



Food and Nutrition  
Service

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October 4, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer Program (P-EBT)  
Approval of U.S. Virgin Islands' State Plan for Summer 2022,  
School Children Only

**TO:** Christine Ruggieri  
Acting Regional Administrator  
Northeast Regional Office

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (P.L. 116-127; the Act), as amended, authorized a temporary assistance program for households with children without access to meals in school and to certain SNAP-enrolled children in child care during the public health emergency originally declared in January 2020. The March 11, 2021 American Rescue Plan Act (the ARP, P.L. 117-2) extends P-EBT through the end of the public health emergency, a period that includes the summer of 2022.

Pursuant to the authority granted under Section 1101 of the Act, FNS approves the U.S. Virgin Islands' enclosed plan to issue P-EBT benefits to children in schools for the 2022 covered summer period.

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

The U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Human Services and the Virgin Islands Department of Education will issue P-EBT benefits through the U.S. Virgin Islands' Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) EBT card system to households with eligible children. In general, school children are eligible for benefits if they would have received free or reduced price meals at their schools through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) if not for the closure or reduced attendance or hours of their schools. Children in child care are eligible 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 ARP deems all schools closed for the 2022 P-EBT covered summer period.

### **Children in Schools**

The U.S. Virgin Islands and its school districts will identify the children who were eligible to receive free or reduced price NSLP meals as of the end of school year 2021-2022. The U.S. Virgin Islands will offer households who become income-eligible for free or reduced price meals the ability to establish their eligibility during the 2022 covered summer period. In addition, the U.S. Virgin Islands and its school districts will identify eligible children through direct certification during the same period.

In addition, the U.S. Virgin Islands will:

- issue the U.S. standard benefit of \$455 to all eligible children,

- tentatively issue a single benefit for the entire summer period in the week of October 10 - October 14 for all eligible school children,
- submit a separate plan to USDA to issue P-EBT summer benefits for eligible pre-school-age children in child care at a later date.

Finally, the U.S. Virgin Islands will identify risks for improper payments and ensure a high level of integrity.

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

The U.S. Virgin Islands estimates that it will issue \$5.4 million to approximately 11,900 school children during the 2022 covered summer period.

### **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 the U.S. Virgin Islands. 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**

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

### **Civil Rights**

The U.S. Virgin Islands 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 U.S. Virgin Islands 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 U.S. Virgin Islands’ Administrative Grant level. However, the FNS-366(a), Program and Budget Summary, may be updated and revised as the U.S. Virgin Islands’ operational plan evolves.

**Reporting**

The U.S. Virgin Islands 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 the U.S. Virgin Islands' commitment to meet the nutritional needs of children during a challenging time. If you have questions, please contact the FNS Northeast Regional Office.

Sincerely,

Cindy Long  
Administrator