



Food and Nutrition  
Service

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May 07, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer Program (P-EBT)  
Approval of Puerto Rico'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 Puerto Rico's enclosed plan to operate P-EBT for children in child care.

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

The Puerto Rico Department of the Family and the Puerto Rico Department of Education will issue P-EBT benefits through Puerto Rico's Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) EBT card system to households with eligible children. Puerto Rico's plan for NAP-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 NAP 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. Puerto Rico 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, Puerto Rico will identify all children under age 6 who are enrolled in NAP at any time since October 1, 2020. Puerto Rico will not issue child care benefits to any child for months after their SNAP enrollment ends. Finally, Puerto Rico 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, Puerto Rico will:

- identify the residence ZIP code for each NAP-enrolled child under the age of 6 to determine if they live in the area of a school that is closed or operating at reduced capacity,
- for each month from October through the end of the school year, determine whether any school in the ZIP code has at least one school that is issuing P-EBT benefits to its students:

- if the State identifies at least one school operating fully virtually, all NAP-enrolled children under age 6 in the ZIP code will receive a P-EBT benefit equal to the fully virtual P-EBT benefit for school children in that month;
- if the State does not identify any fully virtual schools but does identify schools operating a hybrid model, all NAP-enrolled children under age 6 in the ZIP code will receive a P-EBT benefit equal to the hybrid P-EBT benefit for school children in that month;
- if the State does not identify any schools operating fully virtually or using a hybrid model, no P-EBT benefits will be issued to NAP-enrolled children under age 6 in the ZP code for that month,
- issue benefits for the months of October through May, distributed equally throughout the months of May and June, 2021.

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

#### **Estimated Caseload and Value of P-EBT Benefits**

Puerto Rico 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 Puerto Rico's plan.

Puerto Rico estimates that it will issue \$83.6 million to approximately 73,400 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 Puerto Rico. 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**

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

**Civil Rights**

Puerto Rico 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 Puerto Rico Department of the Family 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 Puerto Rico's Administrative Grant level. However, the FNS-366(a), Program and Budget Summary, may be updated and revised as Puerto Rico's operational plan evolves.

**Reporting**

The Puerto Rico Department of the Family will complete the FNS-292B, the FNS-46, the FNS-388, and the FNS-778 reports in accordance with existing requirements.

FNS appreciates Puerto Rico'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