

**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>Replaces:</b>	N/A
<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-e-bt-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: Utah

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

The state of Utah would like to request date range coverage from September 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021. Utah did not issue P-EBT to children for the month of September 2020 during the previous P-EBT issuance for the school year 2019-2020.

- for children in child care

The state of Utah intends to issue P-EBT benefits for eligible children in child care for the months of October through May 2021.

- 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.
  - Estimated amount issued to school children in non-SNAP households

The state of Utah estimates the total amount of P-EBT benefits for school age children will be \$45,093,440 and a monthly amount of \$5,010,382. Utah estimates the following total and monthly amounts for SNAP households; \$12,626,163 total and \$1,402,907 monthly. Utah

estimates the following total and monthly amounts for non-SNAP households; \$32,467,277 total and \$3,607,475 monthly. P-EBT issuance for children in child care will be covered in a separate plan submitted to FNS.

- Estimated amount issued to non-school children in child care

The state of Utah estimates the total P-EBT issuance for children in child care will be \$10,228,508 and a monthly amount of \$1,278,564.

- c. Estimated total **number** of children to which the State will issue P-EBT benefits.
- Estimated number of school children in SNAP households
  - Estimated number of school children in non-SNAP households

The state of Utah estimates the total number of children it will issue P-EBT benefits to is 112,555. 31,515 children (14,500 households) will be SNAP households and 81,040 (37,280 households) children will be non-SNAP households. P-EBT issuance for children in child care will be covered in a separate plan submitted to FNS.

- Estimated number of non-school children in child care

The state of Utah estimates they will issue benefits to 35,000 children in child care.

- d. Estimated total amount of administrative funds the State needs to complete the work described in this State plan/amendment.<sup>2</sup>

The state of Utah estimates the total amount of administrative funds the State needs to cover all costs that were incurred on or after October 1, 2020 described in this state plan to be \$3,133,680.

1. Utah State Board of Education (USBE) requested an amount: \$50,000 for P-EBT activities related to systems and staffing.
2. Local Education Authority/School Food Authority requested amount: \$800,000 for activities related to systems, data gathering, and P-EBT education. USBE is in the process of collecting individual LEA estimates. The state of Utah will be requesting administrative funding reimbursement for the local level P-EBT activities.
3. Department of Workforce Services (DWS) requested amount: \$39,800 for IT related development and system costs, \$19,800 for P-EBT activities related to staffing, \$500,000 for P-EBT Hotline staffing, and \$1,724,080 for EBT Vendor (Conduent) P-EBT related change order costs.

- 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

Utah will issue P-EBT benefits to school children both in SNAP and non-SNAP households using the following tentative schedule. Utah plans to issue the benefits in four separate blocks.

- Block one will cover the months of September through December 2020 and will be issued at the end of March 2021.
- Block two will cover the months of January through March 2021 and will be issued at the end of May 2021.
- Block three will cover the months of April through May 2021 and will be issued at the end of June 2021.
- Block four will be our final issuance as a catch all in the month of September 2021. This will identify any remaining students that may have been missed in the first three issuances.

- Children in child care

Utah will issue P-EBT benefits to eligible children in child care using the following tentative schedule. Utah plans to issue the benefits in three separate blocks. Each block will be a single P-EBT benefit issuance for all eligible children in care.

- Block one will cover the months of October through January 2021 and will be issued at the end of July 2021.
- Block two will cover the months of February 2021 through May 2021 and will be issued at the beginning of August 2021.
- Block three will be our final issuance as a catch all in the month of September 2021. This will identify any remaining children in child care that may have been missed in the first two issuances.

<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.

#### **4. P-EBT for School Children**

##### **A. Eligible Children**

- 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.

