

Pandemic EBT (P-EBT)

Maine has been authorized to issue P-EBT benefits to eligible **school aged children** for the 2022-2023 school year.

- Benefits will be issued as soon as possible. As dates become available they will be updated at maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/programs-services/food-supplement.

To be eligible for this program individuals must meet the following criteria for either a traditional student, or a home-schooled/virtual student:

Traditional Students must meet **all** of the following criteria:

1. They must attend a school that was closed or had reduced attendance due to COVID-19 for 5 consecutive days.
2. They must have been absent from school or attended remotely for five or more days in a row due to COVID-19. P-EBT benefits (of \$8.18 per day) are only issued for the days school meals were missed due to COVID-19, for students.
3. They must be eligible for Free/Reduced-price Meal (FaRM) benefits on the USDA National School Lunch Program meal benefit application.

Notes on FaRM eligibility:

- Any student attending a [Community Eligibility Provision or Special Provision II school](#) meets the Free/Reduced-price Meal benefits criteria for P-EBT.
- Students receiving SNAP or TANF benefits of at least \$1 any month during the school year are eligible for Free/Reduced-price Meal benefits under the USDA National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program's meal benefit application.
- Students documented as being part of a family engaged in migrant agricultural work are eligible for Free/Reduced-price Meal benefits under the USDA National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program's meal benefit application.
- Students documented as experiencing homelessness are eligible for Free/Reduced-price Meal benefits under the USDA National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program's meal benefit application.
- Students in foster care through Maine's DHHS are eligible for Free/Reduced-price Meal benefits under the USDA National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program's meal benefit application.
- Students who are eligible for FaRM but do not meet any of the conditions above should [APPLY FOR FREE/REDUCED-PRICE MEAL BENEFITS](#) UNDER THE USDA NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH AND SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM THROUGH THEIR SCHOOL **BY JUNE 30, 2023**.
- School breakfast and lunch were available at no cost for all Maine students this past year. Universal free lunches in Maine schools do not mean a child is eligible for P-EBT. Students must be eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Meal benefits under the USDA National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program's meal benefit application, or by meeting the requirements listed above.

Home-Schooled Students and those attending fully virtual schools must meet **all** of the following criteria:

1. They must have been attending a National School Lunch Program participating school on January 27, 2020 or started school after January 27, 2020.
2. They must be home-schooled or attending a fully virtual school due to concerns about COVID.
3. They must be determined otherwise Free/Reduced-price Meal benefit eligible via the application available at maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/programs-services/food-supplement.

Maine has, also, been authorized to issue P-EBT benefits to **children under age 6** for the 2022-2023 school year.

- Benefits will be issued as soon as possible. As dates become available they will be updated at maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/programs-services/food-supplement.

To be eligible for this program, individuals must meet **all** of the following criteria:

1. They must have been under age 6 on October 15, 2022.
2. They must have been receiving SNAP benefits in Maine in a given month between August 2022 through May 2023 to be eligible for P-EBT for that month.
3. They cannot be eligible for Free/Reduced-price Meals as a student.

The average monthly benefit for children under 6 is about \$39 but varies greatly from month to month. They are based on the average reduction in Child Care Food Program claims for the same month pre-pandemic. August and May each only count as a partial school year month. Children in this group are not eligible for P-EBT benefits after the end of the Public Health Emergency Declaration (May 11, 2023).

Maine has also been authorized to issue P-EBT benefits for students for the **summer of 2023**.

- Benefits will be issued as soon as possible. As dates become available they will be updated at maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/programs-services/food-supplement.

To be eligible for this program, students must meet **all** of the following criteria:

1. They must have met the criteria for school aged children for the 2022-2023 school year.
2. They must have been enrolled in school or home-schooling in June 2023.

Children not yet in school are not eligible for summer P-EBT benefits.

The summer 2023 benefit is \$120.

If no benefits are used from a P-EBT Card/Account for 9 months or more the benefits will be expunged or removed. Once benefits are expunged they cannot be reissued. Any purchases

made with the card will restart the 9-month period. Call the number on the back of the card to check the P-EBT balance regularly to be sure you are aware of all benefits.

