



Food and Nutrition
Service

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July 6, 2021

**SUBJECT: Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer Program (P-EBT)
Approval of Guam's State Plan for School Children**

TO: Jesus Mendoza
Regional Administrator
Western Regional Office

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (P.L. 116-127; the Act) as amended by the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act (P.L. 116-159) and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116-260) authorized the continuation of a temporary assistance program for households with children affected by school closures during the public health emergency that was declared on January 27, 2020. Pursuant to the authority granted under Section 1101 of the Act, FNS approves Guam's enclosed plan to operate P-EBT for school children.

Summary of State's Plan

The Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services and the Guam Department of Education will issue P-EBT benefits through Guam's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) EBT card system to current SNAP households and non-SNAP households with eligible children. Guam's plan covers the months of August 2020 through May 2021.

Children are eligible if they would have received free or reduced price meals at their schools through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) if not for the closure or reduced attendance or hours of their schools for a period of at least 5 consecutive days. Guam will use the best feasibly available data and USDA-approved simplifying assumptions to issue benefits in amounts that are tied as closely as possible to the number of days that eligible children do not receive a meal service at school.

Guam and its school districts will identify children eligible for free or reduced price NSLP meals using the most current available data. All school districts that rely on SY 2019-2020 eligibility data will have a means to address that they do not issue benefits to last year's graduates and non-students, and will offer households with new students the ability to establish their eligibility through the traditional school food authority-run school meal application and direct certification processes.

In addition, Guam has or will:

- confirmed that all Department of Defense Educational Activity (DoDEA) schools operated fully virtually from August 24, 2020 through October 23, 2020,
- confirmed that DoDEA schools returned to in-person learning after October 23, 2020:

- Guam will issue benefits for the number of virtual school days from August 24, 2020 through October 23, 2020 to all children who were determined eligible for free or reduced price meals at DoDEA schools,
- children in DoDEA schools will not receive P-EBT benefits after October 23,
- confirmed that all Guam Department of Education (GDOE) public schools operated fully virtually from August 17, 2020 to January 19, 2021:
 - Guam will issue benefits for the number of virtual school days from August 17, 2020 through January 19, 2021 to all children enrolled in GDOE schools,
- confirmed that all GDOE public schools operated a schedule with 4 or 5 days of virtual learning per week, for all children, beginning January 20, 2021:
 - all GDOE schools continued to operate with 4 or 5 virtual days per week through the end of the school year on May 24, 2021,
 - Guam will issue benefits to all children enrolled in GDOE public schools for 4 virtual days per week from January 20, 2021 through May 24, 2021,
- tentatively issue benefits for the months of August through October 2020 in a single distribution on August 20,
- tentatively issue benefits for November 2020 through January 2021 in a single distribution on August 31,
- tentatively issue benefits for February through March 2021 in a single distribution on September 18,
- tentatively issue benefits for April through May 2021 in a single distribution on September 30.

Finally, Guam will identify risks for improper payments and ensure a high level of integrity.

Estimated Caseload and Value of P-EBT Benefits

Guam will calculate monthly benefits for each eligible child in the household equal to the daily reimbursement for a free breakfast, lunch, and snack multiplied by the number of benefit days calculated as described in Guam's plan.

Guam estimates that it will issue \$36.7 million to approximately 27,900 children for school closures and reductions in attendance and hours extending from August 2020 through May 2021.

Release of Information

Pursuant to Section 1101(e) of the Act, the Secretary hereby authorizes the release of the information necessary to carry out P-EBT in Guam. Section 1101(e) of the Act states, "Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Agriculture may authorize State educational agencies and school food authorities administering a school lunch program under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) to release to appropriate officials administering the supplemental

nutrition assistance program such information as may be necessary to carry out this section.”

Plan Timetable and Revisions

Guam will distribute benefits to households consistent with the timeframes identified in the State plan. Should Guam encounter challenges or delays that significantly impair its ability to implement the approved P-EBT plan or require substantive changes, Guam must notify the FNS Regional Office as soon as possible. The FNS Regional Office will work with Guam to identify reasonable solutions and review revised plans for approval or further revision.

Civil Rights

Guam will continue to comply with civil rights requirements, to include providing equal access to individuals with disabilities and individuals who are limited English proficient.

Administrative Funds

The Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services will participate in a P-EBT Administrative Budget Planning process using the FNS-366(a) Program and Budget Summary. When the FNS-366(a) is finalized, that will determine Guam’s Administrative Grant level. However, the FNS-366(a), Program and Budget Summary, may be updated and revised as Guam’s operational plan evolves.

Reporting

The Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services will complete the FNS-292B, the FNS-46, the FNS-388, and the FNS-778 reports in accordance with existing requirements.

FNS appreciates Guam’s commitment to meet the nutritional needs of children during a challenging time. If you have questions, please contact the FNS Western Regional Office.

Sincerely,

Cindy Long
Deputy Administrator
Child Nutrition Programs