Local Education Authorities process and will submit data to USBE which identifies eligible students and confirms their P-EBT eligibility through the free and reduced-price data for school

year 2020-2021. Local Education Authorities (LEAs), including public school districts, public charter schools, private schools, Residential Child Care Institutions and Bureau of Indian Education entities, have assigned staff that determine school meal eligibility each month that P-EBT benefits will be issued. The LEA verifies and certifies student's free and reduced-price lunch eligibility through the household application and direct certification process. They utilize the USDA income eligibility threshold set for this school year. Data from SY 2019-2020 will not be included to determine student eligibility for P-EBT for the 2021 school year. The state will instruct LEAs to exclude any students that had 30-day carryover from the 2019-2020 school year in their data submissions. LEAs have continued to conduct direct certification processes to determine current year eligible students. LEAs have also provided communication and various means for households to apply for free or reduced-price meal benefits during the school year. We are assuming once a student is approved for free or reduced-price meal benefits the student will be issued P-EBT benefits back to when the school he/she is enrolled in meets the school status criteria and appropriate benefit issuance level.

Each LEA will provide lists of enrolled students, for the 2020-2021 school year, eligible for free or reduced-price meals, receiving SNAP benefits, or that are enrolled in a Provision 2 or Community Eligibility Provision (CEP).

- 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.

USBE will request complete and accurate data, from the LEAs, of all enrolled students eligible for free or reduced-price meals, receiving SNAP benefits or that are enrolled in a Provision 2 or CEP school for the current school year. This data will then be shared with DWS. DWS will run the file against all open SNAP households to be able to identify P-EBT SNAP households from P-EBT non-SNAP households.

- 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.

USBE collected school reopening plans prior to the start of school year 2020-2021 from public school districts, charter schools, and the Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind. USBE will collect changes in school schedule information every other month and provide this data to DWS.

- 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.).

USBE collected school reopening plans prior to the start of school year 2020-2021 from public school districts, charter schools, and the Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind. USBE will collect changes in school schedule and closure information every other month and provide this data to DWS.

- 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).

USBE Child Nutrition Programs will obtain and maintain all student eligibility data confirming eligibility, provide data scrubbing, match SNAP Direct Certification results against CNPweb, track school closures, and provide Memorandum of Understanding for data sharing with DWS. USBE will work with DWS and the LEA to resolve any disputes made by households.

DWS will receive all eligibility data from USBE, confirm SNAP versus non-SNAP households, coordinate with our EBT vendor, provide issuance of P-EBT benefits/notices/instructions, and coordinate customer service phone calls and emails regarding address changes for P-EBT recipients.

- 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.

Due to the implementation of the Seamless Summer Option program (SSO), many of our families eligible for free/reduced meals did not apply at the beginning of the school year. Due to this, Utah will assume any applications received throughout the school year, qualified for free/reduced meals started at the beginning of the school year.

## **B. School Status**

- 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.

USBE collected school reopening plans prior to the start of school year 2020-2021 from public school districts, charter schools, and the Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind.

USBE will collect changes in school schedule and closure information every other month and provide this data to DWS.

- 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?

USBE collected school reopening plans prior to the start of school year 2020-2021 from public school districts, charter schools, and the Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind. USBE will collect changes in school schedule and closure information every other month and provide this data to DWS.

- 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.)

This information will be collected by USBE from the LEAs. It will be collected every other month and provided to DWS.

- 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.

School closure and schedule change information will be collected by USBE from the LEAs. USBE will reassess school schedules and benefit level determination will be adjusted as necessary. It will be collected every other month and provided to DWS. USBE will provide this data to DWS at each block of issuance and any adjustments needed will then be issued. As information is collected school schedules will be reassessed and benefits will be adjusted accordingly.

- 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.

To structure the program in a more beneficial way to students, Utah intends to utilize simplified assumptions based on two distinct amounts, one amount for students enrolled in a hybrid system and another amount for those that are not. Utah will also use a simplified assumption using school level schedule data.

