

Department of Social and Health Services
Olympia, Washington
EAZ Manual

Revision # 1168
Category Pandemic (P-EBT) Program
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Summary

Updated EAZ Chapter to include two new WAC and the expansion of P-EBT to children under six and into the summer months. Clarifying information updated.

See below for new text:



Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) Program

Created on:

~~Mar 26 2021~~ July 23, 2021

Purpose:

This section reviews the Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) Program, which provides food benefits to children affected by school closures or reduced in-person learning due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

WAC 388-439-0005 – What is the pandemic EBT program?

- **Clarifying Information**

WAC 388-439-0010 - Eligibility of pandemic EBT benefits for the 2020-2021 school year.

- **Clarifying Information**

WAC 388-439-0015 - General information about pandemic EBT benefits.

- **Clarifying Information**

WAC 388-439-0020 – Eligibility for pandemic EBT benefits for children under age six.

- **Clarifying Information**

WAC 388-439-0025 – Eligibility for pandemic EBT benefits during the 2021 summer period.

- **Clarifying Information**

Clarifying Information - WAC 388-439-0005

Eligible ~~children~~student:

- All K-12 students eligible to receive free and reduced meals through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) are eligible for P-EBT regardless of age, including:
 - ~~Children-Students~~ attending a Head Start or Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) may qualify if the program they attend is administered by a school participating in the NSLP; and
 - Students over the age of 18 enrolled in high school.

Homeschooled children:

- P-EBT is available ~~only to children~~to students enrolled in and receiving education services in a school, and determined eligible to receive free or reduced-price school meals through the NSLP. Homeschooled children don't qualify for P-EBT. See Clarifying Information for WAC 388-439-0020 regarding children under age six.

Available Meal Service:

- Schools report on-campus meal service provided to the majority of students for the majority of the month (more than 50 percent). All P-EBT eligible students attending the same school get the same benefit amount based on that school's reported meal service.

- “Meal service” means days per week **both** breakfast and lunch is available for consumption on school campus to enrolled students as reported by the school.
 - “Grab and Go” meals or other meals consumed offsite don’t count as normal “meal service.”

Example: Sammie is attending a school that began the majority of students as hybrid learning two days per week in January 2021. Students attended school for the first week and received two days on-site meal service. The following week, school went full remote learning due to a COVID-19 outbreak. For the majority of the month, the school was full remote learning; therefore, all P-EBT eligible students attending this school are eligible for the full benefit level in January 2021. Sammie gets \$123 for the month of January 2021.

Example: Tomas is enrolled in elementary school that has two cohorts – half of the students attend school on campus Monday and Tuesday, and the other half attends school on campus Thursday and Friday. Both breakfast and lunch are available to students on campus two days per week. Because the majority of students receive a two-day meal service, all P-EBT eligible students are eligible for \$74.

Example: A school is offering hybrid learning to the majority of students for the majority of the month. Students attend the school four hours a day. They are served breakfast, but lunch is provided as “Grab and Go” meal. Since “Grab and Go” meals are consumed offsite, students don’t receive both meals on school campus and are reported by the school as full-remote learning, therefore students are eligible for the full benefit level.

Clarifying Information - **WAC 388-439-0010**

Applications:

- There is no application for P-EBT benefits.
- P-EBT eligibility is automatically determined for all students eligible for free or reduced-price meals based on available data from schools. The benefit amount is based on the school’s reported meal service.

Operating days:

- Operating days are based on a statewide average of all schools’ normal operating days, excluding weekends, breaks, and holidays. Schools have an average of 180 operating days from September 2020 to June 2021. The average over 10 months is 18 operating days per month.

Retroactive school reporting:

- Schools report their school status and meal service availability on a retroactive basis to capture the most accurate meal service. This allows schools to account for changes in meal services throughout the month and school year.
- All P-EBT eligible students attending the same school get the same amount of P-EBT benefits.

Benefit Levels:

We base the monthly P-EBT benefit levels on two factors:

- Available meal service to more than 50% of enrolled students; and
- Number of days in the month with meal service.

Example: Privet Drive Elementary provides free or reduced-priced meals. In October, kindergarten to first grade received one day in-person meal service per week. Second to fifth grade received no meal service as students were full remote learning.

All students at Privet Drive Elementary are considered full remote learning since:

- More than 50% of students enrolled in the school were full remote learning AND
- More than 50% of the month was full remote learning.
- Benefit amounts are based on the school’s reported meal service, number of operating days (18), and the daily rate of \$6.82 for breakfast, lunch and snack.

| Meal Service Reported | Calculation | Dollar Amount for the Month |
|---|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Full remote learning or School Closure | $\$6.82 \times 18 \times 100\%$ | \$123 |
| One day in-person | $\$6.82 \times 18 \times 80\%$ | \$99 |
| Two days in-person | $\$6.82 \times 18 \times 60\%$ | \$74 |
| Three days in-person | $\$6.82 \times 18 \times 40\%$ | \$50 |
| Four days in-person | $\$6.82 \times 18 \times 20\%$ | \$25 |

- Schools reporting full in-person learning don’t qualify for a P-EBT benefit for that month.

Example: Donna is a first grader who started attending full in-person learning the last week of February 2021, while second to sixth graders were full remote learning the entire month. First, the school looks at the student enrollment to confirm the majority meal service to all students. At Donna’s school, the majority of students are full remote learning. Second, the school looks at the operating days in the month and confirms that most of the students at the school were in full remote learning for most of the month. This means all P-EBT eligible students are determined to be full-remote learning. Donna is eligible for the maximum benefit of \$123 for February 2021.

