



September 20, 2021

## **PANDEMIC EBT FAQs**

### *Frequently Asked Questions for Child Care Children*

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

P-EBT is an optional federal program designed to provide food benefits to children who have temporarily lost access to free and reduced-price meals at school due to school closures triggered by COVID-19.

P-EBT is administered by the South Carolina Department of Education and the South Carolina Department of Social Services.

#### **2. What is Child Care P-EBT?**

Child Care P-EBT provides benefits to households with children, age five and under, who received SNAP benefits between October 2020 and June 2021.

#### **3. Who is eligibility for Child Care P-EBT?**

A child is eligible for benefits under P-EBT's child care component if both of the following conditions are met:

- The child is a member of a household that received SNAP benefits at any time during the time period of October 1, 2020 – June 2021
- One or more schools in the area of the child's residence is closed or has reduced attendance or hours for at least 5 consecutive days.

#### **4. How do I apply for Child Care P-EBT?**

There is no application process for Child Care P-EBT. Eligible SNAP children are automatically approved and will be issued a P-EBT card.

#### **5. How will I receive my Child Care P-EBT benefits?**

Children eligible to receive Child Care P-EBT will receive a new P-EBT card issued to the address associated to the active SNAP case in which they received SNAP benefits. If multiple children in the household are eligible, each child will receive a separate P-EBT card.

#### **6. How much is the Child Care P-EBT benefit amount?**

The benefit amount is based on the average monthly allotment for P-EBT K-12

school program. For South Carolina, this equates to \$81.12 per month. Benefits will be paid for each month the child was a participant in an active SNAP case and was under the age of 6 during the time period of October 2020 – June 2021.

**7. Do I or my child have to be a citizen to be eligible for P-EBT?**

No. Child Care P-EBT benefits are for SNAP children under the age of six enrolled in a covered Child Care facility.

**8. When can I expect to receive Child Care P-EBT benefit for my child?**

Child Care P-EBT cards should be mail out on or before October 11, 2021.

Due to the high volume of P-EBT cards entering the mailing stream, delivery times for Child Care P-EBT cards will vary.

**9. Can I receive my child's P-EBT benefits faster by calling my county office?**

Calls to local County DSS offices or to the State DSS office will not result in faster processing of P-EBT benefits. **Please do not call your local DSS County office with questions about P-EBT.**

**10. What should I do if I feel my child should have received Child Care P-EBT benefits but did not?**

If your child(ren) did not receive Child Care P-EBT benefits and your child meets the eligible criteria outlined in Question #2, please email the PEBT Benefits email box at [PEBTBenefits@dss.sc.gov](mailto:PEBTBenefits@dss.sc.gov).

**11. How do I request a replacement card?**

To check your balance or report your P-EBT card lost, stolen, or damaged, call 1-800-554-5268.

**12. Do I have to use all my P-EBT benefit when I get it?**

No. The benefit will carry over from month to month. Benefits not used within 365 days of issuance will be automatically removed from the card.

**13. When will my P-EBT benefit expire?**

P-EBT benefits expire one year (365 days) after issuance.

**14. What if an eligible P-EBT household does not want to participate in the P-EBT program?**

If an eligible household receives a P-EBT card and does not want to participate in the program, the household should destroy the P-EBT card. The P-EBT card and food benefit **cannot be transferred** to anyone else or used by someone outside your household.

**15. What can be purchased with the P-EBT benefit?**

Purchasing rules are the same for SNAP and P-EBT. P-EBT benefits can be used to purchase food for a household, such as:

- a. fresh, frozen, canned, or dried fruits and vegetables
- b. meat, poultry, fish, dairy products, eggs
- c. cereal, bread, pasta, rice
- d. any ingredients you use for cooking
- e. baby formula
- f. diabetic foods
- g. snack foods and non-alcoholic beverages
- h. seeds and plants for growing food at home

**P-EBT benefits CANNOT be used to buy:**

- beer, wine, liquor, cigarettes, or tobacco
- vitamins, medicines, and supplements
- prepared foods, hot foods
- non-food items (pet foods, cleaning supplies, paper products, hygiene items, or cosmetics)

**16. What retailers accept P-EBT?**

P-EBT benefits can be used to purchase food items at retailers displaying a SNAP logo/signage. Find the closest retailer where you can use your benefits at:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer-locator>



**17. I am a grocery retailer interested in becoming an approved SNAP/P-EBT merchant. What do I need to do?**

Grocery retailers/food stores in SC who are interested in accepting SNAP/EBT must contact the USDA for approval. Visit online at:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/apply-to-accept>.