



# Frequently Asked Questions on Pandemic-Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT)

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
HEALTH AND NUTRITION SERVICES

Arizona Department of Education (ADE) Health and Nutrition Services (HNS) has provided answers to the questions below to provide clarity regarding the second round of P-EBT issuance in 2021. For ADE guidance on P-EBT, please see the following memorandums: 1) [HNS 07-2021: Revised School Year 2021 Pandemic Electronic Benefit \(P-EBT\) and Student Data of Public and Non-Public Schools](#), and 2) [HNS 08-2021: Pandemic-Electronic Benefit Transfer \(P-EBT\) in SY 20-21](#).

## QUALIFYING FOR P-EBT

### 1) How are students identified as eligible for P-EBT?

Students must meet all three of the following criteria to be eligible for P-EBT:

- 1) Be enrolled at a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) (or Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) in SY 20-21)
- 2) Qualify for free or reduced-price meals through direct certification or a school meal application, or be enrolled at a school that participates in a Special Provision Option (Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), Provision 2, or Provision 3)
- 3) Attend a school that offered some form of distance learning during the months of August 2020-May 2021

### 2) For schools that report to AzEDS, how are students identified as eligible for P-EBT?

Students must be enrolled in the school and have an income eligibility indicator of "1" or "2" in AzEDS: "1" if eligible for free meals or "2" if eligible for reduced-price meals.

### 3) For schools that do not report to AzEDS, how are students identified as eligible for P-EBT?

These schools must submit a manual file to ADE with student eligibility information. The file requires schools to enter a "Y" or "N" to indicate each enrolled student's eligibility for free or reduced-price meals. Schools on an approved Provision 2/Provision 3 and/or CEP cycle under the NSLP/SBP will enter N/A for all students. Please review [HNS 07-2021: Revised School Year 2021 Pandemic Electronic Benefit \(P-EBT\) and Student Data of Public and Non-Public Schools](#) for instructions on completing the file and sending the data to ADE.

### 4) How will a school know if students qualify for free or reduced-price meals if the school operated SFSP this year and did not collect school meal applications?

It is recommended to conduct direct certification to match eligible students and outreach to households to submit an application in order to identify students who are eligible for P-EBT.



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## **5) Do all students at schools operating CEP, Provision 2, or Provision 3 qualify for P-EBT?**

Schools on an approved Special Provision Option cycle meet two of the three criteria for a student to qualify; the students will only qualify for P-EBT for the months the school offered some form of distance learning during the months of August 2020-May 2021.

## **6) Our school's base year for SY 20-21 was rescinded because we opted into the waiver to operate SFSP. Does this mean all of our students will only qualify for P-EBT based on individual free or reduced-price student data?**

No. For purposes of P-EBT, ADE has interpreted the parameters in the Continuing Appropriations Act to include schools that were approved to operate a base year in SY 20-21 as those that are approved to operate a Special Provision Option. Therefore, students enrolled at schools that would have otherwise operated a base year in SY 20-21 are eligible for P-EBT if the school offered some form of distance learning during the months of August 2020-May 2021.

## **7) Our school collects school meal applications because we operate a Special Provision Option for breakfast only. How will students at this school qualify for P-EBT?**

For purposes of P-EBT, ADE has interpreted the parameters in the Continuing Appropriations Act as students are eligible for P-EBT if they attend a school operating a Special Provision Option for breakfast, lunch, or both meal services. Therefore, students enrolled at schools that operate a Special Provision Option for at least one meal service are eligible for P-EBT based on their enrollment at that school, not their individual income eligibility.

## **8) Are tuition and private day schools eligible for P-EBT?**

Yes, if they participate in NSLP and offered some form of distance learning during the months of August 2020-May 2021.

## **9) What if an application has not been turned in and the school is no longer operating NSLP due to switching to SFSP? Can households turn in an application even if we are operating SFSP?**

Yes. The school is still an NSLP-participating school even though the SFA has opted into the waiver to operate SFSP. The school should start (or continue) collecting and certifying applications and conducting direct certification to identify eligible students through the end of the program year (June 2021).

## **10) If a family submits an application at the end of March 2021, will the student(s) only be eligible for April and May?**

No. For purposes of P-EBT, the free or reduced-priced eligibility will be retroactive to August 2020.



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The student(s) will be eligible to receive P-EBT for each month they attended a school that reported offering some type of distance learning starting in August.

**11) We are a Provision 2 school so all students eat at no charge. A family submitted a household application (due to hearing about P-EBT) that was denied and none of the students are a match in direct certification. Do the students still qualify for P-EBT?**

All students at schools that operate Provision 2, Provision 3, or CEP are eligible and do not need to submit an application or be matched in direct certification. This family will receive P-EBT if the school offered some form of distance learning during the months of August 2020-May 2021. P-EBT issuance begins in April. See question 22 for payment schedule.

