

Summer EBT Informational Webinar for Partners Questions and Answers

March 14, 2024

Questions and Answers are organized in nine categories:

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Accessibility

Do you know yet what languages will be provided for applications and the call center?

The Summer EBT Call Center will have an option to speak to a representative in English and Spanish. Callers can request an interpreter through the phone with any language they need. For the application and notices, we will be translating into English, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese Simplified, Chinese Traditional, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Ukrainian and Vietnamese.

Is it possible to have the application in Farsi as well?

We are unable to translate the application into Farsi. However, a family who speaks Farsi can contact the Summer EBT Call Center which will provide an interpreter to help the family complete the application.

Application

Please confirm that the Summer EBT application won't ask applicants for their citizenship status, as this is not required by USDA FNS.

There will not be a question asking applicants about their citizenship status and it does not affect eligibility status at all.

Would it be OK if we direct people to do an application for Summer EBT even if they might be automatically eligible? If they aren't sure? Will it cause a problem if they also do an application?

Yes. It will not cause a problem, and families will not receive duplicate Summer EBT benefits if they are automatically eligible and submit an application.

The application will be available in June. Students who are automatically eligible for benefits will receive their benefits in June. We are hoping this will help clarify which families are automatically eligible and who need to apply.

Will people going to the ONE eligibility system find the SUMMER EBT application?

Summer EBT won't be available on the ONE Eligibility system. It will take place in a different system than ONE.

Can you provide assurance that the application will not include unnecessary questions, such as asking for social security numbers?

Yes. The application is very short and only request the required information for a household to apply for Summer EBT benefits. This includes names of everyone in the household, amount of income and sources of income, school the child attends and signature of an adult. We will also ask for contact information and the last 4 digits of a child's SSN as this confers eligibility for free and reduced-price meals which we will share with schools.

Will the online app be phone-friendly?

Yes. The application will be optimized to be used on a phone.

Will families need to reapply each year?

If they are not streamlined eligible then yes.

Do we turn the application in or what is needed for tracking?

If an application is required, it will be submitted to the Point of Contact at the individual school.

Students who attend Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) schools are not all qualified unless they have an application in that approves of their status and or direct certified through the different entities, correct?

That is correct. Students that attend a CEP school, and are not streamlined certified, will need to submit an application.

Distribution

Will families already on SNAP get the benefits loaded on their existing Oregon EBT card, whereas families who aren't on SNAP would get a new "Summer EBT" card?

Yes. If the family already receives SNAP or TANF, the Summer EBT benefits will be issued onto this EBT card. If they do not receive SNAP or TANF, benefits for all eligible children in the household will be put on one EBT card and mailed to the family.

If students are already eligible (through the federal assistance programs), they don't need to apply, but what do they need to do to receive the benefits?

Correct, students who receive SNAP, TANF, Medicaid or are part of a foster care family will automatically receive Summer EBT benefits. They do not need to apply or do anything to receive the benefit. Benefits will automatically be added to their existing EBT card.

Will families that are automatically eligible be notified that they will be getting those benefits automatically so they know they don't have to apply?

Yes, eligible students will receive a notice in the mail in June.

Please recap how the benefits will be issued to families. Include how much and the role of EBT cards.

The benefits will be issued on Oregon EBT cards. If the household already has SNAP or TANF the benefits will automatically be issued on their current cards. If they do not have SNAP or TANF, benefits will be issued for all eligible students in the household to the same EBT card. The EBT card will be mailed to them.

How will it work if the child splits households - with mom one week and dad the next and are over-issued/getting double benefits?

We will take every step to make sure a child is not overissued benefits. If the child is receiving SNAP, TANF or Medicaid they will receive the benefit through the same household confirming the eligibility. If multiple parents are applying for Summer EBT for the same child, we will need to determine where the child will be receive the majority of their summer meals.

Can you provide assurance that in the event a family is issued benefits twice through no fault of their own, that they would not face overpayment/collections situations?

We are confident that we can catch any duplicates on our end but in the event of an overpayment we would only recover what we can from the household and we will let them know. We will only be recovering what was issued as a duplicate. Families will not have to re-pay.

Are new cards being issued since it's a family card?

New Oregon EBT cards will be issued to households without one.

Can the student use the card or does it have to be used by a parent/guardian?

It can be either one.

Is this a one-time allotment of \$120 or a monthly allotment of \$40 for each child? What about families who newly move to the area and are enrolled in their new school? Will they be able to apply and receive mid-summer?

The payment will be issued as a one-time payment of \$120 for each eligible child. When an application is received during the summer and the child is eligible, they will receive the full \$120 benefit. The requirement to verify enrollment/attendance in an National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP) school is an eligibility factor and will need to be verified through Points of Contact at the school or district level.