Based on UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-419- 3(A),4(C) the state of Utah requires 180 total school days per year. We will use the 180 school days as our simplified assumption toward the total number of school days in the calendar year. Most schools begin at the end of August through the first part of September. As August is a short month of operation the state will use the months of September 2020 through May 2021 for 9 months to calculate benefit issuances. The state will include August as a month to determine school status eligibility. Benefits will not be issued for August as a partial benefit issuance for up to a 1 ½ week period is not cost effective. We will take a total of 180 school days and divide this by the nine school months, September 2020 through May 2021. This totals 20 school days per month. Students that are 100% virtual will be paid the benefit of 20 days per month.

The state of Utah has some schools that have opted to use a hybrid attendance plan. In eighty percent of these schools, the students are in school 4 days a week (20% virtual time). In the other 20 percent of schools, the students are in school 3 days a week (40% virtual time). We used a weighted average calculation to determine a statewide average of 25% virtual instruction time for hybrid students.

Hybrid Models and State Average Virtual Instruction per Week

Hybrid School Count	% of Virtual Time/Week	Hybrid School Count/Total Hybrid School Count	% of Virtual Time per Week x % Hybrid School Count
413 Hybrid A Shortened day and/or remote day-School in session 4 days/week	20%	81%	16%
99 Hybrid B A/B Days, Reduced Class Size-School in session 3 days/week	40%	19%	8%
512 Total Hybrid Models		100%	24% round up to 25%

Utah will pay hybrid students 25% of the 100% remote benefit amount, equal to 5 days a month. This payment will allow for a consistent monthly benefit amount for those students that are 100% remote learning and those that are doing a hybrid/split schedule of any kind.

**5. P-EBT for Children in Child Care**



- Describe how the State will identify eligible children and confirm their eligibility consistent with the above standard.

USBE will send DWS a list of counties with eligible school closure details. DWS will match the county of residence with each SNAP eligible child against the list of eligible school closures located in each of Utah's 29 counties. For eligible children residing in an eligible county, all children 0-5 receiving SNAP will be considered virtual or hybrid based on the school closure for the county of their residence. In determining the county schedule, Utah will first look for a school with virtual attendance and then hybrid attendance. The county will be designated a virtual schedule if one school in the county is operating on a virtual schedule during the month. The county will be designated a hybrid schedule if there is not one school operating a virtual schedule, but at least one school is operating a hybrid schedule.

If the child's residence is in a county, or is contiguous to a county, that has at least one school that is closed in the month, the child will receive the fully virtual benefit for that month

If the child's residence is in a county, or is contiguous to a county, that does not have at least one school that is closed in the month, but at least one school is operating at reduced attendance or hours, the child will receive the hybrid benefit for that month

If there are no schools that are closed or operating at reduced attendance or hours, UT will identify eligible children who attend a covered child care facility that is closed or operating at reduced attendance or hours in the month and provide the child with benefits consistent with their facility's status, the fully virtual benefit or hybrid benefit, respectively, for that month.

- How will the State determine and confirm the child's receipt of SNAP benefits in accordance with relevant SNAP privacy requirements?

DWS is the agency that issues SNAP benefits in Utah. Each month will be reviewed to identify all children 0-5 receiving SNAP benefits. We will then take the county list of school closures, provided by USBE and we will match that to the child receiving SNAP for each month during the P-EBT plan. DWS will make sure privacy requirements are met.

- How will the State determine that a child's residence is in the area of one or more schools that are closed or are operating with reduced attendance or hours?

The state of Utah will use simplified assumptions by using counties to identify children living in areas of school closure/reduced attendance.

- 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
  - 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?

DWS will work closely with the Office of Child Care (OCC) and Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). OCC has tracked closures of child care provider facilities due to the COVID pandemic. The state will review information provided by OCC and CACFP to determine eligibility. Any child attending a closed CACFP facility will be eligible for P-EBT if they resided in a county that experienced no school closures.

- 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.

- 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.)

DWS will receive information from USBE showing counties where school closures occurred during the 2020-2021 school year. Since the school months have passed, USBE is able to provide a list of county school closures as they actually took place. The county list is a compilation of that data for each month of the P-EBT plan. DWS is able to verify actual SNAP enrollment for all children 0-5 during each month of the P-EBT plan. The information gathered to determine P-EBT eligibility will be verified prior to issuance using the actual data as it occurred during the months of the P-EBT plan.

