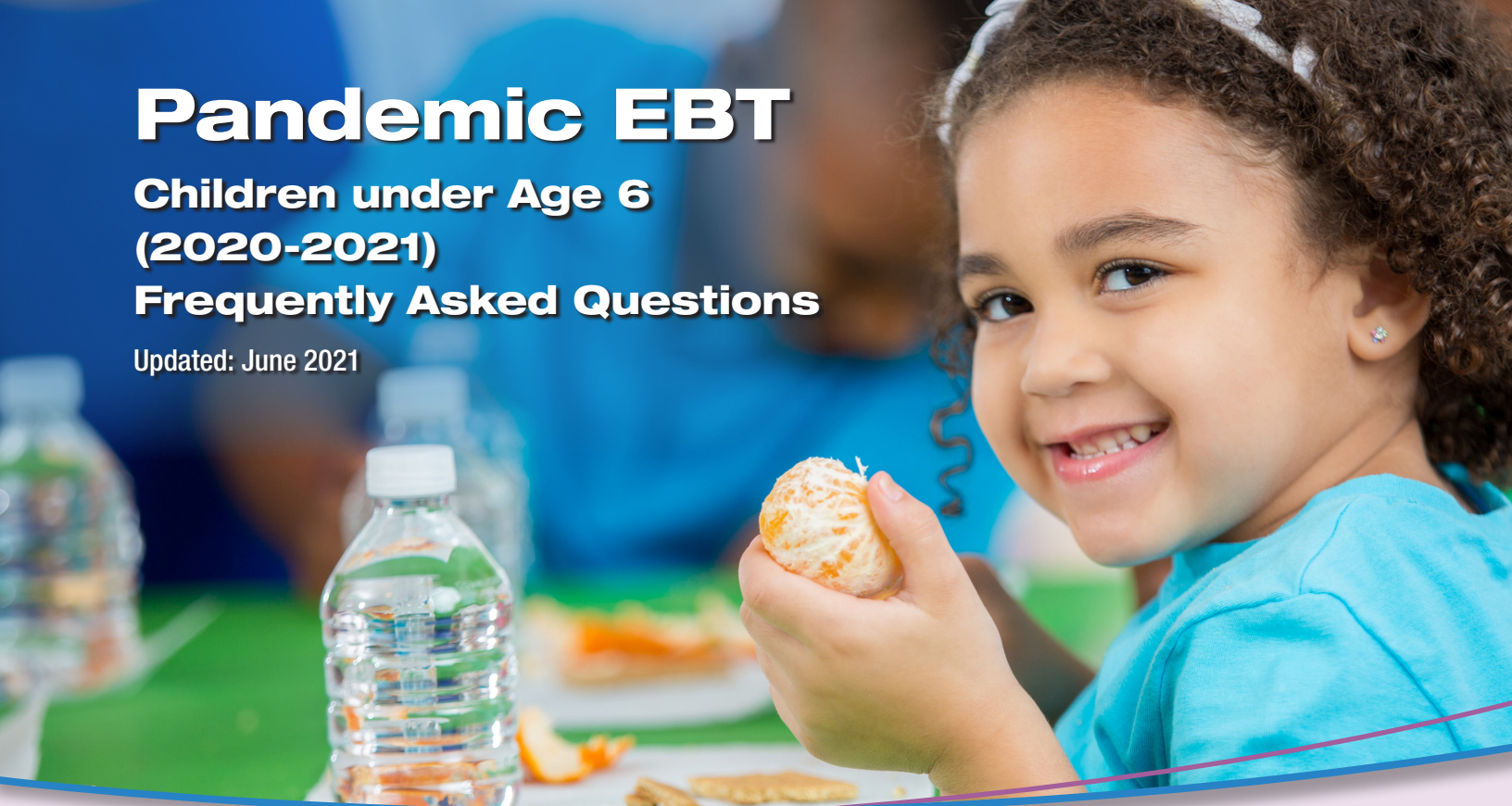


Pandemic EBT

**Children under Age 6
(2020-2021)**

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated: June 2021



General Information

1. What is the Pandemic EBT Children under Age 6 program?

The Pandemic EBT program, or P-EBT, provides food benefits to children under age 6 to replace the cost of meals due to reduced attendance or child care facility closures during the 2020-21 school year. Please see questions 5 – 11 for P-EBT eligibility information.

2. How is this different from P-EBT for children in school?

The 2020-21 school year P-EBT program for children enrolled in school is based on school-reported limited in-person attendance. P-EBT for children under age 6 assumes all children on a Basic Food program have been impacted due to child care limited attendance or closures.

3. If I get P-EBT benefits, will it affect my immigration status or make me a public charge?

No. The Public Charge rule does not apply to P-EBT benefits and P-EBT benefits will not impact immigration status. This includes children who receive P-EBT through Washington's state-funded Food Assistance Program.

4. My child gets lunches at school or in a Headstart or ECEAP Program. Can I still qualify for P-EBT?

Yes. P-EBT benefits are additional food benefits. Children may continue to receive grab-and-go meals at school or community sites, or emergency food at COVID-19 emergency feeding sites offered at community locations, even if they are receiving P-EBT benefits.

