

# Get help buying food while schools are closed

Because schools are closed due to COVID-19, children who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals can get up to \$365 in food benefits in addition to their pick up meals from school. These food benefits are called Pandemic EBT or P-EBT.



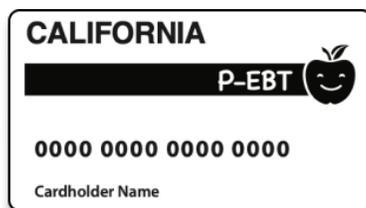
## P-EBT benefits coming soon in May 2020

### Where can families apply?

Families should look out for a message from their school district or local community based organization about how to apply in mid to late May.

### Use it like a debit card.

Families will get up to \$365 per eligible child on their P-EBT card to use on food and groceries. If you already have this card, you do not need to apply online.



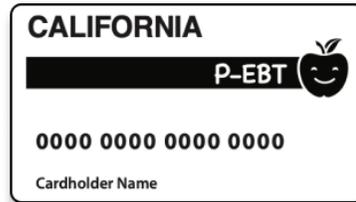
### How will families get their P-EBT benefits?

Most families with children who applied for CalFresh or Medi-Cal benefits do not need to apply. They will get their P-EBT card in the mail during the month of May. P-EBT cards will begin arriving around May 12, 2020 through May 22, 2020.

Families with children who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals and who do not get their P-EBT card in the mail by May 22, 2020 must apply online before June 30, 2020.

**\*Students can still pick up to-go meals if they have P-EBT benefits.**

# Information about P-EBT



## What are 'P-EBT' or Pandemic EBT benefits?

Due to coronavirus (COVID 19), children who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals at school will get extra food benefits. These food benefits are called Pandemic EBT or P-EBT benefits. P-EBT benefits help families in California buy food when school is closed.

## Who is eligible for P-EBT benefits?

Children are eligible for P-EBT benefits if:

- their school is closed due to coronavirus (COVID 19); and
- they are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.

## Is my family still eligible to participate in school meal programs through COVID 19 emergency feeding if we receive P-EBT?

Yes. P-EBT benefits are additional food benefits that do not replace any child nutrition program meals being offered. Children may continue to receive "grab n go" meals or emergency food at COVID 19 emergency feeding sites offered by schools and community locations, even if they are receiving P-EBT benefits.

## How do I get P-EBT benefits?

Most families with children who receive CalFresh, Medi-Cal or Foster Care benefits do not need to apply. They will get their P-EBT card in the mail during the month of May. P-EBT cards will begin arriving around May 12, 2020 through May 22, 2020.

Families with children who applied for CalFresh, Medi-Cal or Foster Care benefits after their school closed will get their P-EBT card in the mail before June 30, 2020.

Families with children who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals and who do not get CalFresh, Medi-Cal or Foster Care benefits must apply online before June 30, 2020.

### **When and where can families apply for P-EBT?**

The P-EBT online application will be available in late May. Families will receive more information about when and where to apply soon! As long as you apply before June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and you are eligible, you will get the full amount of benefits for all four months.

### **How much in P-EBT benefits will I get?**

You can get up to \$365 for each child who is eligible for P-EBT benefits. The total amount you will get depends on how many eligible children are living in your home.

Most families with children who are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals will get \$365 for each child. If you do not get your P-EBT card in the mail and you apply before June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020, you will get the full amount of benefits.

Families with children who applied and got CalFresh, Medi-Cal or Foster Care benefits after their school closed, may get less than \$365 for each child. This depends on when you applied for CalFresh, Medi-Cal or Foster Care.

### **If I get a P-EBT card in the mail do I need to apply online?**

No. If you receive a P-EBT card in the mail do not apply online. Follow the instructions that came with your P-EBT card and create your private PIN number. Then your card will be ready to use.

### **What should I do when I get my P-EBT card in the mail?**

Follow the instructions that came with your P-EBT card and create your private PIN number. Then your card can be used to buy food in most grocery stores and farmer's markets.

## **When is the deadline to apply for P-EBT benefits?**

If you do not get a P-EBT card in the mail, you must apply online by June 30, 2020 to get P-EBT benefits. P-EBT benefits are only available while schools are closed due to coronavirus (COVID 19). If you didn't get a P-EBT card in the mail and do not apply by June 30, 2020 you will not be able to get P-EBT benefits

## **What if I applied online and haven't received my P-EBT card?**

Call California's EBT customer service center at (877) 328-9677. You can reach them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## **What can I buy with P-EBT benefits?**

Your P-EBT benefits can buy food in most grocery stores and farmer's markets, or to purchase groceries online at Amazon and Walmart.

Use your P-EBT card like a debit card:

- Select "EBT"
- Swipe the card
- Enter your private PIN number

## **How long do I have to spend my P-EBT benefits?**

You can use your P-EBT benefits for one year. It starts on the date you get your P-EBT card.

## **If I get P-EBT benefits, will it make me a public charge?**

P-EBT is a disaster emergency benefit based on free and reduced fee school meals eligibility, similar to other benefits that the Department Homeland Security (DHS) has said would not be considered for public charge purposes. However, the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) can consider several factors under their public charge test.

Public charge does not apply to all immigrants. If you have questions about your immigration status and this food benefit, more information is available [here](#), including a list of free and low-cost immigration services providers.