

Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Parents/Guardians

May 19, 2020

What is the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer?

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act of 2020, has provided additional funding available to families whose children would receive free or reduced price meals under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act if not for the COVID-19 school closures.

Similar to Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (S-EBT), the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) will provide additional funding on a per student basis for families to spend on qualifying food purchases in their community. P-EBT funds go directly to eligible children to bring food into their household. This program helps alleviate food insecurity and increase local spending at the same time.

How does it work?

The Oregon Trail Card (EBT) system is used to provide funds to ALL eligible students. Existing Oregon Trail Card beneficiaries will have these additional funds added to their cards. Families who do not already have a card will receive one with a letter explaining the program.

Households will receive benefits equivalent to one free lunch and one free breakfast for each eligible student, \$5.70 per regularly scheduled school day through the end of the school year. This includes days during the months of March, April, May and June.

Benefits will be retroactive to March 16, 2020 for students who were eligible to receive free and reduced-price meals at the time that schools closed due to the Pandemic. For newly eligible free or reduced-price students, benefits will start at the beginning of the month that the family's application is certified as eligible. Eligible families will receive the following for each student:

- \$69 for March
- \$126 in April
- \$120 in May
- \$69 in June

How do I know if my child is eligible to receive P-EBT?

Oregon Department of Education Child Nutrition (ODE CNP) is working closely with school districts to identify eligible students. Eligible students include:

- Enrolled students who were eligible to receive free and reduced price meals as of the close of school on March 16, 2020 or newly identified eligible students.
- An eligible student, who if not for the closure of their school during a public health emergency designation and due to concerns about a COVID-19 outbreak, would receive free or reduced-price school meals under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, as amended, and
- The child's school or district will be (or has been) closed for at least 5 consecutive days during a public health emergency designation and due to concerns about a COVID-19 outbreak.

Do I need to apply for P-EBT?

No, individuals do not need to apply for P-EBT. If your child is currently eligible to receive free or reduced priced lunches at a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) you will receive this benefit automatically.

The Oregon Department of Education is partnering with local school districts to obtain student specific information.

What if my family recently moved or the school my child attends does not have the correct address on file?

If you have recently moved, please contact your student's school to update your address and consider turning in a change of address form at your Post Office.

What if my child currently attends a school that is participating in the NSLP but has not been determined as eligible for free or reduced price lunches?

Oregon families who have experienced income loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic and may have recently become eligible for free or reduced-price school meals can [apply online](#). Once the application has been submitted, please contact your child's school district nutrition service department for more information.

What happens to the online application after I submit it?

Individual school districts will determine eligibility for free or reduced-price benefits.

In addition, this confidential information will be shared with Department of Human Services (DHS) for P-EBT benefits for students that meet eligibility requirements. This information may be shared with DHS without written parental consent.

DHS will process this information and the Oregon Trail Card (EBT) system is used to provide funds to ALL eligible students. Existing Oregon Trail Card beneficiaries will have these additional funds added to their cards. Families who do not already have a card will receive one with a letter explaining the program.

What if my child does not attend a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program?

To be eligible for the P-EBT benefit, a student must be enrolled at a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program. See full eligibility criteria below:

- The funding for Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer is specific to participants for who if not for the closure of their school during a public health emergency designation and due to concerns about a COVID-19 outbreak, would receive free or reduced-price school meals under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, as amended, and
- The child's school or district will be (or has been) closed for at least 5 consecutive days during a public health emergency designation and due to concerns about a COVID-19 outbreak.

What if I believe my student qualifies for P-EBT benefits but I do not receive an Oregon Trail Card or funding on my existing card?

If you believe your student is an eligible student, ODE CNP encourages families to contact the Department of Human Services for more information.

DHS can be reached by [email](#) or by calling 211. For additional information, please visit the Department of Human Services [Covid-19 Webpage](#).

What if I receive the P-EBT benefits and I do not want to accept them?

The program is optional and is supported through the Oregon Trail card system. This is an opt-in program, requiring activation of the Oregon Trail card. Families who do not wish to participate may choose to not activate and destroy the cards. Instructions will be included with the card.

When will I received my P-EBT benefits?

ODE CNP is working directly with school district to collect information regarding eligible students. ODE then submits the information to Department of Human Service (DHS). The Department of Human Services is working diligently to process these benefits as quickly as possible. DHS will begin processing cards at the end of May 2020 and will continue issuing benefits through the month of June 2020.

If you haven't received your P-EBT benefit by the end June, contact Department of Human Services. DHS can be reached by [email](#) or by calling 211. For additional information, please visit the Department of Human Services [Covid-19 Webpage](#).