- 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).

USBE will provide DWS with a list of schools attending virtually or through the hybrid option. DWS will use the lists to issue P-EBT benefits to SNAP households that have children under the age of 6 in those areas.

- What simplifying assumptions does the State propose? Why must the State make those simplifying assumptions? Please address both of these questions in detail.

The state of Utah will use the simplified assumption of school closures in counties to identify eligible children under the age of 6. In Utah, it is an administrative and time intensive burden to identify eligible children in a smaller defined geographical area than a county. A county definition allows for an equitable determination for each potentially eligible child under the age of 6 for the entire state. We will use simplified assumptions to match the highest level of eligibility for the area of school closure or reduced attendance.

**Response:** Utah will submit a separate Children in Child Care P-EBT plan.

## 6. Benefit Levels

SY 2020-2021 July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021	Free Reimbursements USDA School Meal Programs			
	Lunch	Breakfast	Snack (NEW)	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 after school 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.

To structure the program in a more beneficial way to students, Utah intends to utilize simplified assumptions based on two distinct amounts, one amount for students enrolled in a hybrid system and another amount for those that are not.

Based on UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-419- 3(A),4(C) the state of Utah requires 180 total school days per year. We will use the 180 school days as our simplified assumption toward the total number of school days in the calendar year. There are a total of 9 months in the school year. We will take a total of 180 and divide this by the nine school months. This totals 20 school days per month. The state of Utah will issue 20 school days for non-hybrid schools, multiplied by the daily total; we will issue \$136.40 per month.

The state of Utah has some schools that have opted to use a hybrid attendance plan. These schools attend on average 60% in person. We will issue 5 school days per month for schools that have decided to use the hybrid option as they are missing 25% of the school time each month. The State of Utah will issue 5 school days per month for hybrid schools, multiplied by the daily total; we will issue \$34.10 per month.

#### Children in child care under 6

The state of Utah will use the same framework for the student benefit issuance determination and amounts. For children in child care under 6, Utah will determine a child's issuance based upon the presence of a school within the county that was either determined as a hybrid or virtual school. If a child was eligible through a CACFP child care facility, because they were not eligible through the county school closure, the P-EBT amount will be determined following the same virtual or hybrid amounts list. The P-EBT benefit determination will be made monthly for each child under 6 receiving SNAP during the months of October 2020 – May 2021.

- Child in child care under 6 residing in a county with a virtual school will receive a monthly issuance of \$136.40.
- Child in child care under 6 residing in a county with only hybrid school will receive a monthly issuance of \$34.10.

#### 7. 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.

LEAs will provide student data for the first block of issuance to USBE by March 12th. USBE will clean the data and prepare the file to send to DWS no later than March 24th. DWS will submit the file to the EBT vendor for benefit issuance within two weeks of receiving the student data file.

- Block one will cover the months of September through December 2020 and will be issued at the end of March 2021.
- At this time the P-EBT hotline will become active.
- Public notice campaign will begin in the month of March and continue for the duration of the P-EBT issuances.

LEAs will provide student data for the second block of issuance to USBE by May 12th. USBE will clean the data and prepare the file to send to DWS no later than May 24th. DWS will submit the file to the EBT vendor for benefit issuance within two weeks of receiving the student data file.

- Block two will cover the months of January through March 2021 and will be issued at the end of May 2021.

LEAs will provide student data for the third block of issuance to USBE by June 1st. USBE will clean the data and prepare the file to send to DWS no later than June 18th. DWS will submit the file to the EBT vendor for benefit issuance within two weeks of receiving the student data file.

- Block three will cover the months of April through May 2021 and will be issued at the end of June 2021.

LEAs will provide student data for the final issuance to USBE by August 31st. USBE will clean the data and prepare the file to send to DWS no later than September 10th. DWS will submit the file to the EBT vendor for benefit issuance within two weeks of receiving the student data file.

