

**State Plan for Pandemic EBT
Children in School and Child Care, 2022-2023**

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Summary:	(1) This document is a template to assist states in the development of state plans to operate Pandemic EBT for children in schools or child care during school year (SY) 2022-2023. (2) This document relates to Section 4601 of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (P.L. 116-127) as amended by the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act (P.L. 116-159), the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116-260), and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-2).

Additional context and background for this document can be found at State Guidance on Coronavirus P-EBT: [Click Here](#)

The submission of a P-EBT state plan, associated template, and related reporting obligations are addressed in OMB# 0584-0660, Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT), expiration 11/30/2023.

State Plan for Pandemic EBT
Children in School and Child Care, 2022-2023

1. **State:** Kentucky

2. **Primary Citations:** Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA);
Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act;
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021;
American Rescue Plan Act of 2021

3. **Executive Summary:**

Please provide the following data. In addition, please include a statement indicating that you commit to informing USDA of any significant increase or decrease in these data points during the *date range*¹ covered by this initial plan (or subsequent amendment).

- a. The *date range* covered by this state plan or amendment
 - for children in school
 - for children in child care
- b. Estimated monthly and total *amount* of P-EBT benefits the state will issue within this plan/amendment's date range.
 - Estimated amount issued to school children in SNAP households.
 - Estimated amount issued to school children in non-SNAP households
 - Estimated amount issued to non-school children in child care
- c. Estimated total *number* of children to which the state will issue P-EBT benefits.
 - Estimated number of school children in SNAP households
 - Estimated number of school children in non-SNAP households
 - Estimated number of non-school children in child care
- d. Tentative P-EBT issuance schedule (the dates on which you will issue P-EBT benefits).
 - School children in SNAP households
 - School children in non-SNAP households
 - Children in child care
- e. Names of state agencies involved in administering this plan.

Response:

- a) The *date range* covered by this state plan or amendment
 - for students enrolled in person- September 1, 2022 through May 11, 2023
 - for students enrolled in virtual or homeschool- September 1, 2022 through May 11, 2023.

¹ The date range covered by P-EBT state plan or amendment. A state's plan will typically cover the instructional months in the state's school year (September 2022 through June 2023, for example).

- b) Estimated monthly and total **amount** of P-EBT benefits the state will issue within this plan/amendment's date range.

Due to the ever-evolving nature of the COVID pandemic, these estimates are not precise. Kentucky will inform USDA of any significant increase or decrease in these data points during the period covered by this amendment.

Kentucky reviewed actual data on school closures, virtual instruction, and COVID-related absences in the 2021-2022 school year to develop P-EBT estimates with increased confidence. The resulting estimates of P-EBT issuance during the date range coverage period are as follows:

- Estimated monthly amount issued to school children is \$237,220 assuming eligible students impacted by COVID-related absence during the 2022-23 school year is approximately 20% of Kentucky's total eligible student population of 580,000. 116,000 students over the 2021-22 school year, each averaging 3 eligible P-EBT days in at least one month of the 9-month period, for a total benefit of \$24.54.
 - Estimated monthly amount issued to school children in SNAP households (35% of \$237,220) is \$83,027
 - Estimated monthly amount issued to school children in non-SNAP households (65% of \$237,220) is \$154,193
- Total issuance of \$2,134,980 (total monthly estimate of \$237,220 multiplied by 9 months in the 2022-2023 school year)
 - Estimated total amount issued to school children in SNAP households is \$747,243
 - Estimated total amount issued to school children in non-SNAP households is \$1,387,737
- The estimated total *number* of school children to which the State will issue P-EBT benefits is approximately 116,000 (distinct annual student count)
 - Estimated number of school children in SNAP households (35% of total) is 40,600.
 - Estimated number of school children in non-SNAP households (65% of total) is 75,400.

The tentative monthly P-EBT issuance schedule is outlined in Section 7, Implementation Timeline, EBT Processing, and Benefit Issuance.

- c) The tentative first P-EBT issuance date for SNAP and non-SNAP households is October 1, 2023.
- d) Names of state agencies involved in administering this plan.

The Kentucky Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) and the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) are the state agencies involved in administering this plan.

