

# News Release

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## **Oregon Department of Human Services to recover mistakenly issued Pandemic-EBT benefits**

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### **Need to know:**

- The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) mistakenly issued \$7.8 million of Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT) food benefits to approximately 5,800 students in Oregon.
- ODHS is working to recover any unused food benefits that were mistakenly issued.
- No one that used these mistakenly issued food benefits will be penalized.
- Oregon provided approximately \$563 million in food benefits to nearly 429,000 Oregon students and children between July and October.

(Salem) – The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) mistakenly issued \$7.8 million of Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT) food benefits to approximately 5,800 students in Oregon.

ODHS is working to recover any unused food benefits that were mistakenly issued. The agency is working in partnership with the school districts and the Oregon Department of Education to notify families. Notices will be mailed to impacted households as quickly as possible.

ODHS has already recovered \$1.6 million of the mistakenly issued food benefits.

No one who used these mistakenly issued food benefits will be penalized.

“We know that this can be confusing for families right now,” said Dan Haun, director of the ODHS Self-Sufficiency Programs. “Families who were mistakenly issued these food benefits were told that they were eligible for the program and entitled to use the benefits to buy food for the students and children in their households. We apologize for any confusion this has caused and we take responsibility for this mistake. We want to assure anyone who has already used these mistakenly issued food benefits that they will not be penalized in any way.”

The mistakenly issued benefits are a result of an error that designated certain schools in Oregon as Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) schools in an internal ODHS database. All students who attended these schools, even those who were not eligible for P-EBT, were issued P-EBT cards and food benefits. The error that led to the incorrect CEP designations has been fixed.

The database errors were discovered after ODHS became aware of at least one school mistakenly identified as a Community Eligibility Provision school. This discovery prompted a full review of the data to identify if additional schools were impacted. At least 26 schools were impacted by the error.

**Schools affected by this issue include:**

Arthur Academy Portland

Crane Union High

Kairos - New Beginnings - West

Kairos PDX

Kelly Creek Elementary

Kelso Elementary

Kings Valley Charter School

Lincoln Elementary Corvallis (Note: While Lincoln Elementary Corvallis was impacted by the database error, it was corrected the same day and no over-issuance of benefits occurred at this location.)

Lincoln High (Note: Mistakenly issued P-EBT benefits at this location were previously reported on the [ODHS P-EBT website](#). \$1.6 of the \$1.8 million in benefits issued to Lincoln High students in error were recovered on Nov. 5, 2021.)

Meadow Park Middle

Oak Hills Elementary

Oakdale Heights Elementary

Oakland Elementary

Oakland High

Oaklea Middle

Obsidian Middle

Ocean Crest Elementary

Ogden Middle

Oregon Service Learning Academy

Oregon Trail Elementary

Oregon Trail Primary Academy

Riddle Elementary

Ridgeview Elementary

Step Up at Edwin Brown Education Center (Note: While this Step Up location was impacted by the database error, there were no students reported as enrolled at the time of the error and no over-issuance of benefits occurred at this location.)

Weston-McEwen High

Yamhill Carlton Intermediate

### **About Pandemic EBT**

P-EBT provides food benefits to families whose children did not have access to the free or reduced-priced meals usually provided at school or childcare centers because of COVID-19 closures.

Oregon provided approximately \$563 million in food benefits to nearly 429,000 Oregon students and children between July and October.

Community Eligibility Provision schools offer free meals to all students regardless of their income. All students at Community Eligibility Provision schools are eligible for P-EBT.

Oregon was approved to provide retroactive food benefits to eligible students for the 2020-21 school year and the summer of 2021. Benefits were issued to students and children July through October.

P-EBT benefits can be used to purchase food anywhere that EBT is accepted.

P-EBT does not replace any child nutrition program already offered, and families are encouraged to continue participating in grab-n-go-meals or emergency food programs at their local schools and community locations.

P-EBT is separate from SNAP benefits including emergency allotments that are also being issued due to the impact of COVID-19. P-EBT benefits are not considered in a public charge test.

For additional information about P-EBT visit [pebt.oregon.gov](https://pebt.oregon.gov)

## Resources to help meet basic needs

- Find a food pantry: [foodfinder.oregonfoodbank.org](https://foodfinder.oregonfoodbank.org)
- Learn about government programs and community resources for older adults and people with disabilities: Aging and Disability Resource Connection of Oregon at 1-855-673-2372 or [www.adrcforegon.org](https://www.adrcforegon.org).
- Dial 2-1-1, or text your zip code to 898211 (TXT211), [www.211info.org](https://www.211info.org)
- [Oregon Department of Human Services COVID-19 Help Center](#)

## About SNAP

Administered by ODHS, SNAP is a federal program that provides food assistance to approximately 1 million eligible, low-income families and individuals in Oregon, including many older adults and people with disabilities. Oregonians in need can apply for benefits, including SNAP, child care, cash assistance and Medicaid. Learn more at <https://govstatus.egov.com/or-dhs-benefits>. For local resources in your area, such as food or shelter, please call 2-1-1 or reach out to the state's Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) at 1-855-ORE-ADRC or 1-855-673-2372.