



Strategies to Ensure States Reach All Eligible Families With P-EBT

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) requires states to describe how they will serve groups with potential access problems in their P-EBT state plan for the 2020–2021 school year. Below are strategies states can implement to ensure all eligible children can access P-EBT this school year.

- Directly issue benefits to children whenever possible.
- Issue benefits to eligible children rather than a parent or guardian.
- Create a clear troubleshooting process and system for families who have questions or issues with P-EBT with both online and phone options.
- Provide a mechanism for families to update their mailing address before issuing benefits.
- When applications are necessary, make applications accessible.
 - Keep the application short and simple (no Social Security numbers or other identification requirements that may not be available).
 - Make the online application publicly available.
 - Provide the application in multiple languages.
 - Allow families to apply by phone.
- Develop a robust communications and outreach plan.
 - See FRAC's [*P-EBT Communications Toolkit*](#) for more details.
- Provide a mechanism for newly eligible families to apply for P-EBT.
- Simplify card activation requirements.
 - Use information other than a Social Security number for card activation.
 - Create clear and helpful P-EBT call scripts.

In addition to the broad strategies above, below are strategies that states can implement to ensure targeted populations access P-EBT.

Homeless Youth

- Work with McKinney-Vento state homeless education coordinators to ensure homeless families and youth can easily access P-EBT.
- Work with McKinney-Vento district homeless liaisons to share information about P-EBT with the district's homeless families and youth. Resources should include information on

the program, how to update addresses, and how to get a replacement card if their card was sent to the wrong address.

- Allow McKinney-Vento district homeless liaisons to deliver P-EBT cards to students and families if their address is not readily available.
- Issue P-EBT cards in the student's name to ensure unaccompanied minors have access to P-EBT benefits.
- Create an easy way for families and youth to update address information or allow them to request that the card be delivered to the school district.
- Share information about the program with homeless youth via email and text.

Foster Children

- Work with child welfare leadership in the P-EBT planning process.
- Work with the child welfare agency, private providers, advocates, and foster parent groups to educate foster families about P-EBT and, if necessary, ensure they apply for P-EBT.
 - Ensure all child welfare county and regional staff, supervisors, caseworkers, other frontline staff, volunteer agencies, and foster parents receive information about the P-EBT program. Include information about who is eligible and ineligible and how the benefit will be distributed in their state. Include information on how to set up the P-EBT card once it's been received and whom to contact with questions.
 - Ensure foster and kinship families receive the information in multiple ways: via mail, informed by the caseworker, through social media, etc. Enlist local foster parent organizations to help spread the word.
- Child welfare agencies should use this opportunity to strengthen processes to ensure that all foster children are quickly enrolled in school (when coming into care or moving placements) with appropriate addresses AND are registered for free or reduced-price school meals.
- Encourage district caseworkers and foster families to update addresses before P-EBT is issued.
- If there is an application process for P-EBT, enlist caseworkers, volunteer agencies, and foster parent organizations to conduct outreach to foster parents for assistance with applications.
- Issue P-EBT benefits to each child, not by sibling group or family; foster children often are not placed as a sibling group.
- Do not send P-EBT cards to regional or county child welfare offices without thorough information on what they are and instructions for dissemination.

Immigrant and Migrant Students

- Work with migrant education coordinators in developing a process that ensures migrant children can easily access P-EBT.
- Translate P-EBT materials and resources into multiple languages.
- Include language about public charge in all communications to families.

Sample Q&A

Q: Do P-EBT benefits count against me under public charge?

A: No, they do not. Using P-EBT benefits does not impact you or your child's immigration status. The public charge rule does not apply to P-EBT benefits. Even though P-EBT uses the same type of card as SNAP, Pandemic EBT is NOT SNAP and is not considered in a public charge test. In addition, receipt of SNAP benefits by a child does not affect their parents' immigration status.

See FRAC's [*P-EBT Communications Toolkit*](#) for additional language.

- If an application is necessary, implement the application strategies outlined above to ensure families complete the application.
- Work with community-based organizations and individuals that are trusted messengers to spread the word about P-EBT in their community. Share information with school districts, food banks, health clinics, social workers, and immigration attorneys so that they can assist with outreach to non-SNAP households.
- Translate video messaging (e.g., Facebook and WhatsApp) in multiple languages to communicate critical messages to families with limited English proficiency.

Strategies to Reach Households Without Internet Access

- If an application is necessary, allow families to apply on the phone or provide a paper application through the school district.
- Share information with families regarding P-EBT through flyers, robocalls, and texts.

For additional resources on P-EBT, please visit www.frac.org/pebt.