One of the slides mentioned that Summer EBT will be put on the same Oregon Trail EBT card as SNAP. Will there be a way for retailers to distinguish between SNAP and Summer EBT? Having this ability to distinguish may be necessary for matching programs like Double Up Food Bucks which can only be used for SNAP benefits.

Summer EBT benefits can be used to buy groceries. This includes food bought online through Amazon and Walmart (delivery fees not included). Summer EBT benefits also can be used in the Double Up Food Bucks program, which matches every \$1 of benefits spent up to \$10 on fresh fruit and vegetables at participating local farmers markets. We are researching the question about whether benefit recipients or retailers will have a way to distinguish among Summer EBT and SNAP benefits.

Eligibility

Could you clarify who will not need to do a separate application for Summer EBT?

School-aged children (ages 6-18) who qualify for public assistance do not need to submit an application for Summer EBT. They will automatically be eligible for the benefit. These include students who receive SNAP, TANF or Medicaid or are part of a foster care family through Child Welfare.

In addition, students (any age) enrolled in a NSLP/SBP school are automatically eligible and do not need to turn in an application if they:

- are determined eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals at school
- are determined by the school as experiencing houselessness (Title X)
- are determined by the school as migrant
- are determined by the school to be considered runaway
- receive the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservation (FDPIR)
- are in Head Start Preschool

Schools will need to provide information for students who are eligible through these programs

Are home schooled children eligible for Summer EBT program?

Possibly. If a homeschooled child is between the ages of 6-18 and receives SNAP, TANF, Medicaid or is part of a foster care case, they will automatically be eligible for Summer EBT.

If they do not receive SNAP, TANF, Medicaid or are part of a foster care case, they must be enrolled in a NSLP/SBP school to be eligible.

Some schools in the area provide free breakfast and lunch for all students - does this mean that all students at those schools would be covered under streamlined eligibility?

No. One of the big differences between Pandemic EBT and Summer EBT is students who are attending Community Eligible Provision (CEP) schools are not automatically eligible.

Students in CEP schools are automatically eligible if they receive SNAP, TANF, Medicaid or are experiencing foster care. Eligibility also is automatic for students who are determined as experiencing houselessness, are considered migrant or runaway or receive the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservation as determined by the school. They are eligible through those programs, not because they attend a CEP school.

Those who think they meet the household income level can apply and submit an application. CEP schools do not accept applications.

Am I understanding correctly that children age 5 will not qualify for Summer EBT? If so, why? There are children who have completed kindergarten already but are still age 5 the summer after.

Children under the age of 5 are not automatically eligible because of their participation in public assistance (SNAP, TANF, Medicaid or Foster Care). This is because they are not considered "school aged" which in Oregon is the compulsory school age of 6-18.

Children under 5 (and over 18) may be eligible for Summer EBT if they are enrolled in a NSLP/SBP school and eligible because they:

- are determined eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals at school
- are determined by the school as experiencing houselessness (Title X)
- are determined by the school as migrant
- are determined by the school to be considered runaway
- receive the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservation (FDPIR)
- are in Head Start Preschool
- are determined eligible through the Summer EBT application

What are the ages for eligible children? Is there a cut-off age?

School-aged children from ages 6-18 who qualify for public assistance.

Can you clarify the eligibility?

Automatically eligible: School aged children (ages 6-18) who qualify for public assistance. These include students who receive SNAP, TANF or Medicaid or are part of a foster care family through Child Welfare. They do not need to submit an application or do anything further.

Automatically eligible, but we need info from the schools:

Students (any age) enrolled in a NSLP/SBO school are automatically eligible (and do not need to turn in an application) if they:

- are determined eligible to receive free or reduced price meals at school
- are determined by the school as experiencing houselessness (Title X)
- are determined by the school as migrant
- are determined by the school to be considered runaway
- receive the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservation (FDPIR)
- are in Head Start Preschool

Apply through the Summer EBT Application: Students (any age) enrolled in a NSLP/SBP school and income eligible (household income under 185% of the federal poverty level).

Our school became a Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) school on March 1, partway through the year. How will that affect the application process for families?

The CEP status of schools does not impact whether a student is automatically eligible for Summer EBT. Also, students who attend a CEP school are not automatically eligible for Summer EBT benefits.

If your school collected free and reduced-price meal applications before March 1 and has the capacity to share the information of these eligible students with ODHS, that would be great. More information on how to share this information will be provided soon. If not, we ask that households please apply for Summer EBT using the Summer EBT application available in June, unless they are automatically eligible.

