



Illinois Department of Human Services

Notice of Eligibility for Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) SNAP Benefits

Many students in this school may be eligible for Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP) benefits during the 2020-2021 school year. P-EBT is a food assistance benefit for students who get free or reduced-price meals in schools under the National School Lunch Program, but – because of the pandemic – the school is not providing meals to the students at school. P-EBT benefits will help Illinois families buy food during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Do I Need to Apply for Benefits?

You **do not** need to apply for these benefits. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) will provide the eligible student's information to the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) monthly. It is important that your child's school has your correct address on file.

What is the Benefit Amount?

P-EBT benefits are issued for any month in the school year the student has eligible days. For each eligible P-EBT day, an eligible student is allocated \$6.82. If you have already received the P-EBT benefits for August and September that was issued as part of the extension in September 2020, you will not receive benefits for those months again. If the student did not get benefits through the extension, benefits will be issued for any eligible days.

When will Benefits be Available?

Starting March 2021, P-EBT benefits will be issued to the Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) account. The initial month of P-EBT benefits, which may continue P-EBT eligible days from August 2020 through January 2021 will be issued over a two-month period (March and April). Benefits will then be issued monthly. The date your benefits will be in the EBT account is based on the first letter of your child's last name. See the P-EBT Benefit Availability Date Chart at the end of this notice.

How Do I Get the Benefits?

An EBT card in your child's name will be mailed in March 2021 to your address provided by the student's school. If you have more than one child in your home that qualifies for P-EBT benefits, then each child will get their own card with benefits. You can buy food at any authorized retailer location that accepts SNAP benefits. You can also complete an online EBT transaction for food purchases with Aldi, Amazon and Walmart. Only eligible food or food products for human consumption can be bought with P-EBT benefits. You cannot buy hot foods ready to eat, or foods intended to be heated in the store and lunch counter foods. You can use P-EBT benefits to buy seeds and plants to produce food in a home garden.

How to Activate the EBT Card

When you get the EBT card in the mail, call the Illinois LINK Hotline number 1-800-678-LINK(5465) to set up a Personal Identification Number(PIN) and to hear the benefit amount. Follow the instructions below to set up your PIN and activate each card, if you get more than one.

1. Enter the 16-digit P-EBT card number.
2. Enter the number nine (999-99-9999) for all digits of the Social Security Number. (**Do not enter the Social Security Number of your child or yourself**).
3. Enter the Date of Birth of the child whose name is on the card.
4. Enter a personally selected 4- digit PIN.
5. Confirm the entry, and the card is ready to use.

Misuse of P-EBT Benefits

P-EBT benefits can only be used to buy food to be eaten by the child who is eligible for the benefits. The penalties for misuse of benefits under the regular SNAP program also apply to P-EBT benefits. P-EBT cannot be sold or traded to others. See the penalties for misuse of benefits below.

IF YOU:	THEN YOU WILL LOSE BENEFITS FOR:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hide or give wrong information on purpose to get SNAP benefits ➤ Trade, steal or sell SNAP benefits, or resell food bought with SNAP benefits ➤ Use SNAP benefits to buy non-food items like alcohol or tobacco. ➤ Use someone else's SNAP benefits for yourself or someone else. ➤ Throw away beverages purchased with SNAP benefits just to get money back from a container deposit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 12 months the first time. ➤ 24 months the second time. ➤ Permanently the third time.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Trade SNAP benefits for controlled substance, such as drugs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 24 months first time ➤ Permanently the second time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Trade SNAP benefits for firearms, ammunition or explosives. ➤ Buy, sell, steal or trade SNAP benefits of more than \$500.00. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Permanently
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Give false information about who you are and where you live so you can get extra SNAP benefits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 10 years
<p>You can also be fined up to \$250,000 and put in prison up to 20 years or both. In addition, you may be barred from SNAP for an additional 18 months if court ordered. You can also be charged under other Federal Laws. Persons who are fleeing felons or probation/parole violators are ineligible for SNAP benefits.</p>	

P-EBT BENEFIT AVAILABILITY DATE CHART												
First Letter of Child's Last Name	A	B	C	D, E, F	G	H, I	J, K, L	M	N, O, P	Q, R	S, T	U, V, W, X, Y, Z
Benefit Availability Date Each Month	11 th	12 th	13 th	14 th	15 th	16 th	17 th	18 th	19 th	20 th	21 st	22 nd

For more information (FAQs), visit dhs.illinois.gov/PEBT or call the P-EBT Helpline at 1-833-621-0737.