4. P-EBT for School Children (see Q&As #7-25)

A. Eligible Children

Standard for P-EBT Eligibility

A child is eligible for P-EBT benefits if two conditions are met:

1. The child would be eligible for free or reduced-price meals if the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program were operating normally. This includes children who are:
 - a. directly certified or determined “other source categorically eligible” for SY 2021-2022, *or*
 - b. certified through submission of a household application processed by the child’s school district for SY 2021-2022, *or*
 - c. enrolled in a Community Eligibility Provision school or a school operating under Provisions 2 or 3, *or*
 - d. on the school’s most current prior year list of directly certified children, children determined other source categorically eligible, or children certified by application *and* the school district has not made a new school meal eligibility determination for the child in SY 2021-2022.
2. The child does not receive free or reduced-price meals at the school because the school is closed or has been operating with reduced attendance or hours for at least 5 consecutive days in the current school year. Once the minimum 5 consecutive day threshold is met, children are eligible to receive P-EBT benefits for closures or reductions in hours due to COVID-19.

- Describe how the state will identify eligible school children for P-EBT. Please describe separately for the subset of children enrolled in non-NSLP-participating fully virtual institutions or homeschooling who may be eligible for P-EBT (see Q&As #16 and #25). Also describe what measures the state will take to prevent the issuance of benefits to school year 2021-2022 graduates and other non-students.
- How will the state determine and/or confirm each child’s eligibility for free or reduced-price meals?² Please describe separately for SNAP-recipient and non-SNAP-recipient children, children in public and non-public schools, new students (such as kindergarteners and transfer students), children who become eligible during the school year, and the subset of children enrolled in non-NSLP-participating fully virtual institutions or homeschooling who may be eligible for P-EBT.
- How will the state confirm each child’s lack of access to meals at school? Please describe separately for children in public and non-public schools.
- If the state’s schools will continue to impose temporary virtual or hybrid schedules, describe the process that the state will use to update each child’s in-person and virtual schedules (see Q&A #12). How frequently will that information be updated? (Note that this information must be updated no less frequently than every other month.).
- Describe the process that the state will use to identify individual students’ COVID-related absences or virtual learning days, including the process to identify, confirm and monitor the enrollment status of children in non-NSLP-participating fully virtual institutions or homeschooling.

² The burden associated with National School Lunch Program applications is covered under OMB Control # 0584-0026, 7 CFR Part 245 - *Determining Eligibility for Free & Reduced Price Meals and Free Milk in Schools*, expiration date 7/31/23.

- Describe the roles and responsibilities of each state agency or other partners involved in P-EBT (e.g., which agency is responsible for confirming eligibility).
- Describe any simplifying assumptions the state proposes to use and the justification for using those simplifying assumptions. **Please address both in detail.** In addition, please describe any proposed measures that the state will take to address program integrity when using the proposed simplifying assumptions. *(Please review Q&A #25 on simplifying assumptions regarding fully virtual schools and homeschooling.)*

Response: [please use as much space as needed]

The following entities are involved in the administration of P-EBT:

- The Kentucky Department for Community Based Services (DCBS), in collaboration with Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), is responsible for the planning, coordination, policy development, and monitoring of the P-EBT program. DCBS is also responsible for development of primary communications regarding P-EBT (i.e., website, partner toolkits, social media).
- DCBS is responsible for the issuance of P-EBT benefits, as well as the issuance of P-EBT cards and replacement cards, notices to clients, and the provision of customer service and support.
- KDE collaborates with local public-school districts to address pandemic-related initiatives for students. The department oversees eligibility determinations for free or reduced meal benefits for students participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) application process, determining Community Eligible Program (CEP) schools, the reporting of student enrollment, and attendance data. KDE also provides P-EBT related technical support to school districts, communicates with education leaders and stakeholders, and provides valuable support to DCBS to ensure overall program integrity, equity, and inclusion.
- DCBS will work with its EBT processor, Fidelity Information Systems (FIS), KDE, school districts, and other stakeholders to ensure a successful P-EBT program, timely implemented, with realistic expectations.

All of Kentucky's public and private schools who administer the NSLP record individual student attendance, but only approximately 5% track individual absences due to COVID during the 22-23 school year. Further, Kentucky schools do not use a common student attendance coding system. As such, data collection methods vary greatly among the state's nearly 200 distinct school districts. Due to the varying data collection methods among Kentucky's diverse school districts, automatic P-EBT enrollment is not feasible for the 22-23 school year.