When we speak about students that qualify for free and reduced-price lunches, are we speaking about the federal income requirements or the Oregon expanded income requirement?

The federal income requirements (185%). Students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals because of Oregon's expanded income guidelines (EIG) are not eligible for Summer EBT.

There are many children from medium income families who receive Medicaid due to the CHIP/Medicaid expansion from the ACA. Does that mean some children with Medicaid will qualify for Summer EBT, while others won't?

Only children who receive Medicaid because their household income is below 185% of the federal poverty level will be automatically eligible (due to Medicaid enrollment).

Are families qualifying for no-cost meals under Oregon's Expanded Income Guidelines (EIG) able to qualify, presumably with an applications?

No. The Summer EBT application has the same income guidelines as the FRP application, 185% of the federal poverty level. Families who apply for Summer EBT with income over 185% will not be eligible. In addition, students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals due to Oregon's EIG are also not automatically eligible.

If the resource family doesn't qualify for SNAP benefits, will the child in foster care still qualify for Summer EBT?

Yes. Children experiencing foster care automatically qualify for Summer EBT.

Some Medicaid programs for kids (CHIP) have an income limit above 185% of the federal poverty level. How will this be dealt with in the streamlined certified population?

Only children who receive Medicaid because their household's income is below 185% of the federal poverty level will be automatically eligible (due to Medicaid enrollment).

Will students who are 18 and graduate in 2024 qualify?

Yes, as long as they are enrolled in a NSLP school.

Other

Are you going to be hiring for this program or have you already hired the staff needed? If so, where can one go to apply for a position? Is this position can be done from home?

ODHS is hiring for several positions that we received funding for. They are active and posted and should be closing in the next couple of weeks. They have different timelines based on each role. The Oregon Department of Education will also have positions opening up soon.

Outreach

I am a case manager working with refugee families. Will parents receive information in the mail if they qualify? What about if they don't - how can they know when to apply?

If a student is determined as eligible, they will receive a notice in the mail in June.

If they are unsure if they qualify or are automatically eligible, we ask that they review the eligibility information or call the Summer EBT Call Center, opening in June, to speak with a representative to help them.

Will SFA's be provided with outreach materials or links to same? Besides sharing information, what else will be expected from SFA's?

Yes, ODHS and ODE will provide SFA's outreach materials to share with families. More information is coming soon.

Please share information about how families will be notified that they are receiving OR need to apply for Summer EBT?

If a child is eligible, they will receive a notice in the mail in June.

How does a school district let ODHS know about students on free and reduced-price meals?

The processes are being developed and more information will be provided soon.

Can you tell us about the messaging approach, and how it will distinguish for parents between Summer EBT, Summer Meal programs, and School Meals (with various CEP/185%/300% state eligibility levels)? How can we help to clarify

"what am I eligible for?" and "what steps do I take?" for each of these programs for families?

We are building a robust communication plan and will be exploring alternative ways to approach outreach to families. We anticipate the communication will outline who needs to apply for the Summer EBT benefit.

How are the schools going to let you know which students are qualified?

There is the option for schools to let ODHS know that there is an eligible student who qualifies for Summer EBT. There will be a portal created specifically for schools in which an account can be made and will be used to share information by uploading students who are eligible. A secure email can also be sent to ODHS noting eligible students. More information will be provided soon.

For schools that are FRM eligible, will parents receive a notice that they are eligible?

Yes. Eligible students will receive a notice in the mail in June.

What's the strategy for rolling out the program for special populations of homeless students, specifically for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth? How will these students receive notice?

These strategies will be developed as ODHS and ODE develop the plan and materials for the new Summer EBT program.

Is ODE/ODHS going to do media outreach to promote Summer EBT?

Yes. There also will be other materials schools and partners can use and share through their own communication channels such as flyers, social media and more.

Can community organizations receive applications to share with clients and assist them with filling out?

The application should be available to download and print from the website. Community partners are encouraged to share the application to families. There will be more information for community partners about assisting families with the application.

Are nutrition service departments at schools expected to communicate to families or is ODHS taking care of all of that?

School nutrition staff will not have a role in Summer EBT like they did with the Pandemic EBT where they communicated with families and took on applications. We will be sending out a message to school districts and charter schools so that they are aware and identify who would be the appropriate staff to collect these applications and communicate about this program.

Will community-based organizations receive applications to share with our clients so we could assist with filling out?

Applications will be made available online to complete electronically, or download, print and mail/email. CBO's willingness to help a family connect with the application materials is much appreciated.

Is the P3 portal going to be used, as was done for P-EBT?

