

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

<b>Issuing Agency/Office:</b>	FNS / Child Nutrition Programs, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
<b>Title of Document:</b>	Amendment to Approved State Plan for Pandemic EBT: Children in School and Child Care, Summer 2021
<b>Document ID:</b>	
<b>Z-RIN:</b>	
<b>Date of Issuance:</b>	April 26, 2021
<b>Replaces:</b>	N/A
<b>Summary:</b>	(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)
<b>Disclaimer:</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.

*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:** Rhode Island

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 benefit<sup>1</sup>, 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:** N/A

- 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.")

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

- Estimated amount issued to school children: \$39,793,500
  - Estimated amount issued to non-school children in child care: \$5,326,875
- d. Estimated total number of children to which the State will issue P-EBT benefits.
- Estimated number of school children: 106,116
  - Estimated number of non-school children in child care: 14,205
- 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.

RI will provide Summer P-EBT benefits via two issuances - one in July and one in August (\$187.50 for each child each month).

- School children: July 15, 2021 and August 16, 2021
  - Children in child care: July 29, 2021 and August 27, 2021
- 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:**

**School-Aged Children:**

Rhode Island will identify school children who received P-EBT benefits during the last month of SY 20-21 and children who were eligible for free or reduced price school meals under the NSLP 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 by leveraging its existing data share agreement with RI Department of Education (RIDE). RIDE will provide RI DHS a file that includes all students eligible for free or reduced priced meals through the NSLP from the 2019/2020 school year (excluding graduates and transfers) as well as those who became NSLP eligible in the 2020/2021 school year (including graduates). Rhode Island’s eligibility system vendor will then match that information with the SNAP eligibility records and issue P-EBT benefits on the students’ SNAP EBT card if they are receiving SNAP, or P-EBT card if they are not receiving SNAP.

The following steps will be taken to identify children who are determined newly eligible for free or reduced-price school meals during the covered summer period:

1. Schools will be provided written guidance describing their roles in enabling student/household access to Summer P-EBT benefits for July and August 2021 via memo to the (RI education) field from the Commissioner’s Office as well as a separate memo from the Child Nutrition Program Office at RIDE.
  - The guidance will urge schools to continue to assign staff to collect school meal benefit applications for students not currently eligible and make eligibility determinations for P-EBT purposes through the summer. The guidance will state that if it is NOT possible to make eligibility determinations once school ends and before school starts again, schools are urged to at least collect the applications and commit to making the eligibility determinations as soon as school resumes. (Schools will be informed that these newly eligible children will be provided Summer P-EBT retroactively.) The application deadline for households to submit applications for Summer P-EBT is August 27, 2021.
2. RIDE will put out a statewide media release related to the availability of free meals for SY21-22 but with information on why families still can/should fill out a Meal Benefit application that could result in additional benefits including Summer P-EBT. RI DHS

will cross message this on its web site and social media platforms. The information will also include the application deadline of August 27, 2021 for households to submit Summer P-EBT applications, and that submission of school meal applications after this deadline will not qualify their children for summer P-EBT benefits.

3. RIDE will hold an information session with members of the RI School Business Officials (RIASBO) to explain the guidance and urge cooperation at an upcoming meeting of that group.
4. To the extent possible, P-EBT admin grant funds will be leveraged to support these efforts at the local level and RIDE will work to highlight the availability of these funds to Sponsors.

**Children in Child Care:**

The State will identify eligible children by utilizing the data available within RI DHS’s eligibility system. A query will identify all children under six years of age who were active on SNAP in the month of June 2021 and received P-EBT child care benefits. RI will also cross match the information with the files for P-EBT for school age children to ensure that duplicate benefits are not issued.

All children under age 6 and active on SNAP receive P-EBT child care benefits in RI because RI is utilizing the operating status of the schools throughout the state to confer eligibility for this benefit. Since all schools in Rhode Island have been operating at reduced attendance or hours since October 2020, all SNAP-eligible children under age 6 were deemed eligible for a standard P-EBT benefit.

Any child under the age of 6 who becomes newly eligible for SNAP during the summer period will become automatically eligible for summer P-EBT benefits as long as they are not already receiving P-EBT for school aged children. Children who may have been eligible for P-EBT child care benefits in June 2021 will only be eligible in the summer if they are SNAP enrolled in one of the summer months.

See Rhode Island’s State Plan for P-EBT for Children in School (School Year 2020 – 2021) for additional information relating to EBT Processing, Customer Service (resolving issuance errors, access issues, public information campaign, noticing), and Overissuances.

**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	<b>\$375</b>
Alaska	55	10.99	<b>604</b>
Hawaii, Guam, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico	55	7.97	<b>438</b>

**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	<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>

**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:**



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Signature  
Bethany Caputo  
SNAP Administrator, RI Department of Human Services



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Signature  
William Trimble  
Associate Director of Finance, RI Department of Education

**Date of Request:** 5/20/2021