



Food and Nutrition
Service

1320 Braddock Place
Alexandria, VA
22314

May 3, 2022

SUBJECT: Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer Program (P-EBT)
Approval of Nevada's State Plan for School Children,
School Year 2021-2022

TO: Jesus Mendoza, Jr.
Regional Administrator
Western Regional Office

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (P.L. 116-127; the Act), as amended, authorized a temporary assistance program for households with children without access to meals in school and to certain SNAP-enrolled children in child care during the public health emergency declared on January 27, 2020. Pursuant to the authority granted under Section 1101 of the Act, FNS approves Nevada's enclosed plan to operate P-EBT for school children.

Summary of State's Plan

The Nevada Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, the Nevada Department of Agriculture, and the Nevada Department of Education will issue P-EBT benefits through the State's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) EBT card system to households with eligible children. The State's plan for school children covers the months of August 2021 through June 2022.

School children are eligible for benefits 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. The State 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.

The State 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 eligibility data from the most recent prior year will have a means to address that they do not issue benefits to school year 2020-2021 graduates and other 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, Nevada has or will:

- tentatively issue benefits for the months of August through November in a single distribution between September 14 and September 23,
- tentatively issue benefits for the months of December through February in a single distribution between October 14 and October 23,

- tentatively issue benefits for the months of March through June in a single distribution between November 14 and November 23
- collect schools' free and reduced price eligibility lists for school year 2021-2022 in June to identify students who may qualify for P-EBT benefits:
 - assume eligibility back to the beginning of the school year for any households that applied after the start of the school year,
- receive data from LEAs for the entire school year that contains information on:
 - the names of students with approved fully virtual schedules for the who attend NSLP eligible schools and sites,
 - the names of all other students with COVID-related absences or virtual learning days:
 - for schools that are tracking COVID-related absences or virtual learning days, the school will provide the actual count of those days,
 - for schools that cannot track COVID-related absences, any excused absence of 5 consecutive days or more will be a presumed COVID-related absence, the school will provide the actual count of excused absence days:
 - for children attending schools using the 5 consecutive day threshold as a proxy for a COVID-related absence, a parent or guardian may make a claim with the state for any COVID-related absence that is less than 5 consecutive days:
 - the parent or guardian will attest on a standard reconsideration application created by the state that the days were COVID-related absences,
 - the parent or guardian will contact their school prior to submitting their application to the state and include confirmation from the school that the absences were at least excused,
 - the state will confirm that the necessary school verified information is contained in the reconsideration application,
- calculate benefits for each income-eligible student based on the student's actual number of eligible virtual learning days and COVID-related absences each month:
 - for those in a fully virtual schedule, this will equal 16 days' worth of benefits per month,
- provide guidance to schools detailing the requirements for:
 - determining school eligibility based on school closures or reductions in attendance and hours,
 - determining what is a COVID-related absence and,
 - determining the number of benefit days for individual students,

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

Estimated Caseload and Value of P-EBT Benefits

The State 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 the State's plan.

- Nevada estimates that it will issue \$44.1 million to approximately 77,100 children for school closures and reductions in attendance and hours extending from August 2021 through June 2022.

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 Nevada. 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

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

Civil Rights

Nevada 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 Nevada Division of Welfare and Supportive 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 the State's Administrative Grant level. However, the FNS-366(a), Program and Budget Summary, may be updated and revised as the State's operational plan evolves.

Reporting

The Nevada Division of Welfare and Supportive Services will complete the FNS-292B, the FNS-46, the FNS-388, and the FNS-778 reports in accordance with existing requirements.

FNS appreciates Nevada's exceptional efforts to maintain children's access to nutritious meals, and understands that even as the nation recovers from this difficult time, State agencies and local program operators will still face any number of challenges. FNS stands ready to provide additional support as needed. If you have questions, please contact the FNS Western Regional Office.

Sincerely,

Cindy Long
Administrator