

**State Plan for Pandemic EBT  
Children in School and Child Care, 2020-2021**

<b>Issuing Agency/Office:</b>	FNS / Child Nutrition Programs, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
<b>Title of Document:</b>	State Plan for Pandemic EBT: Children in School and Child Care, 2020-2021
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<b>Summary:</b>	(1) This document is a template to assist States in the development of State plans to operate Pandemic EBT for school children during school year (SY) 2020-2021 and for children in child care during federal fiscal year 2021. (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) and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116-260).
<b>Disclaimer:</b>	<b>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.</b>

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

*The P-EBT Assistance for Children in Schools and Child Care should be covered under an Emergency Information Collection Request for the Pandemic EBT (Schools), to be adjusted as appropriate, which is currently under review at OMB. Once OMB has approved the request and assigned the OMB# Control Number, FNS will include the necessary information on the State Plan.*

**State Plan for Pandemic EBT**

## Children in School and Child Care, 2020-2021

1. State: Maine

2. Primary Citations: Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA);  
Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act;  
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 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*<sup>1</sup> covered by this initial plan (or subsequent amendment).

*Note that P-EBT benefits for school children are available from the start of school year 2020-2021. P-EBT benefits for children in child care are only available from the start of federal fiscal year 2021, or October 1, 2020.*

- a. The *date range* covered by this State plan or amendment
  - for children in school 9/8/2020 through 6/18/21 (175 days)
  - for children in child care 10/1/2020 through 6/18/21 (158 days)
- 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 **\$4,379,429** monthly and **\$43,794,289** total
  - Estimated amount issued to school children in non-SNAP households **\$4,296,600** monthly and **\$42,966,000** total
  - Estimated amount issued to non-school children in child care **\$3,727,160** monthly and **\$33,544,443** total
- c. Estimated total *number* of children to which the State will issue P-EBT benefits.
  - Estimated number of school children in SNAP households **36,694**
  - Estimated number of school children in non-SNAP households **36,000**
  - Estimated number of non-school children in child care **31,130**
- d. Estimated total amount of administrative funds the State needs to complete the work described in this State plan/amendment.<sup>2</sup> **Will be provided in an amendment.**
- e. 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 and children in child care: **Please see the Word attachment named P-EBT issuance schedule.**

### A. Eligible Children

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<sup>1</sup> The date range covered by P-EBT State plan or amendment. For example: a State's initial plan could cover August 31 through September 30, 2020; and a later amendment could cover October 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Note that States may only claim 100% reimbursement for P-EBT administrative expenses incurred from October 1, 2020 forward.

*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 2020-2021, **or**
  - b. certified through submission of a household application processed by the child’s school district for SY 2020-2021, **or**
  - c. enrolled in a Community Eligibility Provision school or a school operating under Provisions 2 or 3, **or**
  - d. directly certified, determined other source categorically eligible, or certified by application in SY 2019-2020 **and** the school district has not made a new school meal eligibility determination for the child in SY 2020-2021.
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. Also describe what measures the State will take to prevent the issuance of benefits to school year 2019-2020 graduates and other non-students. **The Department of Education (DOE) has an up-to-date roster of children eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch (FaRL) that they have provided to the Office for Family Independence (OFI). 2019-2020 graduates and other non-students have been removed from this list.**
- How will the State determine and/or confirm each child’s eligibility for free or reduced-price meals? 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), and children who become eligible during the school year. **The DOE’s roster of eligible children is all inclusive and up-to-date. The DOE will send OFI files with newly eligible students on a weekly basis. These children will be added to issuance files beginning with the month they were found eligible for FaRL if enrolled in a school with a remote or hybrid learning model.**
- How will the State confirm each child’s lack of access to meals at school? Please describe separately for SNAP-recipient and non-SNAP-recipient children, and children in public and non-public schools. **Benefits will be issued at the school level. If the school indicates that virtual learning was the predominant level for a certain month then each child who was eligible for FaRL in that school will receive 100% benefit for that month. If the predominant level was in person with a virtual option, no children would receive a benefit for that month. Please see the sample Qualtrics survey PDF named *LearningModalitiesForPEBT* for additional details. Because the DOE roster is all inclusive, SNAP-recipient and non-SNAP-recipient children’s lack of access to meals at schools is determined in the same manner.**
- Describe the process that the State will use to update and re-establish each child’s in-person and virtual schedules. How frequently will that information be updated? (Note that this information must be updated no less frequently than every other month.). **The initial survey will cover September through March and one or more surveys**

