



Food and Nutrition  
Service

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April 9, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer Program (P-EBT)  
Approval of Pennsylvania's State Plan for Children in Child Care

**TO:** Dr. Patty Bennett  
Regional Administrator  
Mid-Atlantic Regional Office

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (P.L. 116-127; the Act) as amended by the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act (P.L. 116-159) and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116-260) authorized a temporary assistance program for households with 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 Pennsylvania's enclosed plan to operate P-EBT for children in child care.

### **Summary of State's Plan**

The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services 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 SNAP-enrolled children in child care covers the months of October 2020 through May 2021.

Children in child care are eligible for benefits if they are enrolled in SNAP and their child care facility is closed or operating with reduced attendance or hours, or if they live in the area of a school that is closed or operating with reduced attendance or hours. 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 through their covered child care facility.

At a minimum, the State will identify all children under age 6 who are enrolled in SNAP at any time since October 1, 2020. The State will not issue child care benefits to any child for months after their SNAP enrollment ends. Finally, the State will ensure that children who receive a benefit through P-EBT's child care component do not also receive a benefit through P-EBT's school component for the same month.

In addition, Pennsylvania will:

- identify the county of residence for each SNAP-enrolled child under age 6,
- for each month from October through the end of the school year, determine whether the county or any contiguous counties have at least one school that is issuing P-EBT benefits to its students:
  - if the State identifies at least one school that is issuing fully virtual benefits to its students, all SNAP-enrolled children under age 6 will receive the State's P-EBT benefit for fully virtual school children;

- if the State does not identify a school issuing fully virtual benefits, but identifies at least one school issuing the State's average hybrid benefit, then all SNAP-enrolled children under age 6 will receive the State's hybrid benefit;
- issue benefits for the months of October and November in a single issuance approximately two weeks after school benefits for this time period are issued;
- issue benefits for the rest of the months on a retrospective basis, approximately two weeks after school benefits for that time period are issued.

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.

Pennsylvania estimates that it will issue \$244.3 million to approximately 224,000 SNAP-enrolled children in child care from October 2020 through May 2021.

### **Release of Information**

Pursuant to Section 1101(e) of the Act, the Secretary hereby authorizes the release of the information necessary to carry out P-EBT in Pennsylvania. 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**

Pennsylvania 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**

Pennsylvania 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 Pennsylvania Department of Human 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 Pennsylvania Department of Human Services will complete the FNS-292B, the FNS-46, the FNS-388, and the FNS-778 reports in accordance with existing requirements.

FNS appreciates Pennsylvania's commitment to meet the nutritional needs of children during a challenging time. If you have questions, please contact the FNS Mid-Atlantic Regional Office.

Sincerely,

Cindy Long  
Deputy Administrator  
Child Nutrition Programs