



Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT) Q&A for CAFB Partners

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What is P-EBT?

- It's a new program created to help feed children who are eligible for Free or Reduced Price school meals during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- It's completely SEPARATE from CalFresh. It has different eligibility rules, a different card and application process. It is not CalFresh!

Is there a website where I can access all the information?

- Yes! CDSS has set up this page: <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/home/pandemic-ebt>
- On that page they have linked to an [FAQ document](#) and a [one-page factsheet](#) (that will soon be available in Spanish and Chinese, too).
- CDSS has also developed an [outreach toolkit](#).

Who is eligible?

- Children who are eligible to receive Free or Reduced Price school meals, and are enrolled at a school that was closed for 5+ days due to the pandemic (all schools in CA – including charter and private schools).
 - o Children enrolled at “Community Eligibility” schools – where ALL children are eligible for Free or Reduced Price meals without having to submit a school meal application – will all be eligible for P-EBT.
- This is not a “replacement” for school meals – kids can continue to pick up school meals while also getting P-EBT.
- There is no age restriction – it's for kids enrolled in schools offering Free or Reduced Price meals.
- There's no immigration status requirement, and it's not a public charge.

How will families get it?

- Kids who are on CalFresh/Medi-Cal/Foster Care will get their P-EBT card mailed to them automatically, and they do not need to apply for it. Cards will begin to be mailed by CDSS in early May – so likely people will start getting them around May 12 - May 22. Cards will be mailed to the address the child has on file at the school they attend.
 - o If the child's family applied for CalFresh/Medi-Cal after their school already closed due to COVID-19, they do not need to apply for P-EBT. They will get their P-EBT card later.
- Kids who are NOT on CalFresh/Medi-Cal/Foster Care will need to fill out a [simple online application](#), which will become available on May 22. The application website isn't active yet! It will be in English, Spanish, and Chinese.
 - o Will take about 5 minutes to fill it out.
 - o CDSS will verify information submitted to make sure they are eligible for P-EBT.
 - o Will not ask for documents or income information – just basic info like name, address.
 - o Deadline to apply for it will be June 30. If they miss this deadline, they will not be able to get it retroactively.

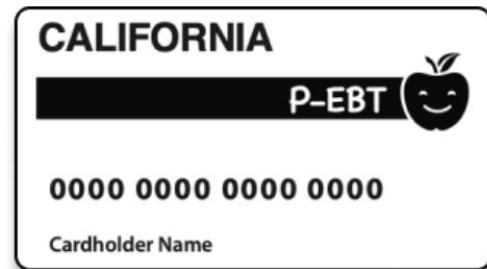


How much will the benefit be?

- \$365 per child. This is calculated based on the number of days (on average across CA) schools were closed due to COVID-19, multiplied by the price of school breakfast and lunch.
 - o For the vast majority of children, they will get the full \$365, to cover school closures between March 16 – June 12 (62 days of school were cancelled on average).
 - o For a much smaller population of children, they will get a pro-rated amount based on when they became eligible for Free or Reduced Price meals. Ex. if they became eligible because of lost household income in April, their benefit would be pro-rated to cover April/May/June, but not March.
- This is a one time benefit – not recurring.

The P-EBT card:

- This is a DIFFERENT card than CalFresh. It will look like the image here.
- It can be used *like* CalFresh to buy food at grocery stores and farmers' markets.
- It will have the name of the child (if multiple kids in household, the name of oldest child) on it.
- You will be able to use it to buy groceries online (like CalFresh) at Amazon and Walmart.
- It will need to be activated with a DOB and PIN number that households will get in the mail (separately from the actual card).



What can my organization/food bank be doing now?

- Make sure your organization and its staff are educated about P-EBT for when you get questions from the community.
- Start spreading the word! Check the [CDSS website](#) for materials you can use. Note that more materials will be coming soon in additional languages. (Also make sure you're making it clear that if a household is already on CalFresh, Medi-Cal, or the child is in Foster Care, they will get the card AUTOMATICALLY and they will not have to apply for it).

How does P-EBT impact my organization, if we have a CalFresh outreach contract?

- It doesn't. P-EBT is a completely separate program from CalFresh.