- Block four will be our final issuance as a catch all in the month of September 2021. This will identify any remaining students that may have been missed in the first three issuances.

### Children in child care under 6

DWS will identify the eligible P-EBT children in child care under 6 populations by July 2, 2021. DWS will determine eligibility amounts for each eligible P-EBT child based upon their country of residence coding for either hybrid or virtual issuance amounts as described in section 5 by July 14, 2021. DWS will issue the P-EBT benefits to eligible children in three blocks.

- Block one will cover the months of October 2020 through January 2021 and will be issued at the end of July 2021.

- Block two will cover the months of February 2021 through May 2021 and will be issued at the beginning of August 2021.
- Block three will be our final issuance as a catch all in the month of September 2021. This will identify any remaining eligible children that may have been missed in the first two issuances.

For both the student and children in care under 6 P-EBT plans, the state of Utah will develop an implementation timeline in conjunction and with coordination from our EBT processor, Conduent. Utah will develop a communication pathway to provide timelines regarding EBT processing for both plans. Utah will work with our EBT processor to develop specific milestones and check points for card stock, card distribution, and issuance schedules.

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?

The state of Utah will issue P-EBT benefits on a unique P-EBT card design for non-SNAP households only. SNAP households will receive their P-EBT benefits on their current SNAP card. Children in child care under 6, who are SNAP recipients, will have their P-EBT benefits issued on their current SNAP card.

- 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.

The P-EBT benefits are issued with a subprogram code of PEBT.

- 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.

The drawdown priority will be first in, first out. Since the PEBT funds will be deposited into the SNAP account, there is not a priority determination between PEBT or SNAP. It will simply be FIFO.

- 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.

The state of Utah will continue to follow the expungement rules it uses for our SNAP cases.

- 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?

The EBT Processor will status the cards that are returned and these will be reported on the Undeliverable Card report. The State Agency will work the Undeliverable Card report daily to make contact with the customers, update addresses, and mail new cards out. There is also a process in place for issuing OTC cards if needed.

- Will you issue **new** P-EBT cards to existing P-EBT households?
  - If so, who will receive these cards? Non-SNAP households only? Or also SNAP households?
  - If not, how will you handle cases where the P-EBT household no longer has their P-EBT card?

The State of Utah will issue new cards to all non-SNAP P-EBT households. SNAP households, including households receiving P-EBT with children in care under 6 receiving SNAP, will receive P-EBT benefits on their SNAP EBT card. The customer can contact the EBT Vendor or the State Agency to have a new card issued.

## 8. Customer Service

Unless otherwise noted, the information provided in the Customer Service section is for both the student and children in care under 6 P-EBT plan. The state of Utah will provide the same level of customer service for both eligible students and eligible children in care under 6.

- 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.

The state of Utah will have a toll free hotline, (833) 940-2990, for families/households to contact regarding disputes. The personnel staffing the hotline will work toward resolving questions, concerns, and disputes. The hotline personnel will refer unresolved disputes to the appropriate agency for resolution. Disputes on eligibility and benefit amounts for students will be sent to USBE for assignment and resolution by the local LEAs. Disputes on eligibility and benefits amounts for children in child care under the age of 6 will be handled by DWS for resolution. Disputes from individuals not receiving their cards or losing their cards will be handled by the EBT provider contracted with DWS.

- 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.

In order to minimize any potential access problems, the State of Utah will not require an application. All beneficiaries that qualify for P-EBT benefits will be automatically enrolled in the program and issued the P-EBT benefit. Children that are homeless, in foster care, without social security numbers, with limited English proficiency, without internet access, or those living with disabilities should not have any barriers due to the automatic issuance.

- 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).

The state of Utah has an all-around approach to assist with efficiency and providing the best customer services and customer education possible. USBE and DWS will ensure accurate communication to all households. Utah will work with partnering agencies, such as Utahns Against Hunger (UAH), to establish our public information campaign. The campaign will be ongoing for the duration of the P-EBT issuances and available on the state’s P-EBT website. We will also utilize the schools’ communication pathways to ensure that all families/students are notified of the P-EBT program.