**will be sent to school districts for status updates. Benefits will be issued retroactively. OFI will not be issuing P-EBT prospectively.**

- 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). **The DOE is responsible for determining eligibility for FaRL and transferring this data to OFI. OFI is responsible for dispersing benefits. P-EBT messaging will be a shared responsibility and local advocacy agencies will assist.**
- 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. **The Office for Family Independence will use simplified assumptions and the best available data we have to feed Maine children during the COVID-19 pandemic as allowed by P.L. 116-260 the “Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act” and P.L. 116-159 OFI will use the flexibility allowed by FNS and these acts to issue benefits at the school level. OFI and FNS acknowledge that some children will receive more or less P-EBT benefits than they were eligible for in a given month based on individual choice to not follow a school’s recommended predominant learning model. Issuing at the school level alleviates tremendous burden on schools and the DOE by not requiring a daily record of every child’s attendance, or lack thereof.**

**Main has the ability to match child specific information received from the DOE to data in ACES. This information will be used to ensure that school age children that are under six years of age do not also receive an allotment when we issue benefits to the child care population.**

## 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. **The initial survey will cover September through March and one or more surveys will be sent to school districts for status updates. Benefits will be issued retroactively. OFI will not be issuing P-EBT prospectively.**
- 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? **If a school indicates in a given month that its' learning was predominantly virtual or hybrid then it is a reasonable assumption that for that month when the school had reduced hours or attendance the duration was equal to or exceeded 5 consecutive days. No school's children will be issued benefits until it is indicated that the predominant model for a month was hybrid or virtual.**
- 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.) **The initial survey will cover September through March and one or more surveys will be sent to school districts for status updates. Benefits will be issued retroactively. OFI will not be issuing P-EBT prospectively.**
- Describe the State's plan for monitoring changes in eligible school status between the State's bi-monthly (or more frequent) collection of updated school data. Describe how the State will use this updated school information to revise issuance amounts. **The initial survey will cover September through March and one or more surveys will be sent to school districts for status updates. Benefits will be issued retroactively. OFI will not be issuing P-EBT prospectively.**
- 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. **The Office for Family Independence will use simplified assumptions and the best available data we have to feed Maine children during the COVID- 19 pandemic as allowed by P.L. 116-159 the "Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act" and SEC. 722**

**of P.L. 116-260 “Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021”. OFI will use the flexibility allowed by FNS and these acts to issue benefits at the school level. OFI acknowledges that some children will receive more or less P-EBT than they were actually eligible for in a given month. Issuing at the school level expedites Maine’s ability to address student food insecurity and alleviates tremendous burden on schools and the DOE by not requiring a daily record of every child’s attendance or lack thereof.**

#### 4. P-EBT for Children in Child Care

*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 received SNAP benefits at any time since October 1, 2020.
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.

