

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

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| Issuing Agency/Office: | FNS / Child Nutrition Programs, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program |
| Title of Document: | Amendment to Approved State Plan for Pandemic EBT: Children in School and Child Care, Summer 2021 |
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| Date of Issuance: | April 26, 2021 |
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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.

Children in School and/or Child Care, Summer 2021

1. **State:** Arizona
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]

N/A

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
\$281,250,000
- Estimated amount issued to non-school children in child care
\$56,250,000

Estimated total number of children to which the State will issue P-EBT benefits.

- Estimated number of school children
750K
- Estimated number of non-school children in child care
150K

d. 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.

- Children in child care

- In August 2021, DES will begin issuing the P-EBT summer benefits in a one-time payment of \$375, staggered over 13 days, sequentially by case last name.
- * Children in child care will be processed first and start the 13-day staggered schedule, which will be determined, based on approval of the Summer P-EBT plan and systems readiness.
- * DES will send a letter at the time of the alpha issuance to each P-EBT household notifying them of the Summer P-EBT program, their assigned case number, and the amount of Summer P-EBT benefits to expect per child. This notice will explain this is a one-time payment that covers the eligible Summer P-EBT period for Arizona.

- School children

- DES will start the issuance approximately 2-10 business days after the start of the 13-day staggered issuance of the children in child care.
- DES will send a letter at the time of the alpha issuance to each P-EBT household notifying them of the Summer P-EBT program and include that amount of Summer P-EBT benefit for each eligible child. This notice will explain this is a one-time payment that covers the eligible Summer P-EBT period for Arizona.

- e. 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.

Since the covered summer period is an extension of the school year, this includes children who graduate at the end of the school year. DES will use its list of eligible children as of the last transmission from ADE (Arizona Department of Education) as the basis for this benefit. DES expects to receive this file from ADE in early July 2021.

- 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.

DES will use a new file from ADE, which will include all known eligible children (regardless of learning model status) enrolled in NSLP/SBP school within the last month of SY 20-21 as of June 30, 2021. ADE will determine eligible students based on their last enrollment date to equal the last calendar month of school (i.e. last enrollment date of May 20, 2021, last day of school May 28, 2021; this student would meet the eligibility for Summer P-EBT and be included in the file).

- For schools that report to AzEDS (ADE's public school student database), ADE will use data reported as of June 30, 2021 for each student's corresponding last enrollment date and last day of school.
- For non-public schools, ADE will use the data initially collected manually this spring with the last enrollment date for each student record. Such schools were instructed to send updated records to ADE manually no later than June 30 to reflect any students who have withdrawn during SY 20-21. ADE will use the last school day reported through data collection for school learning model data.

These children will need cases built, letters, and P-EBT cards sent to those who did not previously get a payment.

- 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).

ADE/DES will instruct households to use the school meal application made available by the school the child was enrolled in during the last month of SY20-21. If the household is unsuccessful in obtaining a school meal application, DES will link to ADE's generic school meal application template and instructions on their webpage. The household will complete the application and provide back to their local school prior to the end of the covered summer period. DES/ADE will not accept school meal applications directly.

Schools will be responsible for processing applications received during the covered summer period (June 1, 2021 – July 30, 2021). Applications must be processed in order to provide the student data for newly eligibles to ADE on a manual file no later than Friday, August 27, 2021. If schools are not able to have staff present during the covered summer period to confirm which applications were submitted prior to the end of summer (July 30, 2021), ADE is providing instructions to schools to include all applications to ADE that provide a parent signature/date from June 1, 2021-July 30, 2021.

The data submission deadline (August 27, 2021) does overlap for some LEAs with the start of the academic school year. Therefore, for all eligibility determinations (i.e. applications/direct certification, etc.) between the covered summer period (June 1- July 30) will be accepted through a manual file of eligible student records from schools rather than using the agency database (AzEDS) referenced in the School plan to ensure students who submitted eligibility *after* the summer period are not included in Summer P-EBT issuance.

ADE will generate a new file based on the submissions from schools through August 27, 2021. The file sent to DES will only include students on record as enrolled in the last calendar month of the SY 20-21. DES will remove any duplicative student records that were already included in the Summer P-EBT issuance from the June 30, 2021 file. DES will provide the second Summer P-EBT payment for these newly identified eligibles in late September/October.

ADE will work with local schools on education of the availability of reimbursement funds for local administration costs. ADE will provide a template letter for schools to send out to each household with eligible students enrolled in the last month of SY 20-21 to expect a Summer P-EBT issuance in July and to not reapply/resubmit a household application. An additional template letter will be provided to schools to send out to each household with students not yet determined eligible during the SY 20-21 and include instructions on how to apply using the household application for purposes of Summer P-EBT. The letter will emphasize that children must have been enrolled in school as of the last month of the school year to receive summer benefits. If determined eligible, households may expect the Summer P-EBT issuance in late September/early October.

Children who are newly entering kindergarten in SY 21-22, are not eligible to receive summer P-EBT benefits as school children (since summer P-EBT is an extension of SY 20-21 P-EBT), but that they may qualify for P-EBT summer benefits under the child care component of P-EBT if they meet criteria.

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.

Arizona will identify all eligible children using the DES eligibility system, and the processes used for P-EBT for the school year 20-21. All children that received a paid P-EBT Child Care benefit in May 2021. Children must be SNAP-enrolled during the summer period to be eligible for the summer child care benefit. Children under 6 as of Oct 1, 2020 whose SNAP enrollment begins or ends during the summer period June 1 - July 30 can receive the full summer benefit.

- 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.

Arizona will take the 15 county designations for child care and as long as they are flag1 (full benefit) or flag 2 (partial benefit) or flag 3 that will qualify and identify all child care children on SNAP in June for the FULL Summer P-EBT benefit.

- 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

Newly eligible children, who did not receive a P-EBT benefit in May, shall be potentially eligible if they are under the age of 6 years old as of October 1, 2020 and are actively receiving SNAP starting June 2021 or July 2021.

DES will process the ongoing Child Care children and any newly eligible children identified in June for the first summer P-EBT issuance in August.

DES will process any newly eligible Child Care children identified in July and any remaining June Child Care children missed for the following catch up issuance in September/October 2021.

State Response: see grey sections above

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:



 Signature
 Print Name and Title Jason Sauer Deputy Assistant Director DBME



 Signature
 Print Name and Title Melissa Conner
 Associate Superintendent
 Health & Nutrition Services

Date of Request: 06/28/2021