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*Division of Family Resources*  
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2021 – 2022 School Year P-EBT FAQ – For School Reference

**PLEASE READ:**

**Please distribute this document to school data administrators, secretaries, and/or anyone who may receive questions from parents regarding P-EBT. Schools must field P-EBT questions, as DFR and FSSA are unable to help parents with most individual student cases.**

**Fielding issuance questions for the 2021-2022 school year:**

1. School staff should compare:
  - a. The student's eligible P-EBT days for the period
  - b. Attendance data in the school's SIS
2. If there is a discrepancy between eligible days and the attendance system, the school should correct the mistake in the SIS, which will trigger a correction when data is collected for the next issuance.
3. If the attendance information in the SIS is correct, but parents received a different amount of issuance:
  - a. Confirm that there are no outstanding attendance corrections that will be included in the next issuance.
  - b. If there are no outstanding corrections, schools should contact FSSA via the P-EBT Portal, accessible through DOE LINK.

**Schools should only contact FSSA/DFR if there is a discrepancy between data submitted by schools and benefits received by parents.**

**Quick Links:**

Below are resources that may be helpful as you field questions from parents.

- For up-to-date policy guidance, visit FSSA's P-EBT Website:  
<https://www.in.gov/fssa/dfr/dfr-policy-changes-and-actions/pandemic-ebt/>
  - o Phone instructions for parents: Navigate to FSSA.in.gov and select the link under **Pandemic P-EBT**

For Address Change and Card Replacement Form, visit:

- a. <https://www.in.gov/fssa/dfr/dfr-policy-changes-and-actions/pandemic-ebt/>
  - o Phone instructions: Navigate to FSSA.in.gov and select the link under **Pandemic P-EBT**. Then, select "Click here to complete the "Address Change and Card Replacement Form" near the bottom of the page.



**FAQ:**

This FAQ is intended as a guide to equip schools to field questions regarding P-EBT through the 2021-2022 school year.

**1. Is my school eligible?**

- a. Students are only eligible if individual schools are eligible. Schools are eligible if all of the following is true:
  - i. Schools have a hybrid model in place that is defined as a program that offers virtual learning, OR otherwise schools must be closed for five (5) or more consecutive days or had a delayed start
  - ii. Schools must be a provider of the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program.
  - iii. Students must be enrolled in an Indiana School
- b. P-EBT Virtual Program Eligibility:
  - i. If a virtual program is accredited as a virtual school by the Department, and therefore is not considered a NSLP participating school, students enrolled in that school are NOT eligible for PEBT.
  - ii. Students who are in a virtual school program that is not accredited by the Department of Education and participate in the program separately from their enrolled school are NOT eligible for PEBT.

**2. Who should parents contact if they have a question about their student's P-EBT issuance?**

- a. Parents should contact their student's school. **Parents should not contact FSSA/Division of Family Resources regarding P-EBT issuance, as the agency cannot aid in data issues for individual student records.**
- b. Schools should make every attempt to resolve parent questions including ensuring parents are aware of the FSSA guidance provided [here](#). However, the school should contact the Division of Family Resources if they cannot resolve the issue. For this purpose, schools will continue to be able to login to the FSSA P-EBT Portal tile accessible via LINK in order to submit a ticket that will be routed to the appropriate Division of Family Resources team member.

**3. How are fall 2021 school year benefits collected?**

IDOE will be pulling the Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) eligibility data and rosters from Data Exchange in 2021-2022. P-EBT will be utilizing attendance day types and Free/Reduced Lunch (FRL) eligibility to determine eligible students and benefits. Schools should code these students just as they normally would, and it will all flow correctly from IDOE to FSSA, the state agency administering the P-EBT program.

For students at home and engaged in academic programming 'virtually' (one-to-one device, packet pickup, course work emailed, etc.) due to any COVID reason, the Virtual Due to COVID attendance type is most appropriate. Both the Virtual Due to COVID and Virtual attendance types count as eligible days for determining PEBT eligibility if the student is enrolled at a school participating in the NSLP (National School Lunch Program). *If the student is doing course work 'virtually' which may include one-to-one device without teacher participation, packet pickup, work emailed, etc., report Virtual Due to COVID, not excused or unexcused absent.*

Students that may temporarily not be engaged in academic programming due to excused/unexcused absence due to having COVID, being quarantined or for any COVID related reason ARE also eligible for P-EBT benefits. Most schools have the ability to denote absence reasons via their SIS, however some do not.