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P-EBT Eligibility

5. Who is eligible for P-EBT for Children under Age 6?

Children who receive Basic Food qualify for P-EBT if they are:

- Under the age of 6.
- A member of a household active on a Washington state Basic Food assistance program anytime between Oct. 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.
- Reside in a county with a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program that has limited on-site meal service.

6. We were on food assistance, but my case closed. Do we still qualify for P-EBT?

Children eligible for P-EBT as a child under 6 only qualify for P-EBT for the months their household was active on Basic Food from October 2020 to June 2021 if one school in their county has limited on-site meal service. Families interested in reapplying can contact DSHS Customer Service Contact Center at 877-501-2233 and apply over the phone or submit an application on www.washingtonconnection.org.

7. I already receive food assistance. Do I automatically qualify for P-EBT?

You may automatically receive a P-EBT benefit if you reside in a county that had at least one school with limited on-site meal service as described in #5. Households who reside in a county that did not experience limited school meals will not be eligible for P-EBT benefits.

8. My child is in child care, but we are not on Basic Food. Do we qualify for P-EBT for Children under Age 6?

No. P-EBT for Children under Age 6 benefits are only for children who were in a household receiving Basic Food between October 2020 and June 2021. If you believe you may qualify for Basic Food, you can contact DSHS Customer Service Contact Center at 877-501-2233 and apply over the phone or submit an application on www.washingtonconnection.org.

9. How do I find out if my child is eligible for P-EBT benefits?

Eligible children will receive a notice and a P-EBT card with their name on it. We anticipate the notice to be sent to eligible children beginning July 2021. The P-EBT card will be mailed shortly after if they don't already have one. Families should keep their P-EBT cards as more P-EBT benefits may be loaded later if the federal COVID-19 public health emergency continues. P-EBT benefits will NOT be added to existing Quest EBT cards.

10. Why will it take so long to receive the P-EBT benefits?

Federal law requires states not duplicate benefits for children who already received P-EBT benefits. We will review students enrolled in Headstart or ECEAP programs to ensure they receive accurate benefit amounts.

Getting P-EBT Benefits

11. How do I get P-EBT benefits for children under the age of 6?

Eligible families do not need to apply to get P-EBT benefits. Each eligible child will receive a P-EBT card mailed directly to the address recorded in their Basic Food case with DSHS.

12. We already got P-EBT benefits. Will we get more?

Children may already have a P-EBT card because they were eligible for free or reduced-price meals. We are unable to provide duplicate P-EBT benefits, but we will review the case to see if the child would have gotten more benefits as a child under 6. If eligible for more, additional benefits will be placed on the same P-EBT card.

13. Will my benefits be back-dated to the beginning of the school year (September 2020)?

No. We are only able to provide P-EBT benefits to children in a Basic Food household for months the child was in an active Basic Food Assistance Unit from Oct. 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021, as federally approved by congress.

14. What do I need to do when the new P-EBT card arrives in the mail (if I don't already have one)?

Follow the instructions that come with your P-EBT card and create your secure Personal Identification Number or PIN. Keep your card! If the P-EBT program continues, we may add more benefits to your account and card.

15. Should I keep my P-EBT card?

Yes. Additional benefits may be administered later in the year. Cards should be kept in a safe place.

16. I have split custody between myself and a co-parent. Who can use our children's P-EBT card?

As long as the responsible household member such as a co-parent or caregiver accesses the benefits on behalf of the eligible child, co-parents and caregivers are authorized to use the child's P-EBT card.

17. What if I need a replacement P-EBT card because it was lost or damaged?

P-EBT card replacements are processed by calling the EBT vendor, FIS, at 888-328-9271. Families may also visit www.ebtEdge.com or the ebtEdge app if a replacement card is needed. To request a replacement P-EBT card, you will need the following information: the child's full name, date of birth, zip code and full address. The mailing address must match what is in the system for a replacement card to be mailed by the EBT vendor. Please expect seven to 10 business days to receive your card. See question 27 for additional information on when your address doesn't match what the EBT vendor, FIS, has on file.

18. Can I put these benefits on my existing food EBT card?

No. The P-EBT program is unique and benefits are separate from other food or cash benefits available on your Quest EBT card.

19. I did not receive a notice. Do I qualify for P-EBT?

If you did not get a notice, your child may not be eligible. If you think this is an error, please contact the P-EBT Contact Center at 833-518-0282 to check on their eligibility.

20. We do not need these benefits. Can I decline them?

We encourage households determined eligible for P-EBT to use the benefits for your family and to help boost the local economy. Benefits are not transferrable and cannot be gifted or donated. If you still wish to decline the benefits, you may destroy the card or return the card to the address on the back of the card. Benefits will be automatically removed after 274 days of non-use.

P-EBT Benefit Amounts

21. How much will my child get in P-EBT Children under Age 6?

Meals are budgeted mirroring school operating hours at a daily P-EBT rate of \$6.82. This covers lunch, breakfast and a snack, multiplied by an average of 18 operating days per month. Using the information reported by schools regarding limited on-site meal service, the P-EBT benefit amount is based on the county of residence of the child as indicated on the Basic Food case and the lowest meal service reported in the county for each month, October 2020 through June 2021. Benefits may vary from county to county.

