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State of Indiana

Indiana Family and Social Services Administration

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TO: Superintendents, Principals, and Data Personnel
FROM: Family and Social Services Administration/Division of Family Resources
RE: Continuous Distribution of P-EBT Benefits
DATE: December 10, 2020

The Division of Family Resources (DFR) would like to thank you for your continued support and collaboration as we continue to provide supplemental food assistance, known as Pandemic Electronic Benefits (P-EBT), to eligible families during the Public Health Emergency (PHE). P-EBT is authorized by the Families First Corona Virus Response Act Public Law 116-159 (Continuing Resolution), for Federal Fiscal Year 2021 (ending September 30, 2021). The P-EBT program will remain active as long as the Federal PHE exists. When the Federal PHE ends, the P-EBT program will also end.

The purpose of P-EBT is to provide food assistance to families with students who would have received free or reduced lunch while attending school but are not receiving these meals in school due to COVID-19 restrictions. DFR is sending this communication to provide advance notification of what will occur in the coming months regarding the P-EBT program.

P-EBT cards were issued in the Spring to 606,459 students totaling \$193,426,176 in P-EBT benefits issued to Indiana families. DFR issued another round of benefits in the Fall to 261,758 students totaling \$42,754,519. In total, DFR has issued over \$236,181,000 in P-EBT benefits to eligible Indiana families.

The federal regulations outlined for P-EBT eligibility beginning October 1, 2020 are significantly different from the spring and fall regulations. DFR seeks to improve the data collection and validation necessary to determine eligibility in order to maximize outcomes for eligible students. The information in this initial communication and ongoing communications are focused on improving communication and data submission to significantly enhance the data validity for the P-EBT program. These results will lead directly to the ultimate outcome of timely and accurate P-EBT card provisioning for Hoosier families.



P-EBT Eligibility

P-EBT is available only to families with students enrolled in an Indiana school. The student must be eligible for free/reduced lunch or breakfast or the school is a Community Eligibility Provision participant. Effective October 1, 2020, as result of the new Federal regulations, two (2) types of eligibility exist. The first eligibility must be met by the school. School eligibility is defined as:

- Schools must be a provider of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP) and;
- For the 2020-2021 school year, at some point, the school was closed or delayed start for at least 5 consecutive days, **OR** had a hybrid model in place.

The second eligibility is based upon the individual student. Student eligibility is defined as:

- Students must be enrolled in an Indiana School and;
- Students must be determined eligible to receive free/reduced lunch or breakfast for the 2020-2021 school year (schools may use 2019-2020 data **IF** 2020-2021 data has not yet been determined) and;
- Students are participating in a virtual or hybrid school schedule.

Schools that normally operate on a virtual model are not eligible. If “grab and go meals” are provided to students, this does not exclude these students from participating or being eligible for the P-EBT program.

P-EBT Training and Support

DFR will host a P-EBT Informational Training that will address the details regarding school and student eligibility requirements, how to submit student data, timeframe for the submission of data, and finally the issuance schedule for P-EBT benefits. This training and FAQ will be posted on the DFR website at <https://www.in.gov/fssa/dfr/dfr-policy-changes-and-actions/pandemic-ebt/> by December 14, 2020.

We will also provide a training in the near future to review the data collection process, which will include how to enter the data via the single sign-on with the Department of Education, the data elements required, and the timeframe for submission of student data. This process is also different from the spring and fall data collection.

Data Considerations

In preparation for this initiative, DFR requests schools begin collecting and reviewing the following data points required for P-EBT submission:

1. Student Testing Number
2. Student First Name
3. Student Middle Name (Optional)
4. Student Last Name
5. Street 1
6. Street 2
7. City
8. State
9. ZIP Code
10. Date of Birth (DOB)
11. IDOE School ID
12. School Name
13. Eligible Days

It is imperative that all student information, including but not limited to, the address is accurate. A correct mailing address will reduce phone calls to your schools, to DFR, and reduce delays in receipt of the P-EBT benefits for the families we support.

We encourage schools to contact families to ensure the address on file is accurate. This will expedite the delivery of benefits to eligible households.

Estimated Data Collection Timeframes (*Table 1*) and P-EBT issuance schedules (*Table 2*) are below:

Data Collection Timeframes

Table 1

School date collection timeframe	Issuance month
January 4-15, 2021	January 31, 2021
April 5-16, 2021	April 30, 2021
July 5-16, 2021	July 31, 2021
TBD	September 30, 2021

P-EBT Issuance

Table 2

P-EBT Eligible Months	Issuance Month
October – December 2020	January 31, 2021
January – March 2021	April 30, 2021
April – June 2021	July 31, 2021
July – September 2021	September 30, 2021