

**Amendment to Approved State Plan for Pandemic EBT
Children in School and/or Child Care, Summer 2021**

Issuing Agency/Office:	FNS / Child Nutrition Programs, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
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Summary:	(1) This document is a template to assist States in the development of an amendment to extend their approved State plan to operate Pandemic EBT for school children and for children in child care during summer 2021. (2) This document relates to Section 1106 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, 2021 (P.L. 117-2)
Disclaimer:	The contents of this guidance document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

Additional context and background for this document can be found at:
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/state-guidance-coronavirus-pandemic-ebt-pebt>

The submission of a P-EBT state plan, associated template and related reporting obligations are addressed in OMB# 0584-0660. This emergency information collection (IC) will be replaced by a full IC package to be submitted to OMB for approval prior to its expiration date of 8/31/21. All components of this summer 2021 P-EBT package will be addressed in the full IC package.

**Amendment to Approved State Plan for Pandemic EBT
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1. **State:** New Jersey
2. **Primary Citation:** Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) as amended by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021
3. **Here's what FNS needs from you:**
 - a. If a State chooses to elect the U.S. standard benefit¹, simply check the box below. Next, go to letter 'c' (*Estimated total amount of P-EBT benefits*) of the template.

By checking this box, we are indicating that our State will use the U.S. standard benefit for the covered summer period.

- b. If a State chooses not to elect the U.S. standard benefit, FNS needs the following information:
 - The number of days for which benefits will be issued as part of the State's covered summer period; and
 - An explanation for how the State arrived at the number of days in the State's covered summer period. USDA will not approve a plan that does not tie the length of its covered summer period to the actual summer 2021 calendars of an enrollment-weighted average, or the median, of a representative sample of its school districts.

Response: [please use as much space as needed]

¹ The U.S. standard benefit – as defined in Question #5 of FNS' Q&A document titled, "Summer P-EBT Q&A" – is equal to the median number of weekdays in the sampled school districts multiplied by the daily P-EBT rate. For States in the continental U.S., that works out to a fixed summer benefit of \$375 per eligible child (55 days at \$6.82 per day). The U.S. standard benefit is higher for Alaska, Hawaii, and the territories; see Q/A #14 for a complete set of standard benefit amounts.

- c. Estimated total amount of P-EBT benefits the State will issue within this amendment's date range. (Consult the appropriate table in Section 4, "Benefit Levels.")
- Estimated amount issued to school children
 - Estimated amount issued to non-school children in child care
- d. Estimated total number of children to which the State will issue P-EBT benefits.
- Estimated number of school children
 - Estimated number of non-school children in child care
- e. Tentative P-EBT issuance schedule (the dates on which Summer P-EBT benefits will be issued). Note that USDA encourages States to distribute summer benefits in two or even three issuances across the summer, to the extent practical.
- School children
 - Children in child care
- f. Describe how the State will identify eligible school children and children in child care for summer P-EBT. You must address each of the following bulleted items, below, when responding.

For school-aged children:

- Describe how the State will identify school children who received P-EBT benefits during the last month of SY 20-21.
- Describe how the State will identify school children who were eligible for free or reduced price school meals under the NSLP and SBP in SY 20-21 but did not receive P-EBT benefits in the last month of the school year because they attended school in-person and benefitted from a free or reduced price meal service at school. This includes children who were eligible for F/RP meals during the school year and did not receive P-EBT benefits because the children attended school in-person during the school year.
- Describe how the State will identify children who are determined newly eligible for free or reduced price school meals during the covered summer period. States must provide an opportunity for families to apply for free or reduced price meals using the normal application process. States and SFAs should consider maintaining a minimum presence to process Free and Reduced Price Meal applications, perhaps on a part-time or weekly basis. Another alternative is for SFAs to accept new Free and Reduced Price Meal applications during the summer but only process them after the start of the new school year. Children determined eligible on applications *submitted prior to the end of the summer* could then be issued P-EBT benefits retroactively after the start of the new school year. (Note that it is preferable to process applications and issue benefits during the summer period that the benefits are intended to cover).

For children in child care:

- Describe how the State will identify SNAP-enrolled children who received P-EBT child care benefits in the last month of the school year.
- Describe how the State will identify SNAP-enrolled children who would have received P-EBT child care benefits in the last month of the school year, but did not receive benefits because their child care facility was not closed or operating at reduced attendance or hours in that month, and neither their child care facility nor the child's residence was in the area of a school that was closed or operating at reduced attendance or hours in that month.
- Describe how the State will identify children who are part of a SNAP household who are newly eligible for P-EBT child care benefits during the covered summer period

Response: [please use as much space as needed]

c. New Jersey estimates the total amount of P-EBT benefits issued for the covered summer P-EBT period will be \$362,250,000. Out of this total, the estimated amount issued to school children is \$317,250,000 and the estimated amount issued to non-school children in child care is \$45,000,000.

d. New Jersey estimates issuing P-EBT benefits to 966,000 children. Out of this total, the estimated number of school children is 846,000 and the estimated number of non-school children in child care is 120,000.

e. New Jersey proposes a tentative P-EBT schedule that will include issuing summer P-EBT benefits in multiple issuances for data received by the requested data submission/data availability date. For school children approved for free or reduced-price school meals at the end of the school year, School Food Authorities (SFAs) will submit the data by the 10th of the provided cutoff due date month following the end of the school year. New Jersey estimates issuing the first issuance of summer P-EBT benefits to these school children in SNAP households approximately 20 days after the requested submission date and approximately 25 days after the requested date for school children in non-SNAP households.

