

1. What is Pandemic EBT (P-EBT)?

Federal law allows States to implement a temporary program called Pandemic- Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT), which provides eligible children with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps) benefits. The program is administered by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and the Department is partnering with the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to ensure eligible children receive this important benefit. Prior to school year 2022-2023, students enrolled in virtual schools or who were homeschooled were not eligible for P-EBT.

2. Are children enrolled in a virtual school or who are home schooled eligible for P-EBT?

For school year 2022-2023, children who are currently enrolled in virtual schools or are homeschooled must meet certain eligibility requirements in order to receive P-EBT benefits. The requirements are:

- Current enrollment in a virtual school or home school with a homeschool plan on file with the child's local school district;
- Enrollment in virtual school or home school occurred between January 27, 2020 to January 20, 2023 due to COVID-19 concerns;
- Prior to enrolling in a virtual school or homeschooling, the child was enrolled in a traditional "brick and mortar" school that participated in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) (there is an exception for children who are in kindergarten through second grade who never attended a traditional brick and mortar school. The household will need to indicate this on the application); and
- The child's household must meet the income eligibility requirements for the NSLP program. For the income guidelines, go to [Child Nutrition Programs Income Eligibility Guidelines \(2022-2023\) | Food and Nutrition Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

Please note some schools have online instruction for remote learners and children learning this way are not considered to be enrolled in virtual school for this purpose. If your child is not considered a virtual school or homeschool student, please see the Questions and Answers Document for School Students School Year 2022-2023 at [Pandemic-Electronic Benefit Transfer \(P-EBT\) Program | Office of Family Assistance | Ohio Department of Job and Family Services](#)

3. What is considered a virtual school?

For information on what is considered virtual school, please go to [E-schools | Ohio Department of Education](#).

4. What is considered homeschool?

For information on what is considered home schooling, please go to [Home Schooling | Ohio Department of Education](#).

5. How do I apply for P-EBT benefits?

To apply for benefits, please go to <https://www.ohio-k12.help/pebt-portal/pebt-eligibility-application/>.

The application will be available beginning **February 20, 2023** and close on May 31, 2023. **After May 31, 2023, no more applications will be accepted for the program.**

Please note that only virtual school and homeschooled students are required to apply for benefits. If you have a child in a traditional “brick and mortar” school, please see the Questions and Answers for School Students at <https://jfs.ohio.gov/ofam/p-ebt.stm>

6. How do I verify my child’s eligibility?

When you fill out the application, you will be required to list the reason your child left the traditional “brick and mortar” school to enroll in virtual school or homeschool, and list the household income and upload verification/proof of income.

If your child receives SNAP and/or Ohio Works First (OWF), you will be asked to provide the SNAP or OWF case number. Receiving SNAP or OWF makes your child automatically income eligible for P-EBT.

ODJFS and ODE will work with the child’s previous and current schools to verify/confirm:

- Your child’s previous enrollment in a traditional “brick and mortar” building that participated in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP); and
- Your child’s current enrollment in virtual school, or that there is a homeschool plan on file with the child’s local school district, and that the enrollment or homeschooling began between January 27, 2020 and January 20, 2023.

*Because there are multiple organizations who have to verify your child’s eligibility, it may take up to 90 days to receive a decision on your child’s eligibility. You will receive an email telling you if your child is approved or denied. The P-EBT customer service line will not have information regarding your household’s virtual or homeschool application until the application is approved or denied.

7. How much will an eligible child receive?

The benefit is \$147.24 per month for each eligible child from August 2022 to May 2023, as long as the child remains enrolled in the virtual or is homeschooled through May.

8. How are P-EBT benefits issued?

If the child is a current SNAP recipient:

- The P-EBT benefits may be added to the account on which the child is active.
- If the child was unable to be matched to his or her active SNAP account, you will be sent a P-EBT card in the child's name.

If the child is not a current SNAP recipient:

A pre-loaded EBT card will come in the mail.

- The card will be in the child's name, not the parent or guardian's name. Each eligible child will get a P-EBT card; benefits of siblings are not grouped onto one card.
- Instructions on how to activate the card will be included (also see instructions below).
- **You must keep this new card as it will be used for any future P-EBT benefits your child is eligible for.**

*Please note that if your child has previously received P-EBT at a traditional "brick and mortar" school since February 2021, benefits will be loaded to that card. You will not automatically get a new card. If you need a replacement card, please call 1-866-386-3071.

The benefits are used just like SNAP benefits. Go to <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/eligible-food-items> for a list of eligible food items than be bought with SNAP benefits.

9. How often will this benefit be issued?

Once an application is approved, eligible children will receive an initial benefit that includes benefits for August 2022 through the month of application approval. After the initial benefit, you will receive a monthly benefit by the end of each month until either the month the federal public health emergency ends or May 2023, whichever comes first.

If your application is approved after the school year or public health emergency ends, you will receive all benefits at one time.

In order for local grocery stores to be better stocked, P-EBT benefits are issued over multiple days in the last two weeks of the month rather than on a single day. Your child's benefit will be issued on a certain day based on the first letter of their last name. For example, last names beginning with A-D may receive their benefits on the 20th of the month, then E-G on the 21st, etc. This day will vary each month.

Please note, not every child will receive the P-EBT benefits on the same day, but every child will receive their benefits **by the end of the month.**

10. How long will it take to receive a decision on my application once I submit it?

It may take up to 90 days to receive a decision. If you call prior to the 90th day, we will not have information on your application.

11. *How long will a family have access to the P-EBT benefits?*

The P-EBT benefits will be available for 9 months. If after 9 months the P-EBT benefits have not been spent, they will be removed (expunged) from the account. Current SNAP households will still have access to their remaining SNAP benefits.

12. *Who should a family contact if they have questions regarding P-EBT?*

For general program questions, questions about your child's benefits, please call the P-EBT customer service line at 1-866-244-0071 Option 1.