- Describe what information you will provide for households that do not want the P-EBT benefit that is directly issued to them. How to dispose of the card, etc.

All P-EBT beneficiaries that wish to not participate in the program will be instructed to dispose of the P-EBT card. These benefits will go through the expungement process.

- Describe the information you will provide **directly** to P-EBT participants (this is different from 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)

Information will be sent to P-EBT households, through the form of a buck slip, once they are approved for the benefit. The information will include details about the P-EBT program, where to go if they have questions or need assistance, instructions on PINing a card, where benefits can be used, and how they can/can't be used. The information will include details on violations, penalties and that benefits are non-transferable. Instructions for destroying the card and what to do if they want to decline benefits will be provided. A buck slip will also provide information for customers on setting up the PIN.

- 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 email, text messages, social media, website, robo-call, and/or other electron

All information will be provided in the same manner for SNAP and non-SNAP households. Information regarding the P-EBT card, how to set up the card for usage, and instructions to use the P-EBT will be given through a buck slip. DWS will also provide information through our website and social media pages.

The state will have a reconsideration process in place for households that are not issued P-EBT benefits or would like to be considered for partial or full P-EBT benefits. USBE will provide a list of qualifying schools to DWS. OCC will provide a list of qualifying child care provider facilities to DWS.

Households may contact the toll-free number as a first step. It will be determined if the student(s) in the household was enrolled in a qualifying school. If the student was enrolled in a qualifying school, DWS and USBE will coordinate to determine if the student's information was provided by the LEA in the student eligibility data collection. If the student is not on the eligibility list, USBE will contact the LEA to confirm if the student met the student eligibility criteria. A partial or full P-EBT benefit determination will be made to eligible students in qualifying schools for the months the student was enrolled. Information will be sent to DWS for benefit issuance to the household.

Households with child(ren) 6 and under may contact the toll-free number as a first step. DWS will determine if the child was receiving SNAP during the months of the P-EBT plan. If the child was not receiving SNAP, DWS will educate the household. Next, it will be determined if the child in the household resided in a county of a qualifying school closure and was not issued a P-EBT benefit, DWS will research the request and determine P-EBT eligibility. If the child was enrolled in a CACFP eligible child care facility and was not issued a P-EBT benefit, DWS will research the request and determine P-EBT eligibility. DWS will educate the household on the eligibility decision and if applicable information regarding the P-EBT issuance amount.

## **9. 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.

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.

USBE validates all data and will only provide data for students that qualify for P-EBT based on household application for free or reduced-price meals based on the USDA guidance and regulations. DWS validates all data and will only provide data for children in child care under the age of 6. USBE validates all data regarding counties of qualifying school closures. DWS and USBE validates all data regarding child care provider facility closures and eligibility in CACFP. Utah will make all reasonable efforts to detect improper usage of P-EBT payments. These

efforts will include utilizing methods to identify questionable issues related to P-EBT activities. We will utilize these methods to determine if improper activities have occurred with P-EBT funds and when necessary refer cases to USDA for final claims processing.

If the benefits are disputed for any reason, assigned staff will research the concerns. Each case/concern will be handled individually. If determined that the original P-EBT benefits were issued incorrectly, Utah will ensure that the child receives the correct amount of entitled P-EBT benefits.

#### **10. 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.

#### **11. 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.

**12. 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.”

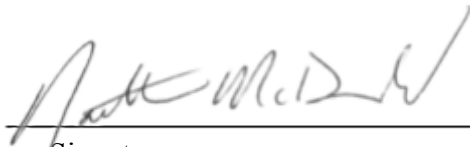
**13. Civil Rights Statement**

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.

**14. 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:**



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Signature

Print Name and Title – Nate McDonald, Utah Department of Workforce Services, Deputy Director (Department of Workforce Services)

Signature – *Kathleen Britton*

Print Name and Title – Kathleen Britton, Child Nutrition Programs Director (Utah State Board of Education)