Kentucky will provide a web-based application, similar to the application platform utilized during the 2019-2020 SY. A parent/guardian must apply for each student to determine P-EBT eligibility for the 2022-2023 SY. The application must be reviewed by school personnel to determine each student's free/reduced-price meal eligibility. Kentucky will not apply prior year free or reduced-price meal eligibility to the 2022-2023 school year. KDE will provide DCBS with an electronic file containing the individual demographics of all students. The file will contain the minimum necessary data elements to issue benefits in

accordance with USDA guidance and the processes described in this plan. DCBS will match KDE's file to household submitted applications and free/reduced-price meal eligibility and student absence confirmation received from school districts to P-EBT eligible students for benefit issuance purposes. To prevent duplicate P-EBT issuances, DCBS will match current student records to 22-23 child care P-EBT recipients. If a child received P-EBT child care benefits, the child is not eligible for P-EBT student benefits.

An online Absence Tracking Portal will be available for specific authorized school personnel to review the information entered on the online application. The portal will display each applicant's State Student ID, date of birth, and COVID-related absences as reported on the application. Authorized school personnel will confirm each student's free/reduced meal eligibility, and approve, correct or deny any household-reported COVID-related or absences each month. Schools that do not specifically track COVID-related absences will be instructed to only approve excused absences that do not contradict³ the household's report of the absence being COVID-related.

Absent of a statewide database for current homeschool students, P-EBT enrollment for this population is challenging. To assist with administration, alleviate household hardship, and ensure eligible children receive the P-EBT benefits they are entitled to, Kentucky proposes simplifying assumptions. The first of which is to accept the applicant's statement regarding the public school the homeschool student would have attended in the 22-23 SY if not for enrolling in homeschool due to COVID-related reasons. As part of the web-based application, the applicant is asked if the homeschool student began homeschooling on or after 1/27/2020. If the response is 'NO', the student is ineligible to receive P-EBT. If the response is 'YES', the applicant is asked if the student began homeschooling due to the COVID pandemic. If the response is 'NO', the student is ineligible to receive P-EBT. If the answer is 'YES', the applicant is asked which school the child would be enrolled in during the 22-23 SY had the child not been a homeschooled student due to COVID-related reasons. If the school's information is found in the state's preloaded database of NSLP Community Eligible Program (CEP) schools, the homeschool application will be approved. If the student's would-be 22-23 SY school is not a CEP school, the application will perform matching to the statewide eligibility system to determine whether the child meets the financial criteria for free/reduced meal eligibility. If a program match is not found, applicants will be asked to enter their household size and gross monthly income. Applicants will also be asked if the applicant child is a foster, runaway, homeless or migrant child. Additionally, if there is no system/program match to the applicant child and the child never attended a NSLP-participating school in Kentucky (i.e., children who are in grades Kindergarten through 2nd in SY 22-23, as well as older children who attended school in other states), the child's existence must be verified. The household will be asked to submit proof (i.e., birth certificate) via a link from the application.

If the student is a foster, runaway, homeless or migrant child, the child is determined to automatically meet free meal eligibility. If the student is **not** a foster, runaway, homeless or migrant child, the system will compare the applicant's stated income to the 2022-23 SY free/reduced-price meals eligibility guidelines. If the household's income exceeds the

³ Some Kentucky schools track excused absences using specific codes other than COVID-related (i.e., bereavement, field trips, etc.)

eligibility criteria for free/reduced-price meals, the student's P-EBT application will be denied. If the household's stated income is at or below the gross monthly allowable income, the household will be asked to submit specific household composition and financial information online via a link from the application. An email will also be sent to the address entered on the application to request information and provide examples of acceptable verification needed to process the student's application.

Kentucky schools do not uniformly track virtual students. As part of the web-based application, the applicant is asked if the student began virtual school on or after 1/27/2020. If the response is 'NO', the student is ineligible to receive P-EBT. If the response is 'YES', the applicant is asked if the student began virtual school due to the COVID pandemic. If the response is 'NO', the student is ineligible to receive P-EBT. If the answer is 'YES', the applicant is asked which "in person"/ "brick and mortar" school the child would have attended during the 22-23 SY if not enrolled in virtual school. If the stated school is CEP, the application will be approved.

Note, in Kentucky some virtual students are certified to receive free or reduced-price NSLP meals via direct certification, Kentucky NSLP meals application or their enrolled school's CEP status. In instances that a district does not certify virtual students for free/reduced-price meals and/or the student's would-be 22-23 SY school is not a CEP school, the application will perform matching to the statewide eligibility system to determine whether the child meets the financial criteria for free/reduced meal eligibility. If a program match is not found, applicants will be asked to enter their household size and gross monthly income. Applicants will also be asked if the applicant child is a foster, runaway, homeless or migrant child. If the student is a foster, runaway, homeless or migrant child, the child is determined to automatically meet free meal eligibility. If the student is **not** a foster, runaway, homeless or migrant child, the system will compare the applicant's stated income to the 2022-23 SY free/reduced-price meals eligibility guidelines. If the household's income exceeds the eligibility criteria for free/reduced-price meals, the student's P-EBT application will be denied. If the household's stated income is at or below the gross monthly allowable income, the household will be asked to submit specific household composition and financial information online via a link from the application. An email will also be sent to the address entered on the application to request information and provide examples of acceptable verification needed to process the student's application.