- Describe how the State will identify eligible children and confirm their eligibility consistent with the above standard. **The Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) provided OFI overlays that verify proximity of child care facilities to local schools. See PDFs named *Schools\_And\_Childcare\_Providers\_v01* and *Schools\_And\_Childcare\_Providers\_v02*. The data used to create these overlays can be found in the Excel spreadsheet named *Closest\_Schools\_To\_Childcare\_Providers*. The addresses were provided by the DOE. Using these overlays and address information in our Automated Client Eligibility System (ACES) we will issue benefits to children under age six on SNAP if there is a school or schools in that county using a hybrid or fully virtual model. If one school in the child care facilities county is fully virtual the entire population in that county will receive a benefit equal to the fully virtual benefit value. If that is not the case, but one school in that county is using a hybrid model the entire population in that county will receive a benefit equal to hybrid model benefit value. This matching will be based on ZIP Code and town name. As noted above, the USDA considers all children under the age of six to be enrolled in a covered child care facility, for P-EBT purposes.**
- How will the State determine and confirm the child's receipt of SNAP benefits in accordance with relevant SNAP privacy requirements? **Beginning with October 2020 we will verify SNAP participation for this population on a monthly basis by using Structured Query Language (SQL). Eligibility for P-EBT benefits will be determined on a monthly basis. If a child is no longer eligible for SNAP they will not be eligible for P-EBT beginning with the month of SNAP ineligibility.**
- 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? **The MDOT provided OFI overlays that verify proximity of child care facilities to schools. Using these overlays and address information in ACES we will issue benefits to children under age six on SNAP as detailed above.**
- 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 that child's eligibility? Specifically, how will the State determine that:
  - the child's child care facility is closed or is operating with reduced attendance or hours, or **This population will not receive P-EBT.**

- 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? **The MDOT provided OFI overlays that verify proximity of child care facilities to schools. Using these overlays and address information in ACES we will issue benefits to children under age six on SNAP as detailed above.**
- 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 use those to find that all SNAP-participant children under age 6 are eligible for P-EBT in those areas? **No. Child care related COVID-19 guidance can be found here: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/documents/covid-19/3-16-2020-GUIDANCE-COVID-19.pdf>**
- 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.) **Status and eligibility will be assessed on a monthly basis and all P-EBT benefits will be issued retroactively.**
- 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). **The DOE provided addresses for schools and child care facilities. OFI will use this information, the school surveys and SNAP eligibility in ACES to issue P-EBT to this population.**
- What simplifying assumptions does the State propose? **That all children under age six are enrolled in a cover child care facility, for P-EBT purposes.** Why must the State make those simplifying assumptions? Please address both of these questions in detail. **Individual children's enrollment and attendance data is not available, and under the FFCRA the USDA deems it so.**

**5. 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 2020-2021. The benefit is multiplied by the number of days that the eligible child’s status makes them eligible for P-EBT benefits.

SY 2020-2021 July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021	Free Reimbursements USDA School Meal Programs			
	Lunch	Breakfast	Snack <b>(NEW)</b>	Daily Total
Contiguous U.S.	\$3.60	\$2.26	\$0.96	<b>\$6.82</b>
Alaska	5.79	3.64	1.56	<b>10.99</b>
Hawaii, Guam, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico	4.20	2.64	1.13	<b>7.97</b>

**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>

- 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: The value of a day of school meal programs is \$6.82 and there are 175 days in a school year.  $\$6.82 * 175 = 1193.50$  To simplify issuance, OFI will use the same value for September through June. The value of the predominantly virtual learning model will be \$119.35/month. The value of the predominately virtual learning model  $\$119.35/2 = \$59.675 = \$59.68$**

**The value of a day of school meal programs is \$6.82 and there are 158 days of possible P-EBT eligibility for the child care population.  $\$6.82 * 158 = 1077.56$  To simplify issuance OFI will use the same value for October through June. The value of the predominantly virtual learning model will be \$119.73/month. The value of the predominately virtual learning model  $\$119.73/2 = \$59.675 = \$59.68$**

**Maine has chosen a 50% value for the hybrid model benefit. In a survey sent to all counties in the state, for geographical diversity, the majority of hybrid models were two days in person one week and three days the next week. Maine will evaluate this value during the next survey to determine if the predominant hybrid model has changed and will adjust benefits accordingly.**

**6. Implementation Timeline, EBT Processing, and Benefit Issuance**

Please provide an implementation timeline for SY 2020-2021 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 SY 2019-2020, 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.
  
