

Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT)

What's new for the 2022-2023 School Year

Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) is a temporary food benefit that provides extra support to Minnesota families with children who are approved for free or reduced-price school meals when the COVID-19 pandemic impacts school operations. P-EBT also provides benefits to families with children age 5 and younger who are enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) or Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Tribal TANF).

Beginning in the 2022-23 school year, a limited number of students who are homeschooled or attend a virtual school may also be eligible for benefits.

Families can use P-EBT funds to purchase foods based on their dietary needs and preferences from retailers in their communities.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services and the Minnesota Department of Education operate the program in Minnesota. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) authorizes the P-EBT program.

School-aged students

A student may be eligible if they:

- Attend a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program or the Seamless Summer Option; AND
- Submitted an Application for Educational Benefits to their school and are eligible for free or reduced-price meals; AND
- Experienced reduced access to school meals due to COVID-19 circumstances.

They must also meet the following criteria:

- Their school closed or shifted to remote learning or had reduced hours or attendance for five consecutive days due to a COVID-19 impact; AND
- A parent or guardian reported to the school that the student's absence was due to a COVID-19 impact and the school accepted the COVID-19 impact; AND
- The school submitted the information to the Minnesota Department of Education by the deadline.

Contact your district food service department for information about free and reduced-price meal eligibility, or to apply.

New: Eligibility for Limited Group of Homeschooled and Virtual Students School Year 2022-2023

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that a new limited group of homeschooled and virtual students may be eligible to receive Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) benefits for the

school year 2022-2023. To receive P-EBT benefits, homeschool and virtual school students must meet specific eligibility requirements:

- Attended a school participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) at some point before the start of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, or the child enrolled in kindergarten as a virtual or homeschooled student in the school year 2020-2021 or later.

AND

- Currently not attending an NSLP-participating school due to concerns about COVID-19.

AND

- Would have been eligible for free or reduced-price meals* at their NSLP school if not for their virtual or homeschool status.

They must also meet the following criteria:

- A parent or legal guardian attested that the child transferred to a homeschool option or virtual option due to concerns about the COVID pandemic;
- A parent or legal guardian contacted their local school district to get a student identification number for the child;
- A parent or legal guardian submitted an Application for P-EBT Benefits for Homeschool and Virtual Students to the local school district and are eligible for free or reduced-price meals; and
- The school district submitted the information to the Minnesota Department of Education by the deadline.

Applications will be reviewed by the school district the student originally attended to confirm eligibility.