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Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Chris Reykdal, Superintendent

k12.wa.us

June 1, 2023



Action Required
Informational

BULLETIN NO. 042-23 Child Nutrition Services

TO: Educational Service District Superintendents
School District Superintendents
School District Business Managers
School District Food Service Directors

FROM: Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: Pandemic EBT Summer 2023

CONTACT: Leanne Eko, RD, SNS – Chief Nutrition Officer Child Nutrition Services
360-725-0410, leanne.eko@k12.wa.us

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND

Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT), or Pandemic EBT, is a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) program developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program provides food benefits to eligible children to replace meals that students would have received, if not for disruptions to in-person instruction or school facility closures.

Schools play a vital role to ensure eligible Washington students receive these benefits. Pandemic EBT benefits have been issued throughout the pandemic for school year (SY) 2019–20, SY 2020–21, Summer 2021, and Summer 2022. Washington has submitted plans for Children Under Six P-EBT and Summer 2023 P-EBT which are currently under review by USDA.

With the end of the federally declared public health emergency on May 11, 2023, Summer 2023 will be the final year of P-EBT benefits. However, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 included a permanent Summer EBT program. Information about Summer EBT will be provided at a later date.

ADMINISTRATION

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), in partnership with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), administers P-EBT in Washington state. Collaboration between these state agencies, local schools, and districts ensures that Washington students receive this important benefit.

We appreciate Local Education Agency (LEA) efforts to provide meals to students during the school year and as well as during the summer months. Students are eligible for summer P-EBT benefits regardless of whether they participate in summer meal programs.

P-EBT Eligibility

Students who were approved for free or reduced-price school meals in SY 2022–23 and were enrolled in June 2023 are eligible for P-EBT benefits. This includes:

- Students enrolled at a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP) or students that have access to NSLP/SBP meals.

AND

- Students included in Free and Reduced-Price (F/R) eligibility for SY 2022–23 including:
 - 2022–23 Directly Certified Students through Direct Certification system
 - 2022–23 Directly Certified Students through other sources
 - 2022–23 Eligible students via new free and reduced-price meal applications

OR

- All students in schools that participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), or Provision 2 for both the NSLP and SBP, are eligible for benefits.

Students enrolled in virtual academies or other schools that do not participate in the NSLP are not eligible for benefits, unless those students are on campus at a qualifying NSLP/SBP school site for regularly scheduled, educational activities and have access to meals.

Schools should encourage eligible households to submit a free and reduced-price application if they have not already done so. Applications should be accepted and processed until the last day of the school year. Applications submitted after the last day of the SY2023 may not be accepted for Summer 2022 P-EBT benefits.

Approved Plans and Benefit Levels

Summer P-EBT benefits will be issued to all eligible students as outlined above. The benefit amount is \$120 per student and will be available on existing P-EBT cards. Newly eligible students will receive a P-EBT card in the mail. Benefits are planned to be issued in late August.

The WA Children Under Six plan was also submitted to USDA and is pending approval. Children may qualify if they are under age 6 and live in a household with an active Basic Food Assistance account. Benefit amounts will be announced on the [DSHS webpage](#) following plan approval from the USDA.

LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY (LEA) ROLE

Upload Data

Information provided by LEAs is used to identify eligible students. LEAs must upload student and school information into the P-EBT portal in order for students to receive P-EBT benefits. Instructions on how to upload the information was provided to your district's designated P-EBT contact.

Data is uploaded into a secure data portal hosted by Accenture, a DSHS contracted vendor. Section 1101(e) of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA, P.L. 116–127) states: "Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Agriculture may authorize State educational agencies and school food authorities administering a school lunch program under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) to release to appropriate officials administering the supplemental nutrition assistance program such information as may be necessary to carry out this section."

Data compilation and uploads must be completed by school staff that have the authority to access Meal Eligibility student information.

Communication with Families

We encourage LEAs to share this information with families through communication channels such as social media, emails, and other outreach methods. A P-EBT communications toolkit has been sent to your district P-EBT contact.

Families can sign up for text message alerts about the status of their child's P-EBT benefits by filling out a simple verification form on the [DSHS P-EBT Text Sign-Up webpage](#).

For full details and additional questions about P-EBT benefits, families can visit [the DSHS P-EBT webpage](#) or call the P-EBT Contact Center at 833-518-0282 between 8 am and 5 pm Monday-Friday (except observed holidays).

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INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

For questions regarding this bulletin, please contact Leanne Eko, RD, SNS – Chief Nutrition Officer of Child Nutrition Services, at 360–725–0410 or email leanne.eko@k12.wa.us. The OSPI TTY number is 360–664–3631.

This bulletin is also available on the [Bulletins](#) page of the OSPI website.

Tennille Jeffries-Simmons
Chief of Staff

Leanne Eko, RD, SNS
Chief Nutrition Officer
Child Nutrition Services

CR:ln

Assurance of Civil Rights Compliance

The Sponsor hereby agrees that it will comply with: i. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.); ii. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.); iii. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794); iv. Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.); v. Title II and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 as amended by the ADA Amendment Act of 2008 (42 U.S.C. 12131-12189); vi. Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency." (August 11, 2000); vii. All provisions required by the implementing regulations of the Department of Agriculture (USDA) (7 CFR Part 15 et seq.); viii. Department of Justice Enforcement Guidelines (28 CFR Parts 35, 42 and 50.3); ix. Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) directives and guidelines to the effect that, no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subject to discrimination under any program or activity for which the Program applicant receives Federal financial assistance from USDA; and hereby gives assurance that it will immediately take measures necessary to effectuate this Agreement. x. The USDA non-discrimination statement that in accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs).

This assurance is given in consideration of and for the purpose of obtaining any and all Federal financial assistance, grants, and loans of Federal funds, reimbursable expenditures, grant, or donation of Federal property and interest in property, the detail of Federal personnel, the sale and lease of, and the permission to use Federal property or interest in such property or the furnishing of services without consideration or at a nominal consideration, or at a consideration that is reduced for the purpose of assisting the recipient, or in recognition of the public interest to be served by such sale, lease, or furnishing of services to the recipient, or any improvements made with Federal financial assistance extended to the Program applicant by USDA. This includes any Federal agreement, arrangement, or other contract that has as one of its purposes the provision of cash assistance for the purchase of food, and cash assistance for purchase or rental of food service equipment or any other financial assistance extended in reliance on the representations and agreements made in this assurance.

By accepting this assurance, the Sponsor agrees to compile data, maintain records, and submit records and reports as required, to permit effective enforcement of nondiscrimination laws and permit authorized USDA personnel during hours of program operation to review and copy such records, books, and accounts, access such facilities and interview such personnel as needed to ascertain compliance with the nondiscrimination laws. If there are any violations of this assurance, the Department of Agriculture, FNS, shall have the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance. This assurance is binding on the Sponsor, its successors, transferees and assignees as long as it receives assistance or retains possession of any assistance from USDA.

OSPI provides equal access to all programs and services without discrimination based on sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. Questions and complaints of alleged discrimination should be directed to the Equity and Civil Rights Director at 360-725-6162/TTY: 360-664-3631; or P.O. Box 47200, Olympia, WA 98504-7200; or equity@k12.wa.us.