



## Maine Equal Justice

People Policy Solutions

**Extra SNAP (food assistance) benefits for kids whose schools are closed are coming soon for May and June!**

More than 25,000 Maine families, including 45,000 children will soon get extra SNAP benefits to help make up for free or reduced meals lost at schools. This help will come from the Pandemic EBT Program (P-EBT).

### **Q. What is Pandemic EBT (P-EBT)?**

**A.** Because of COVID-19 schools have shut down throughout Maine. Many children are missing out on free or reduced school meals. P-EBT is a food benefit that will help families with children ages 5-18 buy extra food while schools are closed.

### **Q. Who can get P-EBT?**

**A.** Any family with a child who received free or reduced school meals before the school closed. If your child did not receive free or reduced meal, you can still apply (see next question).

This help is available to families with children in immigrant families with any immigration status or no status. P-EBT will *not* be considered in public charge decisions.

### **Q. How do I get P-EBT for my family?**

**A.** Here's how:

- ✓ **If you get SNAP or TANF now, you do not have to do anything.** Your P-EBT benefits will be added to your monthly benefit beginning in May.
- ✓ **If you do *not* get SNAP or TANF, but your child got free or reduced lunch you can apply for this extra help over the phone. Call: 1-855-797-4357.**
- ✓ **If your child *was not receiving* free or reduced meals before your school closed, you can apply now by calling your local school district.** After your child is eligible for school meals, call 1-855-797-4357 to apply for P-EBT.

### **Q. How much help will I get from P-EBT?**

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**A.** Families with children *already receiving* free or reduced meals will get:

- \$189 per child for March and April, received in May; and
- \$194 per child for May and June, received in June.

If your child did not get school meals before the school closed, but you just signed up, you will get one benefit amount. This will begin in the month that your child became eligible. For example, if your school district finds your child eligible in May, you will receive one benefit amount for May and June.

**Q.** How will I receive P-EBT benefits?

**A.** P-EBT benefits will be added to a Pine Tree EBT card. If you already have a Pine Tree card you do not have to do anything. These benefits will be added to the card you have now.

If you do not have a card now DHHS will mail you one, with instructions about how to activate your new card.

To activate your card, call the phone number on the back. You will need the date of birth of the person whose name is on the card. If you do not receive SNAP or TANF, the card will be in your child's name. You may be asked to provide the last 4 digits of your child's social security number. If the child does not have one, enter 9999. Finally, you will be asked to select a 4-digit PIN number.