For those schools who report 'attendance reason' field utilizing their SIS:

For absences due to COVID (days when students are not engaged in academic programming 'virtually' due to any COVID reason or quarantine), schools should report the student as excused or unexcused absent according to local attendance policy. For students excused or unexcused absent due to any COVID reason, to ensure these days are counted as PEBT eligible days, schools should utilize their SIS absence reason field to provide the reason containing the word 'COVID' or 'Coronavirus'. Additional text can be in the reason field so long as at least one of these words appear. DOE and FSSA will be utilizing this freeform field to identify eligible absent days due to COVID. *For absences to count toward the total eligible days for P-EBT benefits, 'COVID' or 'Coronavirus' should be noted as the reason for the absence. Any absences which do not have this designation will not count toward a student's total P-EBT eligible days.*

For schools using templates or otherwise unable to use the Attendance Reason field:

The previous FSSA P-EBT Portal tile located in the LINK portal will be opened to allow such schools to validate ONLY EXCUSED or UNEXCUSED ABSENCES DUE TO COVID eligible days. All other virtual eligible days will be pulled from Data Exchange.

**4. When will fall benefits be provided, and how long will P-EBT benefit be available as a program?**

- a. Fall 2021 benefits are anticipated to start being provided by the end of Fall. As of July 2021, there is no set end date for the P-EBT benefit program

**5. How do I know if a student is eligible to receive P-EBT benefits?**

- a. A student is eligible for P-EBT benefits if they meet the following criteria:
  - i. The student attends a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program, or School Breakfast Program, **AND** the student qualifies for free or reduced meals through one of these programs.
  - ii. The Student must have been out of school for **one or more** of the reasons below:
    1. The student's school meets one of the following conditions:
      - The school offered a hybrid model
      - The school was closed for five or more consecutive days due to the PHE
      - The school delayed opening for five or more consecutive days due to the PHE
    2. The student in question missed one or more **in-person** school days due to Covid-related remote learning, quarantine, Covid illness, or Covid related school closure.

6. **A parent says they lost or never received their benefits card. What can we do?**
  - a. Schools should first verify that all appropriate data has been recorded for that student and provided via IDOE Data Exchange. In the case of incorrect/changed addresses, please have parents submit the Address Change and Card Replacement form near the bottom of the P-EBT page on the FSSA Website:  
<https://www.in.gov/fssa/dfr/dfr-policy-changes-and-actions/pandemic-ebt/>
    - i. Alternatively, parents can navigate to this page by visiting **in.gov/fssa** then select the P-EBT link on this page. The required form can be found near the bottom of this page.
7. **How often will parents receive benefits?**
  - a. Benefits will be calculated and distributed quarterly, starting in the Fall 2021 timeframe.
8. **Do parents need to notify FSSA of an address change to receive P-EBT benefits?**
  - a. Parents should ensure their address is up to date with their school, as this will be used to issue new benefits to the correct card. It is imperative that schools maintain as detailed student addresses (including street numbers, apartment numbers, suite numbers) as possible, and to keep this information up to date regularly at the source as this information is submitted via Data Exchange which is used for P-EBT administration in the 2021-2022 school year.
  - b. If parents need a replacement card and have moved, they should also refer to the form in question 4 to update their address and request a new card.
9. **Can we make additions or corrections to our 20-21/Summer P-EBT Submission(s)?**
  - a. The state can no longer accept corrections to data submitted for the 2020-2021 school year, including the summer period.
  - b. Beginning July 1, 2021 P-EBT required data will be automatically transferred to the state via Data Exchange. It is imperative that schools maintain accurate and current student address and attendance information. If a parent never received their P-EBT benefits card, or believes it was sent to the wrong address, please contact your school to confirm your student's P-EBT eligibility.