We recognize the need to verify these claims and will collect financial verification for each homeschool and virtual applicant. We commit to review the first 100 homeschool/virtual applications prior to the approval of any P-EBT homeschool/virtual applications requiring an income determination. If the error rate does not exceed 5% of the sample, homeschool and virtual applications requiring financial verification will be approved once acceptable verification is received. Case reviews will then be conducted for 10% of the weekly approved homeschool and virtual applications to ensure program accuracy and that the error rate remains under the 5% threshold throughout the application period. If at any time, the error rate rises above 5%, Kentucky will resume verifying the documentation for all homeschool and virtual applicants.

Student free/reduced-price meal eligibility and absences will be verified by specific school personnel on a bi-weekly basis, at minimum. The system may be accessed at any time to confirm requests. The absence days entered during the application and subsequently verified by school administrators, will determine a student’s eligibility and benefit amount each month. If the student withdraws from school during the month, the child is eligible only for COVID-related absences that occurred prior to the withdrawal. DCBS will request school administrators to approve, correct or deny absences reported during the application and confirm free/reduced-price meal eligibility around the first week of August 2023 through November 10, 2023. P-EBT benefits will be issued within 2 weeks of the application approval by the school administrator. The final P-EBT issuance will occur no later than December 15, 2023.

The following statement is displayed immediately preceding the applicant’s electronic signature:

“I certify (promise) that all information on this application is true and correct and that all income is reported. I understand that this information is given in connection with the receipt of Federal funds. I understand that state or local school officials may verify the accuracy of information in this application. I am aware that if I purposely give false information, my child may be denied benefits and I may be prosecuted under applicable state and federal criminal laws.”

B. School Status

Standard for P-EBT Eligible School Status

Children are eligible for P-EBT benefits if they are eligible for free or reduced price meals, but are unable to receive those meals at school due to the operating status of their schools as outlined below:

1. The school is closed (including any delayed start or early closure to the school year), or the school is operating with reduced attendance or hours.
2. School closures do not include weekends, or days when the school is closed due to a holiday or regularly scheduled break (Thanksgiving, New Year’s Day, Spring Break, etc.).
3. The period of closure or reduced attendance or hours must meet the current school year minimum 5 consecutive day threshold before any child is eligible for P-EBT benefits. Once the minimum 5 consecutive day threshold is met, children are eligible to receive P-EBT benefits for closures or reductions in hours and/or attendance due to COVID-19.

- Describe how the state will identify, confirm and monitor the status of individual schools. Also describe how the state will identify the period of duration of the closure, reduced hours, or reduced attendance of the state’s schools.
- How will the state confirm that the child’s school has been closed or is operating with reduced attendance or hours for a minimum of 5 consecutive days?
- Describe how this information will be obtained and how often the state will collect updated information from schools. (Note that this information must be updated no less frequently than every other month.)

- Describe any simplifying assumptions the state proposes to use and the justification for using those simplifying assumptions. Please address both in detail. In addition, please describe any proposed measures that ensure program integrity when using the proposed simplifying assumptions.

Response: [please use as much space as needed]

All Kentucky public and private schools have returned to in-person instruction however, students continue to miss school due to COVID-related absences. As such, COVID-related absences confirm a school is operating at reduced attendance due to COVID and therefore meets the statutory requirement of operating with reduced hours or attendance for five or more consecutive days.

A student's application for P-EBT benefits will be approved if their school confirms the student's eligibility for free/reduced-price school meals and excused absence⁴ and/or virtual instruction due to COVID-related reasons for each month as entered on the online application completed by the student's parent/guardian.

5. P-EBT for Children in Child Care (see Q&As #26-33)

Standard for P-EBT Eligibility

A child enrolled in a covered child care facility is eligible for P-EBT if:

1. The child is a member of a household that is enrolled in SNAP in the benefit month.
2. The child is enrolled in a covered child care facility. (Note that under the FFCRA, USDA deems all children under the age of 6 to be enrolled in a covered child care facility.)
3. During a public health emergency designation, the child's child care facility is closed or is operating with reduced attendance or hours for at least 5 consecutive days, resulting in the child's inability to attend the facility; or one or more schools in the area of the facility, or in the area of the child's residence, is closed or is operating with reduced attendance or hours.

