

## PANDEMIC ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFER (P-EBT) PROGRAM

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

### WHAT IS THE PANDEMIC ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFER (P-EBT) PROGRAM?

The *Families First Coronavirus Act* allows states to issue Food Assistance benefits to households with children in Pre-K through 12th grade who lost access to Free and Reduced Price School Meals due to pandemic-related school closures in Spring 2020.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO GET P-EBT?

Any child who was an enrolled Pre-K through 12th grade student in either a public school or non-public school that participates in the National School Lunch Program and received Free and Reduced Price School Meals as of March 16, 2020 is eligible.

### DO I NEED TO APPLY TO GET P-EBT?

No, if you had a child receiving Free and Reduced Price School Meals for the 2019-20 school year, as of and prior to March 16, 2020 your enrolled child was included in the program. See the Who is eligible to get P-EBT question above to determine if your child is eligible.

### HOW MUCH WILL MY CHILD GET FOR P-EBT?

Each eligible child will receive a one-time P-EBT benefit of \$307.80. See Who is eligible to get P-EBT question above to determine if your child is eligible. Each eligible child will get a P-EBT card.

### I ALREADY RECEIVE FOOD ASSISTANCE/SNAP BENEFITS. ARE MY KIDS STILL ELIGIBLE FOR THE P-EBT BENEFITS?

Yes. If you currently receive, or have received Food Assistance/SNAP benefits since April, you will get \$307.80 for each eligible child. (See Who is Eligible to get P-EBT question above) The P-EBT benefits will be put on your regular EBT card on Wednesday, July 15th. As always, you can check the EBT portal for the balance of your benefits. [www.connectebt.com](http://www.connectebt.com)

### I DON'T RECEIVE FOOD ASSISTANCE/SNAP BENEFITS. HOW WILL I KNOW IF MY KIDS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THE P-EBT BENEFITS?

Children in Pre-K through 12th grade who receive Free and Reduced Price School Meals, but do not receive Food Assistance/SNAP benefits will have a special P-EBT card mailed to them to be received between Tuesday, July 14th and Tuesday, July 21st with instructions on how to use the card. The address used is the address your school district has on file for each child.

### WHAT IF MY CHILD RESIDES IN MULTIPLE RESIDENCES?

If you have a child who is eligible for the Free and Reduced Price School Meals, the P-EBT benefit will be mailed to the address on file with the school district.



P-EBT card front and back

## WE MOVED FROM THE ADDRESS WHERE THE CARD WILL BE SENT. WILL I STILL GET MY CARD?

P-EBT cards will not be forwarded. A phone number will be provided soon if you if you do not receive your P-EBT card by Friday, July 24th. P-EBT cards will not be replaced before Friday, July 24th.

## I DIDN'T APPLY FOR P-EBT. WHY DID I GET THIS CARD?

You got the P-EBT card because your child received Free and Reduced Price School Meals at their school. The food dollars are intended to help your household purchase food because your child's school was closed due to COVID-19 and they weren't able to get the Free and Reduced Price School Meals they normally did.

## I DIDN'T APPLY FOR MY CHILD TO GET FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS. WHY DID I GET THIS CARD?

Your child may be eligible due to attending an USDA Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) school. To see if your child attends a CEP school, please visit:

[www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/nutrition-programs/school-meals/community-eligibility-provision-cep-schools](http://www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/nutrition-programs/school-meals/community-eligibility-provision-cep-schools)

## HOW DO I ACTIVATE MY CARD?

The card already has your one-time issuance of \$307.80 to use at any store that accepts EBT benefits. All you need to do is activate the card by following these instructions:

1. Call 1-800-359-5802;
2. Enter the 19-digit number on the front of the card;
3. Enter the date of birth of the child listed on the card;
4. Enter 555-55-5555 for the social security number, do NOT use the actual SSN for your child;
5. Set a four-digit PIN. Do not write the PIN on the card.

## I'M HAVING TROUBLE SETTING MY PIN OR ACTIVATING MY CARD. WHAT DO I DO?

Call the number on the back of the card, 1-800-359-5802, 24 hours/day, 7 days/week.

## WHY DID I GET MORE THAN ONE P-EBT CARD?

You will receive a P-EBT card for each eligible child (see Who is eligible to get P-EBT question above.) Each card has \$307.80 already on it, you will just need to activate the cards.

## WHAT CAN I BUY WITH THE P-EBT CARD?

You can use your P-EBT card to purchase eligible food items anywhere Food Assistance/SNAP/EBT cards are accepted. Eligible food items include dairy products, eggs, meat, cereal, rice, pasta, bread, fresh, frozen canned or dried vegetables and fruit, any ingredients you use for cooking, baby formula, diabetic foods, garden seeds, plants for growing food at home, and ice. You cannot buy already prepared/hot food, pet food, and non-food items. For more information, please visit <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/eligible-food-items>



## WHERE CAN I USE THE CARD?

You can use the card anywhere **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** benefits are accepted. All major grocery chains, convenience stores, and Walmart/Target stores accept EBT cards.

Amazon and Walmart offer online grocery purchasing using the P-EBT card. Food Assistance and P-EBT recipients will be able to use their benefits to purchase eligible food items, but will not be able to use benefits to pay for service or delivery charges. For more information, please visit

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/online-purchasing-pilot>.