P-EBT Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

How do I set up my pin for my P-EBT card?

Call the number on the back of the P-EBT card, (800) 477-7428. You will need to enter the child's date of birth and the last four digits of their Social Security Number (SS#). If the child does not have a SS# or it was not provided to OFI you will need to enter 9999.

How do I check my balance?

You can check the balance by calling the back of the card, (800) 477-7428. You will need to provide the card number and the card holder's name and date of birth.

If you no longer have the card, you can call (855) 797-4357 to order a replacement card.

Why did I receive multiple cards?

P-EBT cards are issued for each eligible child not on SNAP. If your children were not on SNAP you will receive a P-EBT card for each eligible child.

I didn't ask for P-EBT and I do not want it. What do I do with the P-EBT card?

Please destroy or simply throw away the card. P-EBT cards are for the individual child. It is a prosecutable offense to give the card and/or benefits away.

Will P-EBT benefits be issued to the P-EBT card I received last year?

Yes. If your child is eligible for P-EBT for the 2022-2023 school year, or the summer of 2023 they will be issued on the same card. If you need a replacement card you can request one at pinetreecard.com/meebtclient/# or by calling (800) 477-7428.

Do home-schooled children qualify for P-EBT?

Home-schooled children and those attending fully virtual schools may qualify for P-EBT for the 2022 – 2023 school year and the summer of 2023. They must meet all of the following criteria:

1. They must have been attending a National School Lunch Program participating school on January 27, 2020 or started school after January 27, 2020.
2. They must be home schooled or attending a fully virtual school due to concerns about COVID.
3. They must be determined otherwise Free/Reduced-price Meal benefit eligible via the application available at maine.gov/dhhs/ofc/programs-services/food-supplement.

If I got P-EBT last year is it automatic this year?

No. To be eligible for the 2022-2023 school year—

- your **school aged child** would need to be eligible for Free/Reduced-price Meal benefits through the USDA National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program during the 2021-2022 school year and have missed five day's worth of school meals in a row due to COVID-19; or
- your **child under age 6** would need to have been receiving SNAP in Maine.

When will my child get P-EBT?

Maine is working to issue P-EBT benefits as quickly as possible. As dates become available, they will be updated at maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/programs-services/food-supplement.

Why did my child get a different P-EBT benefit amount than their classmate?

Each **school aged child's** benefit is uniquely calculated based on the number of days they missed school meals due to COVID-19. Children who had a different number of remote days or excused absences received a different benefit amount.

What are the Monthly benefit amounts for children under age 6?

August 2022	\$15.99
September 2022	\$35.10
October 2022	\$52.95
November 2022	\$35.88
December 2022	\$39.18
January 2023	\$47.68
February 2023	\$40.36
March 2022	TBD
April 2022	TBD
May 2022	TBD

Can I apply for P-EBT?

Eligibility for P-EBT for **school aged children** is dependent on being eligible for Free/Reduced-price Meal benefits through the USDA National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program. If your child has not been found eligible for this program, the first step would be to apply for it. You can apply through your school. If you believe you may also be eligible for SNAP, you can apply for SNAP at [MyMaineConnection](#). Home-schooled students and those attending fully virtual schools must be determined Free/Reduced-price Meal benefit eligible via the application available at maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/programs-services/food-supplement.

If your child is eligible for Free/Reduced-price Meal benefits through the USDA National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program, is enrolled in an eligible school, and missed school meals due to COVID-19, they are eligible for a benefit of \$8.18 for each day missed. If you believe they did not receive the correct amount of P-EBT, you can complete a P-EBT Reconciliation Application available at maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/programs-services/food-supplement.

Applications should be mailed to
P-EBT
Department of Health and Human Services
Office for Family Independence
109 Capitol St.
Augusta, ME 04330-6841

or e-mailed to P-EBT.DHHS@Maine.gov.

Eligibility for P-EBT for **children under age 6** is dependent on them having received SNAP for the month in question. SNAP eligibility cannot be determined retroactively.