There are no changes for P-EBT for children in child care from SY 2021-2022. USDA encourages states to refer to their **approved** SY 2021-2022 child care plan to complete this section. Please describe:

- how the state will identify eligible children and confirm their eligibility consistent with the above standard,
- how the state will set benefit levels for children,
- the roles and responsibilities of each state agency or other partners involved in P-EBT and
- any simplifying assumptions the state proposes to use and the justification for using those simplifying assumptions.

⁴ See Page 6

If the state will establish a reduction in access to child care using the CACFP data method, we recommend that the state respond to all points as described in their **approved** SY 2021-2022 child care plan, such as:

- The state will confirm that there has been a statewide reduction in access to child care for each of the months of the current school year relative to the same months immediately prior to the pandemic, and will share this data and calculations with USDA before issuing benefits for any months.
- The state will use the sum of CACFP lunch claims for child care centers and family day care homes as reported by the state on the FNS-44⁵. The state will exclude at-risk lunches and adult lunches.
- The state will set an average monthly P-EBT child care benefit using the reduction in aggregate lunch claims over a designated period of time, the average number of school instructional days over the course of the current school year, and the SY 2022-2023 P-EBT benefit per day.
- The designated period over which the state will set the average monthly benefit (e.g., a separate average monthly benefit for the fall semester and the spring semester).
- The state will monitor CACFP lunch claims through the end of the school year (or through the end of the public health emergency, as applicable) and will only issue benefits for months where lunch claims remain below claims for the most recent same month prior to the pandemic.

USDA will continue to support states with their calculations for the above approach.

If the state will establish a reduction in access to child care using a different approach, such as individual children's eligibility or proximity to area schools, then please describe below what the state will do and how this approach will be consistent with the above standard, such as:

- How will the state determine that a child's residence is in the area of one or more schools that is closed or is operating with reduced attendance or hours? (See Q&A #30)
- For children whose residence is *not* in the area of one or more closed schools or schools operating with reduced attendance or hours, how will the state determine those children's eligibility? (See Q&A #32-33). Specifically, how will the state determine that:
 - the child's child care facility is closed or is operating with reduced attendance or hours, or
 - the child's child care facility is in the area of one or more schools that are closed or operating with reduced attendance or hours?
- Are there any state or local public health ordinances that limit the capacity of child care facilities in response to COVID-19 in your state? If yes, describe how you will

⁵ The burden associated with state reporting of CACFP meal claims via the FNS-44 form is covered under OMB Control number 0584-0594, *Food Programs Reporting System (FPRS)*, expiration date July 31, 2023.

use those to find that all SNAP-participant children under age 6 are eligible for P-EBT in those areas?

- Describe the process that the state will use to update and re-establish each child’s continued P-EBT eligibility and benefit level consistent with changes in the operating status of the child care facility or area schools? How frequently will that information be updated? (Note that this information must be updated no less frequently than every other month.)

Response: [please use as much space as needed]

6. Benefit Levels

Standard for Benefit Levels

1. The full daily benefit level for each eligible child is equal to the free reimbursement for a breakfast, a lunch, and a snack for school year 2022-2023. The benefit is multiplied by the number of days that the eligible child’s status makes them eligible for P-EBT benefits.

SY 2022-2023 July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023	Free Reimbursements USDA School Meal Programs			
	Lunch	Breakfast	Snack	Daily Total
Contiguous U.S.	\$4.43	\$2.67	\$1.08	\$8.18
Alaska	6.87	4.21	1.75	12.83
Hawaii, Guam, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico	5.10	3.09	1.26	9.45

Notes:

1. Lunch rates include the 8 cent performance-based reimbursement and the extra 2 cents per meal received by school food authorities in which 60 percent or more of the lunches served during the second preceding school year were served free or at a reduced price.
2. Breakfast rates are those received by "severe need" schools.
3. Snack rates are those for afterschool snacks served in afterschool care programs
4. The figures include the temporary additional funding for school lunch and school breakfast authorized under Section 2 of the Keep Kids Fed Act of 2022.

Source: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/07/26/2022-15892/national-school-lunch-special-milk-and-school-breakfast-programs-national-average-paymentsmaximum>

- Describe the benefit levels proposed, including how days of eligibility will be determined. What simplifying assumptions does the state propose? Why must the state make those simplifying assumptions? Please address both of these questions in detail.

