated
 - A statement confirming first date of Covid-19 related absence and number of days the student was absent or learning remotely due to COVID-19
 - MDHHS staff will review individual circumstances and, as necessary, provide P-EBT benefits
- COVID-19 related absences for purpose of P-EBT eligibility will be defined as:
 - Any absence where the school directs students to stay home for a COVID-19 related reason. This would include a school-ordered quarantine of a student, a group of students, a classroom, or a school. It would also include any other stay-at-home order mandated by the school, whatever its duration, if it is part of the school's or the state's protocol for managing COVID outbreaks, positive tests, and/or potential exposure
 - School closures due to staffing shortages do not count for P-EBT benefits
 - An absence initiated by the parent that is recognized and accepted by school officials as COVID-19 related. At the discretion of the school or the state, this could include a parent's decision to keep their child home after a positive test or possible exposure to COVID-19. It could also include, again at the discretion of the school or the state, 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

Miscellaneous

1. Who do I contact with questions?

- Please email MDHHS-PEBT@michigan.gov
- Or call the P-EBT helpdesk at (833) 905-0028, option 1 (School/District Staff Only)

2. Is there a way to view and change our district contact person?

- If you have questions about your district contact person please email MDHHS-PEBT@michigan.gov, include “PEBT District Contacts” in your subject line

3. Where should we direct parents who have not received last school year’s P-EBT benefits?

- Please verify in MSDS the student was Free/Reduced eligible for last school year and was listed as attending a school that was participating in either National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program or CEP
- Please have the parent contact the P-EBT helpdesk at (833) 905-0028, option 2

4. How will benefits be issued?

- Any eligible student active on a Food Assistance case will receive their P-EBT benefits on that EBT/Bridge card
- All other eligible students will receive a new P-EBT card in the mail.
 - A separate card will be sent for each eligible student
 - If the student is active on a Medicaid case, the card will be mailed to the address on that case
 - If the student does not have active Food Assistance or Medicaid, a P-EBT card will be mailed to the address in MSDS Address Line 1

5. For students who received P-EBT card last year, will they reuse last school year’s card?

- No, they will receive a new card

6. Will there be an explanation of benefits to parents?

- Yes, a notice will be sent to parent(s)/guardian(s) of all students that receive P-EBT benefits
- MDHHS will send a notice to districts for all school building(s) to publish to parents/guardians for any school buildings where there are no issuances (report Primarily In-Person)
- The notice will provide instructions for how a parent /guardian could request a reconsideration if their student received instruction in a different attendance type than what was reported by the district

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