The P3 portal, which was used for Pandemic EBT, will not be used. We are developing three new portals similar to P-EBT. There will be a school portal for schools to share information with us, a portal for eligibility workers that will be used to check eligibility and issue benefits, a parent portal that they can use to check on application status, update information and access applications.

Can ODE and ODHS collaborate on one summer outreach campaign for Summer EBT and Summer Meals?

We will coordinate as much as we can for 2024. Given the short timeline for starting Summer EBT this year, this may be an approach we are better able to pursue in 2025.

Schools

What kind of support do you plan to provide to Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) schools to help them identify and enroll Summer EBT eligible students?

We ask that all schools identify a Point of Contact that will work with ODHS to submit Summer EBT applications.

What exactly is a school districts responsibility with this program?

School districts will be asked to provide information for students who are automatically eligible and do not need to submit an application. Schools also will provide a Point of Contact who can receive Summer EBT applications for students.

What role will school staff have in helping get eligible children connected to this benefit?

Schools will still have an important role but not the same as they did with Pandemic EBT, where they have a defined role. Particularly with the nutrition staff at school districts. We are still trying to identify the best pathway to involve schools and will mostly have to be through the collection of paper applications for schools that are CEP schools or students who don't automatically qualify.

How can we verify students if we are a Provision 2 or CEP participating District, who do not process free and reduced-price meal applications in a non-base year, per their Child Nutrition Services representative?

Students who attend a CEP school are not automatically eligible for Summer EBT. We ask that unless the family is automatically eligible because they receive SNAP, TANF,

Medicaid or are part of a foster care family, that they apply for Summer EBT benefits using the application.

Will school districts be able to send files with their full lists of all homeless and migrant-eligible students, instead of approving students individually in the software system?

Yes. More information on this will be provided soon.

We would send our enrollment to ODE as a National School Lunch Program district. Will we be sending out an email to our students to let the parents know to apply?

If the students are not streamlined certified, then sending out an email to students to let the parents know to apply is an excellent idea.

if a school district doesn't have the staff to manage this, what do you recommend they do? There are a lot of schools and districts having to lower their amount of staff.

Our hope is that there won't be a significant amount of time that school district staff will have to devote to helping with applications.

Will schools be required to help with this during the summer months?

Schools will be asked to help collect applications, which may include during the summer months.

If schools collect applications, does that mean those school districts will be processing the applications?

No. ODHS will process the applications. However, applications will be submitted to a Point of Contact at the school.

What should schools do with applications if they receive any?

Each school will have a Point of Contact who will receive applications. Once applications are received, they will be sent to ODHS for processing.

Will nutrition directors receive the ODHS portal to verify applicant students that qualify like we had prior years? And, if so, will we see this portal open soon?

School nutrition staff will not have a role in Summer EBT like how they did with the Pandemic EBT where they communicated with families and took on applications. We will be sending out a message to school districts and charter schools so that they are aware and identify who would be the appropriate staff to collect these applications and communicate about this program.

Once we send the enrollment and they are qualified, do we need to have them do an application?

If students are not determined to be streamlined certified, they will need to submit an application.

If a family fills out a Summer EBT application, will it also function as a National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program application?

Yes, as long as the family provides the last 4 digits of the students SSN, which is a requirement for the NSLP free or reduced-price meals application. This field will be provided on the Summer EBT application. Application requirements for NSLP/SBP applications are found at 7 CFR 245.6.

Systems

Who will be processing applications for Summer EBT?

ODHS as the lead agency will be processing applications. We will have a specialized team that will do that work and we have the call center that will help navigate the work.

What does a “vendor solution” mean?

ODHS will be contracting with Deloitte for a software program that has been used in the past to provide infrastructure support. The approach used to set-up and deliver the Pandemic EBT program will be used for Summer EBT to build portals that schools and parents will be using, and for the call center. This is the plan for 2024 only.

Will you have a new portal for file sharing or a specific format for the McKinney-Vento, Migrant and other verifications from the schools? When will we receive those?

More information will be provided on this soon.

Timeline

When will paper applications and the online application be available?

We are in the early stages of creating the application and anticipate it will be available for families in June.

Can you clarify the timeline. Do you have an idea for when benefits will be issued?

In June with the exact date to be shared later.

Will a card for \$40 go out each month? When do you anticipate the first one going out? Why don't we send them \$120 at the beginning of the summer?

We will not send an Oregon EBT card with \$40 in food benefits every month. ODHS will issue each child's full benefit of \$120 in one issuance, starting in June. Whenever

possible, Summer EBT benefits for all eligible children in the household will be put on one Oregon EBT card.

What is the latest families can turn in the application to receive benefits if they qualify?

August 31st of each year.