Response: [please use as much space as needed]

Eligible students will receive \$8.18 for each verified absence day. Kentucky proposes the simplifying assumption of an average benefit per homeschool and all virtual students. Kentucky operates a school calendar of 180 instructional days over a 9-month period which averages 20 school days per month. Therefore, Kentucky calculates the benefit for eligible homeschool students and eligible students enrolled in a primarily virtual school using 20 school days multiplied by the daily rate of \$8.18 for a total monthly amount of

\$163.60/month for the months of August 2022 through April 2023. Due to the expiration of the Public Health Emergency (PHE) on May 11, 2023, the May 2023 benefit will be prorated to 9 benefit days (the actual number of traditional May school days).

7. Implementation Timeline, EBT Processing, and Benefit Issuance

Please provide an implementation timeline for SY 2022-2023 with estimated dates for major milestones in your plan.

- States should develop their timeline cooperatively, including input from its EBT processor and all state agencies involved in implementing P-EBT. Instead of using specific dates, describe important milestones and realistic durations between them. USDA suggests that states build their timelines from the date USDA approves the state's plan (Day #0).
- The timeline must include the state's tentative issuance dates. In past years, most states issued in phases, and on a rolling basis thereafter. For example: issuance to SNAP households Day #10, to non-SNAP households on Day #15, and to newly identified cases from Day #16 onward. This is a best practice, which we encourage states to continue.
- Examples of other possible milestones include, but are not limited to:
 - State Education agency provides student data to SNAP state agency (Day #5)
 - P-EBT hotline becomes active (Day #9)
 - Public notice campaign begins (Day #10), etc.

Please also address each of the following:

- Will the state issue P-EBT benefits on a unique P-EBT card design? If so, who will receive these cards, non-SNAP households only? Or also SNAP households?
- How will the state distinguish P-EBT from SNAP and D-SNAP issuances? USDA strongly encourages the use of a sub-benefit type, even if your state did not do so in P-EBT issuances for previous school years. This will greatly facilitate the states' ability to report and USDA to maintain accountability for P-EBT.
- What will be your draw/spend priority for P-EBT, SNAP, and D-SNAP? USDA suggests making P-EBT first on your draw/spend priority.
- How will the state handle expungement of P-EBT benefits? USDA recommends that states follow the same expungement rules that the state currently follows for SNAP.
- How will you and your EBT processor handle returned P-EBT cards? How will you handle the need to issue replacement cards in these cases?
- Will you issue *new* P-EBT cards to existing P-EBT households?
 - If so, who will receive these cards? Non-SNAP households only? Or also SNAP households?
 - If not, how will you handle cases where the P-EBT household no longer has their P-EBT card?

Response: [please use as much space as needed]

Kentucky will follow the same procedures for all of the aforementioned as defined in previous approved P-EBT plans.

P-EBT benefits will follow the same expungement rules that the state follows for SNAP. Upon notification of an administrative error or extenuating circumstance, DCBS may reissue the expired benefit to the student. Kentucky will continue to use PEBTSN and PEBTOT benefit codes, applicable to SNAP and non-SNAP P-EBT households respectively. The P-EBT draw/spend priority is first.

Kentucky intends to follow the same distribution model utilized during the 2021-2022 P-EBT plan. Kentucky SNAP households will receive P-EBT benefits on their EBT card. Non-SNAP households will receive benefits on a unique P-EBT card. New P-EBT cards will not automatically be issued to students who were previously issued a P-EBT card. Newly eligible students will be mailed benefit cards to their household address. For students whose card has been lost or damaged, DCBS has developed an online replacement card portal and will accept replacement card requests via call center assistance line. Undeliverable cards will be returned to the EBT processor, FIS, who will in-turn provide the state with information on undeliverable cards. This information will be shared with school districts for outreach purposes as needed.

Kentucky has identified the following milestones and will notify FNS of any major deviations from the following:

- Day 0: Plan approved
- Day 15: Materials disseminated to staff and training begins
- Day 20: School Administrator Training begins
- Day 30: Application go-live
- Day 31: School Administrator Portal go-live
- Day 60: First benefit issuance occurs
- Day 75: Application disabled
- Day 105: Final Issuance occurs

8. Customer Service

Recommended Standard for Household Support

USDA strongly encourages states to develop a customer service plan that anticipates common questions from households of children that are eligible and potentially eligible to participate in P-EBT, and that ensures that all who are eligible are able to receive and use their P-EBT benefits.

1. USDA strongly encourages states to provide a means to resolve disputes and answer questions from actual or potential P-EBT households.
2. USDA strongly encourages states to provide relevant program information to actual and potential P-EBT households.