County Predominant Meal Service	Calculation	Dollar Amounts per Month
Full Remote Learning or School Closure	$\$6.82 \times 18 \times 100\%$	\$123
One Day In-person or Two Days In-person	$\$6.82 \times 18 \times 70\%$	\$76
Three Days In-person or Four Days In-person	$\$6.82 \times 18 \times 30\%$	\$37

22. Why is the amount not based on my child's actual attendance at a child care center?

To help the most children, we applied a county standard amount awarded to the children. We are unable to monitor individual child care attendance. We are using school meal service availability to make an assumption of limited hours and attendance for children in child care.

23. Can P-EBT benefit amounts be changed or corrected?

The amount of P-EBT benefits will be based on the most recent county of residence listed in your Basic Food case and the lowest meal service reported by schools in that county. When you receive your child's notice of eligibility, if you believe there has been an error on your child's P-EBT amount, you can call the P-EBT Contact Center at 833-518-0282 to request they review your eligibility.

24. Will there be more P-EBT benefits?

The P-EBT program may continue as long as there is a federal COVID-19 public health emergency. This may include into the summer months. Make sure to keep your child's card for potential future benefits. Please visit www.dshs.wa.gov/pebt for additional details.

P-EBT Contact Center

25. Who do I call for P-EBT Questions?

All P-EBT eligibility questions may be directed to the P-EBT Contact Center at 833-518-0282.

26. Who do I call to set up the PIN?

Once you get your child's card, families may call the EBT vendor at 888-328-9271 to set up the PIN.

27. Who do I contact if I did not receive my P-EBT card because of an address change?

Families should call the P-EBT Contact Center at 833-518-0282 for help with an address change.

Using P-EBT Benefits

28. Where can I use my P-EBT benefits and what can I buy with them?

Use your P-EBT card like a debit card or just like a Quest EBT card. Your P-EBT benefits can buy food at most grocery stores and farmers markets. You can use your P-EBT benefits at any store that accepts EBT, including online from participating merchants. Most retailers have signs saying they accept EBT. P-EBT benefits can be used to buy any food that can be bought with SNAP EBT. EBT eligible foods are most foods, except prepared foods and foods sold hot. You can learn more about EBT eligible foods by visiting [What can SNAP Buy?](#)

29. Can P-EBT be used with fruit and vegetable incentives?

Yes. Families can use their P-EBT benefits with participating fruit and vegetable incentive programs including [SNAP Market Match](#) and [SNAP Produce Match](#). These programs allow families to boost the amount of qualifying fruits and vegetables they can receive at participating grocery stores and farmers markets. Learn more at [SNAP Match Programs](#).

30. Do I have to use all my P-EBT benefits when I get them?

No. The benefits will carry over from month to month. Your P-EBT benefits will remain on your card for a maximum of 274 days from your last activity starting from the issuance date. Don't throw your P-EBT card away. As long as the COVID-19 public health emergency is in place, we may issue additional P-EBT benefits on this account and card.

31. Do I have to set up my PIN on my P-EBT card by a specific date?

If a card is not pinned and the benefits are not used within 274 days after issuance, they will be removed and cannot be replaced. Families are encouraged to set up their PIN and activate their P-EBT benefits as soon as they receive the card, but there is no set deadline to set up a PIN or activate the P-EBT card.

32. How do I check my balance?

You can call the EBT vendor, FIS, at 888-328-9271 (the number on the back of the P-EBT card) to check the balance, or go to www.ebtEdge.com or download the ebtEdge application on your cell phone.

33. Someone used my benefits. Can I get them replaced?

No. We cannot replace the value of any benefit that has been redeemed. It is very important you choose a secure PIN that is easy to remember but not commonly used. If your card was lost or stolen, we encourage you to immediately contact the EBT vendor, FIS, at 888-328-9271 to cancel your card and request a new one. If you suspect fraud, call the Washington State Welfare Fraud Hotline at 800-562-6906.

Other P-EBT Information

34. I'm not on food assistance anymore, but I have a child under 6 in my household should I reapply?

You can call the Department of Social and Health Services to apply for Basic Food benefits at 877-501-2233 or visit www.washingtonconnection.org. If your household is determined eligible for Basic Food Assistance, P-EBT benefits will be reviewed separately..

35. Are there any other food benefits available right now?

- The USDA Summer Meals Locator Tool can help families find locations serving meals to children. Participating in these meal services does not prevent eligible children from getting P-EBT benefits. These meal programs are available to all children age 18 and under, regardless of what school they attend. Families can also call 1-866-3-HUNGRY (1-866-348-6479) or 1-877-8-HAMBRE (1-877-842-6273) to locate sites near them during the summer months.
- You can go to www.washingtonconnection.org to apply for Basic Food benefits.
- If you have younger children, you may also qualify for the Women, Infants and Children or WIC program, which provides food assistance to children up to the age of 5 and pregnant and breastfeeding mothers. Find more information at <https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/WIC>.