



September 20, 2021

PANDEMIC EBT FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions for Child Care Children

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

P-EBT is an optional federal program designed to provide food benefits to children who have temporarily lost access to free and reduced-price meals at school due to school closures triggered by COVID-19.

P-EBT is administered by the South Carolina Department of Education and the South Carolina Department of Social Services.

2. What is Child Care P-EBT?

Child Care P-EBT provides benefits to households with children, age five and under, who received SNAP benefits between October 2020 and June 2021.

3. Who is eligibility for Child Care P-EBT?

A child is eligible for benefits under P-EBT's child care component if both of the following conditions are met:

- The child is a member of a household that received SNAP benefits at any time during the time period of October 1, 2020 – June 2021
- One or more schools in the area of the child's residence is closed or has reduced attendance or hours for at least 5 consecutive days.

4. How do I apply for Child Care P-EBT?

There is no application process for Child Care P-EBT. Eligible SNAP children are automatically approved and will be issued a P-EBT card.

5. How will I receive my Child Care P-EBT benefits?

Children eligible to receive Child Care P-EBT will receive a new P-EBT card issued to the address associated to the active SNAP case in which they received SNAP benefits. If multiple children in the household are eligible, each child will receive a separate P-EBT card.

6. How much is the Child Care P-EBT benefit amount?

The benefit amount is based on the average monthly allotment for P-EBT K-12

school program. For South Carolina, this equates to \$81.12 per month. Benefits will be paid for each month the child was a participant in an active SNAP case and was under the age of 6 during the time period of October 2020 – June 2021.

7. Do I or my child have to be a citizen to be eligible for P-EBT?

No. Child Care P-EBT benefits are for SNAP children under the age of six enrolled in a covered Child Care facility.

8. When can I expect to receive Child Care P-EBT benefit for my child?

Child Care P-EBT cards should be mail out on or before October 11, 2021.

Due to the high volume of P-EBT cards entering the mailing stream, delivery times for Child Care P-EBT cards will vary.

9. Can I receive my child's P-EBT benefits faster by calling my county office?

Calls to local County DSS offices or to the State DSS office will not result in faster processing of P-EBT benefits. **Please do not call your local DSS County office with questions about P-EBT.**

10. What should I do if I feel my child should have received Child Care P-EBT benefits but did not?

If your child(ren) did not receive Child Care P-EBT benefits and your child meets the eligible criteria outlined in Question #2, please email the PEBT Benefits email box at PEBTBenefits@dss.sc.gov.

11. How do I request a replacement card?

To check your balance or report your P-EBT card lost, stolen, or damaged, call 1-800-554-5268.

12. Do I have to use all my P-EBT benefit when I get it?

No. The benefit will carry over from month to month. Benefits not used within 365 days of issuance will be automatically removed from the card.

13. When will my P-EBT benefit expire?

P-EBT benefits expire one year (365 days) after issuance.

14. What if an eligible P-EBT household does not want to participate in the P-EBT program?

If an eligible household receives a P-EBT card and does not want to participate in the program, the household should destroy the P-EBT card. The P-EBT card and food benefit **cannot be transferred** to anyone else or used by someone outside your household.

15. What can be purchased with the P-EBT benefit?

Purchasing rules are the same for SNAP and P-EBT. P-EBT benefits can be used to purchase food for a household, such as:

- a. fresh, frozen, canned, or dried fruits and vegetables
- b. meat, poultry, fish, dairy products, eggs
- c. cereal, bread, pasta, rice
- d. any ingredients you use for cooking
- e. baby formula
- f. diabetic foods
- g. snack foods and non-alcoholic beverages
- h. seeds and plants for growing food at home

P-EBT benefits CANNOT be used to buy:

- beer, wine, liquor, cigarettes, or tobacco
- vitamins, medicines, and supplements
- prepared foods, hot foods
- non-food items (pet foods, cleaning supplies, paper products, hygiene items, or cosmetics)

16. What retailers accept P-EBT?

P-EBT benefits can be used to purchase food items at retailers displaying a SNAP logo/signage. Find the closest retailer where you can use your benefits at:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer-locator>



17. I am a grocery retailer interested in becoming an approved SNAP/P-EBT merchant. What do I need to do?

Grocery retailers/food stores in SC who are interested in accepting SNAP/EBT must contact the USDA for approval. Visit online at:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/apply-to-accept>.