To complete Section 8, we encourage states to use language from their approved plan from SY 2021-2022 with all necessary updates. -

- How will the state resolve disputes or issuance errors (incorrect benefit amount, denied benefits, etc.)? Based on the large number of such inquiries received by USDA, the states, and EBT processors, USDA suggests a phone number (hotline) staffed by personnel empowered to research and address such cases.
- Please describe how the state will serve groups with potential access problems, for example: homeless children, foster children, children without social security numbers, children and caregivers with limited English proficiency, households without internet access, and people living with disabilities.
- Describe the state's public information campaign. That is, the information you will provide to the general public (i.e., **not directly** to P-EBT participants), and how you will provide that information (i.e., print or broadcast advertising, social media, mailers to the general population).
- Describe what information you will provide for households that do not want the P-EBT benefit that is directly issued to them. How dispose of the card, etc.
- Describe the information you will provide **directly** to P-EBT participants (this is different than the information you provide to the general public), and how you will provide that information. For example:
 - What will you provide to explain the purpose of P-EBT and how to use the benefit? Based on the large number and wide variety of public inquiries that USDA, states, and EBT processor call centers received regarding P-EBT in over the past year, USDA recommends it include:
 - A description of P-EBT
 - Instructions for PINing a P-EBT card
 - Explanation of where benefits can be used
 - Explanation of how benefits can and cannot be used (i.e., eligible foods and non-eligible items)
 - Explanation of violations and penalties, such as trafficking
 - An indication that benefits are non-transferable
 - Instructions for destroying the card, if they want to decline benefits
 - Information regarding a hotline, helpdesk, or website/portal that participants can reach out to, if they have questions, need assistance (setting up a PIN, for example)
 - How will you provide P-EBT information to non-SNAP households? How will you provide P-EBT information to SNAP households?
 - Will you provide information via mailers? Will the mailer(s) be a flyer/brochure, buck slip, letter, or some other alternative? USDA recommends flyers/brochures, because these can be used more flexibly than buck slips.
 - Will you provide information via e-mail, text messages, social media, website, robo-call, and/or other electronic means?

Response: [please use as much space as needed]

Kentucky has a multi-faceted approach to ensuring robust and accurate communication to all eligible households regardless of primary language, lack of permanent address or access to technology.

The DCBS Call Center will continue to serve as front line customer support. DCBS staff has access to all P-EBT information available on the integrated eligibility and enrollment system, as well as inquiry access on EBTedge to specifically investigate a child's P-EBT eligibility, benefit amount, and card issuance status.

Kentucky provides P-EBT information and answers to frequently asked questions on the DCBS website and continues to update information to streamline communication and provide clarity. Additionally, DCBS Central Office staff will maintain a P-EBT Microsoft Teams group to provide fast, accurate responses to state field staff when a caller's concerns cannot be easily resolved. In instances where DCBS is unable to locate a child in their records, the family will be referred to their student's school where issues of eligibility can be more easily determined.

The state is committed to serving all eligible children regardless of primary language. All outreach materials will be translated into Spanish. These materials will be shared with school districts, community partners, and other community organizations to distribute to families. All staff are trained to assist Limited English Proficiency (LEP) callers via a DCBS maintained translator services hotline.

DCBS will collaborate with other divisions within the department and KDE to educate and distribute P-EBT cards for students who are experiencing homelessness, including unaccompanied homeless youth, students in foster care, and students who have been identified as migrant and other students who may need the assistance of a school social worker to help ensure access to P-EBT benefits. DCBS and KDE will collaborate regularly to ensure resources are allocated appropriately and in a manner that supports program integrity.

Public Awareness Campaign: Kentucky will conduct a public information campaign through use of websites. Kentucky intends to issue a press release in English and Spanish to target state-wide and local news organizations and Senior Leadership to announce at a press conference. Similar to all previous school years, Kentucky will create communication toolkits and will work with schools and community organizations to push out P-EBT materials in required languages (sample website copy, sample social media posts and graphics, flyers, etc.). These outreach materials will be shared with schools, community organizations, partner agencies, and other stakeholders.

9. Over-issuance of P-EBT benefits

To complete Section 9, we encourage states to use language from their approved plan from SY 2021-2022 with all necessary updates.

states should outline a process to recover or adjust P-EBT payments to correct errors on previous issuances. states cannot simply apply their existing SNAP benefit claim process to P-EBT. Accordingly, states should develop P-EBT-specific rules and procedures and include those in their state plans. states must also consider the capability of their SNAP systems to distinguish P-EBT from SNAP benefits.

