

Pandemic EBT Information

What is P-EBT?

- **It's a new program created to help feed children 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>
- They will be posting a recording of the webinar today on that website, so check back in a few days if you want to listen.
- On that page they have linked to an [FAQ document](#) and a one-page factsheet available in [English](#), [Spanish](#) and [Chinese](#).
- More outreach materials coming soon!

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).
- 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** – but it's for kids enrolled in schools that offer Free or Reduced Price meals.
- **There's no immigration status requirement**, and it's not a public charge.

How will families get it?

There are essentially two categories of how kids will get it:

1. **Kids who are on CalFresh/Medi-Cal/Foster Care will get their P-EBT card mailed to them automatically, and they will 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 12th through May 22nd. Cards will be mailed to the address the child has on file at the school they attend.**
 - If the child's family applied for CalFresh/Medi-Cal AFTER their school already closed due to COVID-19, they will not need to apply for P-EBT. They will get their P-EBT card at a later date.

2. **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 22nd.** The application website isn't active yet! It will be in English, Spanish, and Chinese.
- Will take about 5 minutes to fill it out.
 - CDSS will verify information submitted to make sure they are eligible for P-EBT.
 - Will not ask for documents or income information – just basic info like name, address.
 - Deadline to apply for it will be June 30th.

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.
 - For the vast majority of children, they will get the full \$365, to cover school closures between March 16th – June 12th (62 days of school were cancelled on average).
 - **For a much smaller segment of children, they will get a pro-rated amount based on when they became eligible for Free or Reduced Price meals.** E.g. if they became eligible because of lost household income in April, their benefit would be pro-rated.
- **This is a ONE TIME benefit – not recurring.**

The P-EBT card:

- This is a DIFFERENT card than CalFresh.
- But it **can be used *like* CalFresh, at grocery stores, farmers' markets, to purchase groceries.**
- 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 online (like CalFresh) at Amazon and Walmart.
- Will need to be activated with a DOB and PIN number that they will get in the mail (separately from the actual card).

Families can also learn more about the benefit and sign up here (Spanish and Chinese translations available on the top right corner of the home page): <https://ca.p-ebt.org/info>