P-EBT Issuance:

P-EBT for students is a one-time payment for a retroactive period.

| Issuance | P-EBT Months: |
|------------------------|---|
| March 2021 | September 2020 to January 2021 |
| April 2021 | February and March 2021 |
| June 2021 | April and May April, May and June 2021 |
| August 2021 | June 2021 |

Clarifying Information - **WAC 388-439-0015**

Using the P-EBT card:

- The P-EBT cards work the same as a regular EBT card to purchase food items. Eligible P-EBT students will receive a card with their name on it.
- Each student (including homeless youth) can use the EBT card or have a responsible household member use the benefits on their behalf.
- Benefits are redeemable nationwide.

P-EBT card:

- Cards are mailed to the address on file with the school.
 - P-EBT cards and notices may be sent to the school for pick up.
- There are no custody requirements for P-EBT, as long as a responsible adult uses the benefit on behalf of the child.
- EBT cards are to be used on behalf of the eligible child. P-EBT benefits can't be transferred, trafficked, or exchanged for non-food items as listed in [WAC 388-412-0046 \(2\)\(d\)](#). This includes donating food items to a food bank or charity.

Clarifying Information - **WAC 388-439-0020**

Eligible child:

- We consider all Basic Food recipient children under the age of six to be enrolled in a childcare facility.

- Children who meet P-EBT criteria don't have to be enrolled in school or childcare to qualify.
- Applications aren't required. We automatically determined P-EBT for all children receiving Basic Food under the age of six.

NOTE: Households with a \$0 food benefit aren't considered participating in SNAP/FAP and don't qualify for P-EBT.

Benefit Levels:

- We base monthly P-EBT benefits for children under six on the lowest meal service reported by one school in each county.
- We assume that all children under six in that county are impacted by the limited on-site meal service at school campuses. We use the county of residence as reported in the DSHS case file.
- We mirror the statewide average operating days for Washington state schools; the average over ten months is 18 operating days per month.
- Benefit amounts are based on the lowest school meal service in the county, number of operating days (18), and the daily rate of \$6.82 for breakfast, lunch and snack.

| <u>Meal Service Reported</u> | <u>Calculation</u> | <u>Dollar Amount for the Month</u> |
|---|--|---|
| <u>Full remote learning or School Closure</u> | <u>$\\$6.82 \times 18 \times 100\%$</u> | <u>\$123</u> |
| <u>One day in-person or Two days in-person</u> | <u>$\\$6.82 \times 18 \times 70\%$</u> | <u>\$86</u> |
| <u>Three days in-person or Four days in-person</u> | <u>$\\$6.82 \times 18 \times 30\%$</u> | <u>\$37</u> |

Example: Violet (5) is active on Basic Food with their parents. Violet is not enrolled in childcare or school. They reside in King County.

In King County, there was one school that reported they were full remote learning all school year. We assume all children under six on Basic Food in King County qualify for the maximum P-EBT benefit.

Violet receives the maximum P-EBT benefit of \$123.

Example: Maria (1) is active on Basic Food and lives in Garfield County. All schools in Garfield County were full in-person learning, therefore Maria does not qualify for a P-EBT benefit.

P-EBT Issuance:

P-EBT for children under six is a one-time payment for a retroactive period:

| <u>Issuance</u> | <u>P-EBT Months:</u> |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <u>July 2021</u> | <u>October 2020 to March 2021</u> |
| <u>August 2021</u> | <u>April to June 2021</u> |

- Children under six may have received P-EBT as a student in Head Start or ECEAP. If the student would receive more P-EBT benefits as a child under six, we will supplement their benefits to the higher amount.
- Issuing P-EBT past September 30, 2021 will require FNS approval.

Example: Jerome (4) is in ECEAP and received P-EBT as a student. His school reported all students at their school were in person two days a week. Jerome received \$74 in P-EBT based on this information.

Jerome lives in Thurston County, active on food assistance, and under the age of six. In Thurston County, there was one school reporting full remote learning. Jerome would have qualified for the full \$123 P-EBT benefit.

$\$123 - \$74 \text{ received} = \text{Jerome qualifies for a } \$49 \text{ supplement for P-EBT benefits.}$

NOTE: A child could receive federally funded P-EBT as a child in school as there is no immigration requirements for students, but then receive a supplement of state funded P-EBT if the child was a child under six and on FAP. The benefit amount will not exceed \$123 maximum for a child.

Example: Andy (5) is in Head Start at his local school in Snohomish County. His school reports he was in person learning 3 days a week. Andy received \$50 in federal P-EBT based on this information.

Andy is active on Basic Food and under the age of six. In Snohomish County, there was one school reporting full remote learning. Andy would have qualified for the full \$123 P-EBT benefit.

$\$123 - \$50 = \$73 \text{ is owed to Andy for P-EBT benefits.}$

Clarifying Information - WAC 388-439-0025

We automatically issue the one-time, lump-sum of \$375 for the months of July and August 2021. Summer P-EBT isn't prorated. Children will receive the standard, statewide benefit of \$375 if they qualify.

Children in School:

- To receive Summer P-EBT, a free or reduced priced meal-eligible child must be enrolled in school as of June 2021.
- Student's have until August 31, 2021 to qualify for Summer P-EBT.
- Students who graduated in June 2021 qualify for Summer P-EBT.

Children under six:

- Families approved for more than \$0 benefits in June, July or August 2021 qualify for the full \$375.
- Families have until August 31, 2021 to qualify for Summer P-EBT.