The process should take into consideration that many households received their benefits, without application, through an automated match process that relied on the state's own administrative data. Reclaiming benefits under those circumstances calls for a process that weighs the equity of the claim, the burden on affected households, and the likelihood and costs of recovery. Given those considerations, a state's P-EBT plan should consider reasonable thresholds for taking action to recover over-issued benefits. states that establish a process for benefit recovery must provide clear notice to beneficiaries of the circumstances under which the state may attempt to recover benefits or reduce a future issuance. Under no circumstances may the state reduce a SNAP benefit to settle a P-EBT claim.

Finally, the states recognize that USDA is responsible for ensuring accountability of funds for P-EBT purposes. As part of its oversight responsibilities, USDA may hold state agencies liable for aggregate over-issuances or improper payments. USDA's course of action is to pursue P-EBT over-issuance claims in the aggregate where USDA believes such action is merited, based on the nature of the error that gave rise to the over-issuance, the size of the error, and whether such action would advance program purposes.

Please describe how your state will manage P-EBT payment errors.

Response: [please use as much space as needed]

Kentucky has considered the fact that many households received their benefits, without application, through an automated match process that relied on the State's own administrative data and that reclaiming benefits under those circumstances would likely burden affected households. Kentucky has also considered the likelihood of recovery with respect to the costs and administrative burden for recovery. A student's information must be confirmed by multiple data matches in order to be P-EBT eligible. Kentucky will pursue P-EBT claims on a case-by-case basis when P-EBT is issued in error. When Kentucky discovers instances where a child's benefits went to the wrong household or child, CHFS will research those cases individually and issue benefits only when the state confirms that its original issuance was made in error. Kentucky will not issue duplicate benefits in cases of disputed guardianship if the state believes the original issuance was correct. Kentucky will notify the USDA Regional Office and complete the over-issuance spreadsheet provided by USDA **prior** to making corrections. Kentucky is committed to preserving P-EBT program integrity through rigorous verification of

student eligibility.

10. Benefit Issuance Reporting

Kentucky agrees to complete the FNS-292 form as well as all other normally recurring SNAP reporting, including the FNS 46, 388, and 778 reports, on a timely basis in accordance with requirements.

11. Administrative Funding

A separate grant to cover state level administrative costs associated with the administration of P-EBT will be awarded to the SNAP state agency within each state, for the period of performance October 1, 2022 through September 30 2023. As the authorized grantee, the SNAP state agency will be granted access to the associated letter-of-credit in which the administrative grant funds will be placed. As P-EBT related state administrative costs may be incurred by state agencies other than the SNAP state agency, the SNAP state agency will be responsible for entering into interagency agreements in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding, or document of similar construct, with all other respective state agencies responsible for delivering P-EBT benefits. The SNAP state agency will be responsible for reimbursing the administrative costs of all associated agencies accordingly.

Prior to USDA releasing the grant for administrative funding, each SNAP state agency will be required to submit a P-EBT Budget Plan using the FNS-366(a) Program and Budget Summary Statement. Funds will not be released to the SNAP state agency's letter-of-credit until this plan is submitted and approved. The SNAP state agency's Budget Plan should include the estimated administrative costs for all state agencies that will be handling P-EBT.

As noted in Item 9 above, the SNAP state agency will be also responsible for reporting all administrative expenditures on a separate FNS-778, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Federal Financial Report designated specifically for P-EBT. The expenditures on the FNS-778 should align with those outlined in the FNS-366(a), Program and Budget Summary Statement. The forms associated with P-EBT will be modified accordingly.

12. Release of Information

Per Section 1101(e) of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act: 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.”

13. Civil Rights Statement

The state will continue to comply with civil rights requirements by not discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. The state will also provide meaningful access to its programs and activities for individuals who are limited English proficient, and provide equal access to individuals with disabilities.

14. Administration of State P-EBT Plan

The state will administer P-EBT according to the terms of its approved state plan. If the state wishes to change any of the terms of its plan, the state shall first notify USDA and will, if requested by USDA, submit a plan amendment for USDA review and approval.

Signature and Title of Requesting SNAP and Child Nutrition State Agency Officials:

DocuSigned by:
Lesa Dennis Commissioner
2597068C24204CA

Signature

Lesa Dennis, Commissioner
Kentucky Department for Community Based Services

Jason Glass, Commissioner
Kentucky Department of Education

Date of Request: 7/10/2023