- ▶ **Amazon** delivers statewide to all Iowa ZIP codes.
  - [Amazon Information](#)
  - [Amazon FAQ](#)
- ▶ **Walmart** provides this service for all store locations that offer online grocery. Visit your specific Walmart store's website to order groceries or call or (800) 924-9206 to get more information:  
If your store participates you will see this information on the website:  
*"NEW – This location offers delivery!"*

DHS is exploring additional opportunities to expand this program to include other retailers.

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## **HOW DO I USE THE CARD AT THE STORE?**

When you use the P-EBT card at the store, choose the EBT option on the point-of-sale machine at the checkout and enter your 4-digit PIN. (See the How do I activate my card question for PIN information.) Anyone in your household can use your P-EBT card, even if their name is not on the front of the P-EBT card.

## **MY CHILD'S NAME IS ON THE CARD, CAN I USE THE CARD AT THE STORE?**

Yes, just because your child's name is on the card doesn't mean they have to be the one to use the card at the store. Your child doesn't need to be with you when you use the card.

## **HOW WILL I KNOW HOW MUCH IS ON THE CARD?**

Each card starts with a balance of \$307.80. After a simple account set-up online, you may check the balance of the card at any time by going to [www.connectebt.com](http://www.connectebt.com). You will need to enter information from the card on the website so make sure your card is handy when you log in.

## **DO I HAVE TO USE ALL THE BENEFITS AT ONCE?**

No. The benefits will carry over month to month. One year after the card is issued, unused benefits will be removed from the card.

## **I LOST MY P-EBT CARD. HOW DO I GET A NEW ONE?**

Call 1-800-359-5802, 24 hours/day, 7 days/week to get a new one. Any remaining benefits you have on the card will be put on a regular EBT card which may look different than the P-EBT card you had previously. The card works the same.

## **I GOT A P-EBT CARD IN THE MAIL, BUT I DON'T WANT IT.**

Using the P-EBT card is voluntary. If you choose not to use the benefits available to you and your children, please cut up the card and throw it away.

## **CAN I GIVE THE P-EBT CARD TO SOMEONE ELSE TO USE IF I DON'T WANT OR NEED IT?**

The P-EBT card is non-transferable.

## **I APPLIED FOR MY CHILD TO RECEIVE FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS AFTER MARCH 16, 2020. WILL I GET A P-EBT CARD?**

The cutoff date to be eligible for P-EBT benefits was March 16, 2020. If you were approved for Free and Reduced Price School Meals after March 16, 2020, you are not eligible for P-EBT and will not receive a card.

## **HOW LONG DO I HAVE TO USE THESE BENEFITS?**

The benefits will be available for you to use for one year. After one year, any unused benefits will be removed from the card.

## **WHAT DO I DO WITH THE CARD AFTER I SPEND ALL THE MONEY ON IT?**

Simply throw the card away.

## **I BELIEVE MY CHILD SHOULD HAVE RECEIVED P-EBT AND DIDN'T. WHO DO I TALK TO ABOUT THIS?**

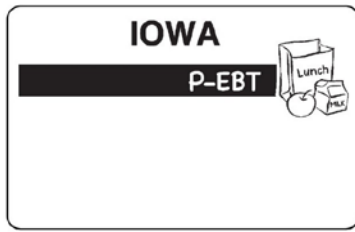
A phone number will be provided soon if you do not receive a card by Friday, July 24th. P-EBT cards will not be replaced before that date

## **I HAVE A QUESTION/PROBLEM THAT WASN'T ANSWERED ON THIS FAQ. WHO DO I CONTACT?**

A phone number will be provided soon for situations that are not answered by this FAQ document.

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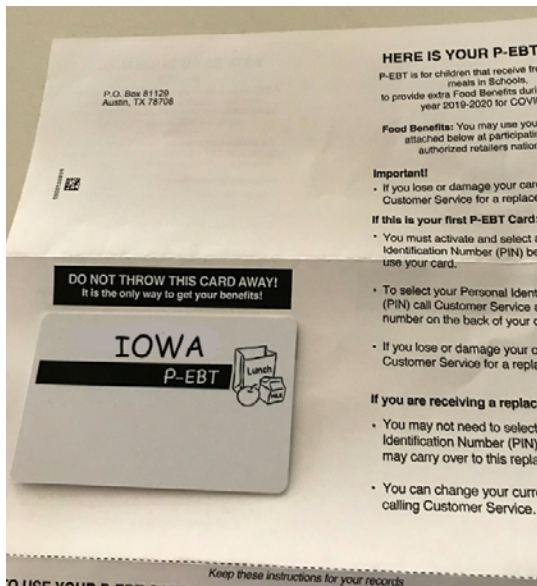
## WHAT DOES THE P-EBT CARD LOOK LIKE?



Card front and back

## IS THERE INFORMATION WITH THE P-EBT CARD?

Yes, this is the insert the P-EBT card will arrive on.



## WHAT DOES THE ENVELOPE LOOK LIKE THAT MY P-EBT CARD WILL COME IN?

The card will be addressed to your child and have a return address of:

P.O. Box 81129  
Austin, TX 78708



## ARE THERE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ASSIST WITH FEEDING MY FAMILY?

<https://coronavirus.iowa.gov/pages/feedingiowa>