SNP Memo #2021-2022-20


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: December 20, 2021

TO: School Nutrition Program Directors, Supervisors, and Contact Persons (Addressed)

FROM: Sandra C. Curwood, PhD, RDN, ***Sandy***

**SUBJECT: Pandemic EBT Updates for School Year 2021-2022**

This memo provides an update on the Virginia plan for Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) for school year (SY) 2021-2022. The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) are working collaboratively to receive approval for the P-EBT plan from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Further details will be provided via a Superintendent’s Memo in January 2022. A webinar will also be scheduled prior to the first P-EBT file due date in February or March 2022.

The VDOE, Office of School Nutrition Programs (VDOE-SNP) is sharing this preliminary information with school nutrition directors and contact persons. Please forward this memo to local contacts for the student information system (SIS), attendance, and others in your school division or organization responsible for P-EBT data.

**P-EBT Eligibility in SY 2021-2022**

The USDA issued guidance on P-EBT plans for SY 2021-2022 in October, including school and student eligibility requirements, which vary from prior years.

**School eligibility:** A school must be closed or operating with reduced attendance or reduced hours due to COVID-19 for at least five consecutive days in the current school year to meet the requirements for eligible students to receive P-EBT. After the minimum five consecutive day threshold has been met by the school in the current school year, eligible students may receive P-EBT for any month in which the student meets the individual eligibility requirements.

**Student eligibility:** Individual students who attend a school that met the P-EBT eligibility threshold once in the current school year would be eligible for P-EBT benefits in any month in which they meet the following conditions.

The student must:

* be determined free or reduced-price eligible, by direct certification or meal application, for meals in the USDA National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or be attending a Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) approved school, *and*;
* be receiving full-time remote instruction from a teacher(s) employed by the NSLP participating school or school division, *or*,
* be documented as absent from school due to COVID-19 related quarantine or illness, whether or not they receive remote instruction during their absence.

*Virtual Virginia* and other full-time virtual schools, including those offered through a multi-division online provider (MOP), are not eligible to participate in the NSLP and do not meet the USDA P-EBT eligibility requirement. Students enrolled in and attending full-time virtual schools do not meet the USDA P-EBT eligibility requirement.

**Data Submission and Monthly P-EBT Benefits**

Local education agency (LEA) and school food authority (SFA) staff should begin preparing to report on P-EBT data for schools and students who have met these eligibility requirements at any time from the beginning of SY 2021-2022 to the present. To do this, please review available data in the SIS and attendance systems for information on school closures, student absences, and temporary remote learning due to the pandemic. There will be additional guidance on the P-EBT student data files which will follow the existing P-EBT template with some exceptions, one of which is a change to the learning mode identifiers. A separate report to document school eligibility will also be necessary. No submissions will be due until the plan has been approved by USDA. VDOE-SNP will provide further guidance at that time.

The plan includes that LEAs will continue to submit P-EBT student data files for each month separately, including for prior months. A monthly schedule of *as of* dates for student data and file submission due dates will be provided. LEAs will submit P-EBT files to VDSS through the managed file transfer (MFT) portal.

The LEA data files will be used to determine P-EBT benefit amounts on a tiered basis each month using the student’s remote instruction and/or absence status for that month. It is critical that the LEA data be accurate. Federal monetary benefits will be issued to households based on the data. Tiered benefits will be issued with the actual dollar amount determined based on full-time remote learning, part-time absence/remote learning, or short-term absence/remote learning.

Thank you for your continued work in support of P-EBT. If you have questions or feedback, please contact Lynne Fellin, Technical Advisor to the State SNP Director, via email at Lynne.Fellin@doe.virginia.gov.

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