# SNP Memo #2020-2021-38


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: December 18, 2020

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

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

## SUBJECT: Pandemic EBT Data Collections for Remote Learners

This memo provides information and guidance regarding the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) data collections for remote learners. The P-EBT food assistance program for certain students who are learning remotely was extended through the end of the 2020-2021 school year. The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) are working collaboratively with local education agencies (LEAs) to operationalize the ongoing P-EBT program. The VDSS is in the process of obtaining plan approval from USDA however the first round of data collection will begin now. The next LEA P-EBT data submission is due Friday, January 15, 2021, by 5:00 p.m.

### Student Eligibility for Ongoing P-EBT for Remote Learning

All LEAs that would claim meals under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) during non-pandemic operation are eligible to submit students for P-EBT. Students who are eligible for ongoing P-EBT benefits must meet the following two conditions:

* The student has either been determined eligible for free or reduced-price meals by application or direct certification, or the student is enrolled in a school approved to participate in the Provision 2 or 3, or the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP); and,
* The student is learning remotely for five consecutive days each week (fully remote) or the student is in a hybrid learning mode with less than five days of remote learning weekly (hybrid remote).

Students who are learning fully in-person are not eligible for ongoing P-EBT. LEAs with fully in-person operational status (five days per week) may submit P-EBT data for those students who meet the fully remote or hybrid remote definitions. Students who would not otherwise be receiving a free or reduced-price meal or a meal provided under CEP during normal school operations are not eligible for P-EBT. Additional information about free and reduced-price eligibility is available in SNP Memo 2020-2021-36.

### Data Submission for Ongoing P-EBT for Remote Learning

The P-EBT VDSS data template has been updated and slightly revised for the third round of data collection. The updated P-EBT VDSS spreadsheet with an expanded instructions tab, a new example tab, and the data collection template is attachment A to this memo. New to the template are column X – *Student Learning Mode* and column Y – *Local Student Identifier.* Column X was added to identify students on fully remote learning (indicated by a 1) and hybrid remote learning (indicated by a 2). Column Y was added to provide a data point VDSS could use to connect information for the same student across data files to increase accuracy and timeliness of benefit issuance.

Please review the instructions, examples, and template in the P-EBT VDSS spreadsheet. In addition, a data definition and file format document (similar to others used for VDOE data collections) is attachment B to this memo. It is designed to assist staff who will provide the data for the file. Improved data quality to streamline workload, reduce data issues, increase accuracy of benefit issuance, and reduce LEA and household frustration are the goals.

The USDA requires LEAs to submit updated P-EBT data to VDSS to assure all eligible students receive P-EBT and changes in eligibility, such as the LEA returning to fully in-person learning, are used in benefit calculations. The next LEA P-EBT data submission is due Friday, January 15, 2021, by 5:00 p.m.

Please submit the data from the LEA student information system (SIS) for eligible students using the required P-EBT Excel template provided. The SIS contact should work closely with the division SNP director to create and review the data before submission. Use the common issues and tips notes from the P-EBT webinar on December 17, 2020, to review the data.

### Future Data Submissions

Please be aware that VDSS is developing new ways for LEAs to deliver the P-EBT data for future submissions with the goal of simplifying the process. More information will be provided as it becomes available. A schedule of data submission deadlines for the 2020-2021 school year will be provided when it is received by the VDOE. LEAs should be prepared to continue ongoing P-EBT data submissions each month through June 2021.

### Required Household Notification and Contact Information for Household Questions

LEAs are required by the USDA to provide notification to P-EBT eligible households about this ongoing P-EBT issuance. An updated P-EBT client flyer will be provided by the VDSS in mid-January. The flyer will be sent via email to SNP directors for distribution after the January file is submitted to the VDSS. Distribution of the flyer should, if possible, be targeted to eligible households.

Households with students eligible for this ongoing remote learning P-EBT that received P-EBT previously will receive these additional benefits on the existing P-EBT card. Newly eligible or newly enrolled students will receive a new P-EBT card by mail. Any household that currently receives SNAP or was receiving SNAP in the past two years, even if the account has been inactive recently, will receive their P-EBT credited to the existing SNAP EBT card and account. SNAP recipients should check their EBT card balance using the ConnectEBT contact information in the client flyer.

Households who previously received P-EBT and lost or discarded their card must call **1-866-281-2448** to receive a replacement. Households should [visit the P-EBT webpage](https://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/pebt.cgi) to submit questions about previous rounds of P-EBT and for more information.

Please direct P-EBT school nutrition program operational questions to Dr. Sandy Curwood, Director of School Nutrition Programs, at (804) 371-2339 or by email at sandra.curwood@doe.virginia.gov or to Lynne Fellin, SNP Technical Assistance Specialist, at (804) 225-2717 or by email at lynne.fellin@doe.virginia.gov.

SCC/LAF/cc

**Attachments**

A: P-EBT Remote Data Template for Ongoing Benefits for Fully and Hybrid Remote Learners

 B. P-EBT Remote Learner File Data Definitions