For children in child care, New Jersey plans to issue the first issuance of summer P-EBT benefits for all children under age 6 that were active in SNAP households in the June end of month file eligible for July benefits by the 20th of the following month (e.g. July 20th), contingent on the timeframe of FNS plan approval.

For both school children and children in child care, New Jersey proposes to allow the submission of newly eligible child data by the 10th of each month during the covered summer period and estimated issuance according to the above timeframe for each group (e.g. school children in SNAP households, school children in non-SNAP households, children in child care). This accounts for a second and possibly third issuance for newly eligible school-age and child care children.

f. New Jersey proposes to identify school-aged children and children in child care according to the following process:

For School-Aged Children

By the 10th of the provided cutoff due date month following the end of the school year and federal plan approval, SFAs will submit a master list of all children eligible for free- or reduced-price school meals under the NSLP and SBP in SY 2020-2021 (including those who attended school in-person) to the state's P-EBT online submission portal. In order to issue summer P-EBT benefits, this list will be separate from the list of students eligible for P-EBT benefits for the last month of the school year so as to include all eligible students. SFAs will continue to submit a list to the online portal throughout the summer months for any children determined newly eligible for free- or reduced-price school meals. SFAs may choose to continue to accept applications during the summer and process throughout the summer or process applications after the start of the school year for applications submitted prior to the end of the summer. The deadline for applications will be Friday, September 3, 2021 or the day prior to the start of the school year for schools that start before September 3, 2021 or after September 7, 2021. The Department of Human Services' Division of Family Development (DFD) continues to be the issuer of benefits and does not determine eligibility. DFD will accept student data from SFAs and the direct certification list from the New Jersey Department of Agriculture for eligible children and process the benefits on an anticipated monthly basis as described earlier in the plan so that children receive benefits during the summer period that the benefits are intended to cover. The last date for schools to submit data for eligible students to receive P-EBT, including Summer P-EBT, will be September 10, 2021.

The SFAs are responsible for verifying eligible student data according to the federal requirements for P-EBT and providing eligible student data to DFD. Children who dropped out of school or graduated before the end of the school year are not eligible for Summer P-EBT benefits as per federal requirements. Any children who transferred to new school districts or moved out of state will be picked up and issued P-EBT summer benefits by those school districts. DFD's processing logic accounts for certain validations of student data received.

For Children in Child Care:

As the state agency administering SNAP benefits, DFD holds all SNAP caseload data. DFD will identify eligible children by querying its eligibility system records ongoing on a monthly basis for all children under the age of 6 in a SNAP household for the prior month. DFD will run the same process in the following month. By following this monthly caseload query process, DFD will be able to identify SNAP-enrolled children who did not receive P-EBT child care benefits in the last month of the school year and newly eligible children in a SNAP household. All children under the age of 6 in a SNAP household for the month of issuance will be included in the benefit issuance file for processing. To account for situations where the child's information may have been submitted by a school for the same month, systems will run a duplicate file check to ensure such children only receive one benefit. DFD plans to issue P-EBT benefits for non-school children in SNAP households on a monthly basis, contingent on the timeframe of FNS plan approval, as described earlier in the plan. Children under 6 must be SNAP-enrolled during the summer period.

4. Benefit Levels

A. U.S. standard Benefit

2021 Covered Summer Period	U.S. Standard P-EBT Benefit		
	Median Length of Covered Summer Period (weekdays)	Daily P-EBT Rate	Standard Benefit
Contiguous U.S.	55	\$6.82	\$375
Alaska	55	10.99	604
Hawaii, Guam, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico	55	7.97	438

B. State-Determined Benefit, Based on Daily Rate

Note: The daily benefit amount – \$6.82 – is only needed if a State elects to set its own covered summer period length; that is to say, if a State declines to use the U.S. standard benefit.

2021 Covered Summer Period	Free Reimbursements			
	Lunch	Breakfast	Snack	Daily Total
Contiguous U.S.	\$3.60	\$2.26	\$0.96	\$6.82
Alaska	5.79	3.64	1.56	10.99
Hawaii, Guam, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico	4.20	2.64	1.13	7.97

Notes:

1. Lunch rates include the 7 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
- Source: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2020-07-22/pdf/2020-15764.pdf>

Civil Rights Statement

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

Administration of State P-EBT Plan

The State will administer P-EBT according to the terms of its approved State plan. In general, conditions related to benefit issuance reporting, administrative funding, and release of information remain in effect for the covered summer period. 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.

Reminder

If the State needs to make any significant changes to its Summer 2021 plan after approval, the State needs to submit an amendment to FNS that describes the change and its impact on operating summer P-EBT. USDA will review the amendment and approve allowable amendments.

Signatures and Titles of Requesting SNAP and Child Nutrition State Agency Officials:

Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner

Rose Tricario
Director

Date of Request: 7/12/21