**12) We have an online school in our district and that school does not qualify for NSLP. Would the students qualify for P-EBT, since that info would be submitted to ADE via our SIS?**

If the students attending an Arizona Online Instruction (AOI) school were in a brick and mortar school last year and would have otherwise been attending the NSLP school in-person, the students are eligible for P-EBT using the AzEDS data provided by the brick-and-mortar school. ADE will be releasing additional guidance regarding AOI and P-EBT qualifications.

**13) The P-EBT webinar shared that SY 19-20 student eligibility data can be used if SY 20-21 data is not available. Why should schools bother collecting applications now?**

SY 19-20 data will not be available for all students, such as new students, students in kindergarten, or high school freshmen. Additionally, some families may not have been eligible in SY 19-20 but are now eligible. Therefore, ADE recommends exhausting all options for collecting SY 20-21 student-level eligibility for P-EBT through direct certification and certifying school meal applications.

## DATA SUBMISSION

**14) How will a school know if they are required to report in AzEDS?**

In general, public districts and charters report to AzEDS; private schools do not. Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) may email HNS at [PEBTInbox@azed.gov](mailto:PEBTInbox@azed.gov) to verify.

**15) Our LEA has already reported to AzEDS. Is it possible to update a student record?**

Yes. LEAs are able to update AzEDS as often as needed.

**16) If we report to AzEDS, do we need to report again?**

LEAs will need to report in AzEDS any time a student record has been updated since the last reporting. Please see question 17 for best practices.



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## 17) What steps should an LEA take to ensure student eligibility data is current in AzEDS data?

Per [HNS 08-2021](#):

- 1) Review the Comprehensive Match Report found in CNP Direct Certification and confirm partial matches.
- 2) Ensure all submitted household applications have been certified.
- 3) Confirm AzEDS Income Eligibility I and II indicators for enrolled students are reflective of the NSLP free and reduced-price eligibility the LEA currently has on file.

LEAs should reach out to households to complete a free or reduced-price household application and continue to monitor any new matches in CNP Direct Certification. Any updates made to student-level free or reduced-price meal eligibility must be reported to AzEDS from now through June 30, 2021.

## 18) For CEP/Provision 2/Provision 3 schools, is there a specific data template for manual upload since all students are eligible?

If the school reports to AzEDS, no manual upload is necessary. (See question 3.) If the school does not report to AzEDS, manual upload is necessary. (See question 4.)

## 19) What is the name of the new ADEConnect portal to submit school-level learning models?

P-EBT Learning Models Data Submission. It will be visible once the portal is live in ADEConnect.

## 20) Who will be notified when the new portal is available in ADEConnect to submit learning models?

HNS will email a program alert through HNS Communications when the portal is live. Sign up for program updates [here](#).

## BENEFIT ISSUANCE

### 21) Is this a one-time benefit or a monthly benefit?

P-EBT eligibility is assessed on a monthly basis and benefits are provided for the calendar month(s) the students and schools are identified as eligible.

### 22) When will payments be issued?

The P-EBT payment schedule can be found on the [DES P-EBT webpage](#):

- Payments issued in April 2021 will be for the months of August 2020-November 2020
- Payments issued in May 2021 will be for the months of December 2020-April 2021
- Payments issued in June 2021 will be for the month of May 2021



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## **23) Why does the DES website state the issuance of P-EBT funds occur in March?**

Childcare P-EBT issuance began on March 18th; P-EBT for school-aged children begins on April 15th.

## **24) What are the payment amounts for full and partial P-EBT?**

The payment amounts can be found on the [DES P-EBT webpage](#).

## **25) If a family no longer receives SNAP but still has their EBT card, will they receive the funds in the old EBT card or receive a P-EBT card?**

P-EBT will only be loaded on EBT cards for active SNAP participants. Non-SNAP participants will be issued a P-EBT card.

## **26) Will the funds be deposited to the same P-EBT cards from last year or will parents receive new cards?**

Funds will be deposited to the same P-EBT card from last year. New cards will be issued if the student has a new guardian or if they haven't received P-EBT before.

## **27) What if families did not keep the P-EBT card from last year?**

The family must request a new one from the [DES P-EBT webpage](#).

## **28) Will the ADE Help Desk be available in case a parent calls asking about P-EBT cards?**

No. Families should contact the school regarding income eligibility, school-level eligibility, or household contact information. If all information is correct at the school level, families can contact DES regarding the status of their P-EBT payment.

## **29) What if a parent mentions that they didn't get the first round of P-EBT but their information is correct in our student data system?**

Parents should first contact the school to confirm the parent/guardian and address information is correct. If the information is correct, contact DES.

## **30) Will parents receive a letter from DES explaining whether they qualify and how to get the money?**

Yes.