- **Planned Maine Milestones**
- **Day #0 FNS approves Maine's P-EBT plan**
- **Day #1 OIT and OFI kicks off testing effort, and creates mock files for all populations (SNAP, Non-SNAP, and Under 6).**
- **Day #1 DOE sends the survey to the school districts**
- **Day #3 OFI, advocates, and the DOE begin public noticing campaign**
- **Day #23 OFI and OIT completes testing on all mocked up test files for SNAP, Non-SNAP and Under Age 6 households.**
- **Day #35 DOE creates monthly data files based on school survey data and submits them to OFI**
- **Day #39 OFI and OIT begin creating and validating maintenance and issuance files for September 2020 benefits for both SNAP and Non-SNAP households. Please reference issuance schedule in section 3.**
- **Day #40 OFI and OIT begin creating and validating maintenance and issuance files for FFY Q1 (Oct/Nov/Dec 2020) benefits for SNAP, Non-SNAP, and Under 6 households. Please reference issuance schedule in section 3.**
- **Please see the issuance schedule in section 3 for additional issuances and note that issuance files cannot be sent to Conduent on weekends.**

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? **Non-SNAP households will receive one P-EBT card per child. P-EBT benefits will be added to existing EBT cards for 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 SY 2019-2020. This will greatly facilitate the States' ability to report and USDA to maintain accountability for P-EBT. **We will use the same sub-benefit type as the first iteration of P-EBT that will be tracked separately from SNAP and D-SNAP benefits.**
- 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. **P-EBT, SNAP, D-SNAP**
- 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. **Maine will follow our current expungement rules. These rules will change for FFY 2022.**
- During SY 2019-2020, large numbers of P-EBT cards were returned to EBT processors via mail, due to incorrect addresses. 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? **Returned cards will be destroyed and marked as such in EPPIC. If a client calls to request a new card the Eligibility Specialist will compare the address in EPPIC to the client's stated address and issue a new card, if appropriate.**
- Will you issue *new* P-EBT cards to existing P-EBT households? **Yes**
  - If so, who will receive these cards? Non-SNAP households only? Or also SNAP households? **Non-SNAP children only will receive P-EBT cards.**
  - If not, how will you handle cases where the P-EBT household no longer has their P-EBT card? **N/A**

## 7. 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.

- 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. **OFI's call queue staff will handle P-EBT inquiries. There will be a final issuance no later than 9/29/2021 to correct any omissions.**
- Please describe how the State will serve groups with potential access problems, for example: homeless children, foster children, children without social security numbers, children with limited English proficiency, households without internet access, and people living with disabilities. **OFI had no issues serving these populations in the first iteration of P-EBT. P-EBT cards for foster children without SNAP will be processed like any other child in that category. P-EBT cards will be sent to the regional office nearest to homeless children and they will be available for pick-up or we will deliver them, when possible. OFI does not need a social security number to create an EBT account or mail a P-EBT card. Maine has translators and Maine relay 711 for TTY. We can also be contacted via e-mail, office visit and fax. Informational materials *may* be translated into common non-English languages.**
- 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). **See below.**
- 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. **See below**
- 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 Spring and Summer of 2020, 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: All the information USDA advised will be available on various State of Maine websites and/or they will have a link directing them to the OFI website where this information will be housed. This includes how to dispose of unwanted cards. There will be a press release directing Mainers to our SNAP website <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/programs-services/food-supplement>.**

**There will be a message on our call queue directing people to the website which will help reduce call volume. The Wilton Call Center (WCC) that screens eligibility calls and answers questions will be provided this information so that they can assist the caller and only transfer callers to Eligibility Specialists if they are unable to help them. OFI has strong relationships with the DOE and many community partners and advocates. We will leverage our partners ability to assist with the distribution of P-EBT information.**

## 8. Over-issuance of P-EBT benefits

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.

**Maine will have the ability to track any detected over issuance of P-EBT data. This data will be available in report form for analysis to determine if a claim will be established and pursued. Maine will use thresholds for pursuing P-EBT claims that were recently approved by FNS. Should a claim be established, repayment of the claim will not occur by recoupment of regular SNAP benefits, but rather through the other avenues of benefit repayment collection.**

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.

## 9. Benefit Issuance Reporting

The State 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. **We agree.**

## 10. 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, 2020 through September 30, 2021. 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.

**11. 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.”

**12. 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.

**13. 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:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature  
Anthony Pelotte, Director, Office for Family Independence

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature  
Daniel Chuhta, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Education

**Date of Request:** \_\_\_\_\_