



## To the Administrator Addressed

Commissioner Mike Morath

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<b>DATE:</b>	<b>May 21, 2020</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>P-EBT Overview and Communications Toolkit</b>
<b>CATEGORY:</b>	<b>Action Needed</b>
<b>NEXT STEPS:</b>	<b>1) Share with appropriate staff; 2) Collaborate with district and campus personnel to communicate to families</b>

Recognizing that COVID-19 has been challenging for many families and has put a strain on household food budgets, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved a new, \$1 billion benefit program to help eligible families buy food during the coronavirus pandemic. All Texas schools are being requested to share Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) information with eligible families, so families understand how to receive benefits.

P-EBT is for children who received SNAP food benefits for March 2020 and for children who are certified for free or reduced-price school meals during the 2019-20 Texas school year. Children who attend a school that offers free meals to all students (Community Eligibility Provision or Provision 2 schools) are eligible. Foster youth, migrant youth, homeless youth, runaway youth and Head Start participants are also eligible for P-EBT.

Some families that have children up to 21 years old who are certified for free and reduced-price meals will have to apply to receive P-EBT benefits. This includes children who attend a school that offers free meals to all students. Families that received SNAP benefits for the month of March 2020 for kids aged 5-18 DO NOT need to apply for those children. They WILL NEED to apply for children under 5 and/or between 19 and 21.

The online application will be active the first week of June and close on June 30, 2020. The application will be verified by Texas Health and Human Services (HHS) to ensure applicants are eligible. Once the application is approved, benefits will be issued. If a family gets SNAP benefits P-EBT funds will be loaded onto their current Lone Star Card. If they do not currently get SNAP benefits, a P-EBT card loaded with benefits will be mailed to them.

Households will receive a one-time benefit of up to \$285 per eligible child. P-EBT benefits can be used wherever SNAP food benefits are accepted. Families can use their P-EBT card like a debit card. P-EBT benefits can be used for up to one year from the date of issuance. P-EBT benefits are in addition to SNAP benefits, grab and go school meals and other nutrition resources. Receiving P-EBT will not affect a family's ability to get other benefits.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA), Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), and Texas Health and Human Services (HHS) request that districts and open-enrollment charter schools assist in the efforts to communicate with P-EBT eligible families and support a data verification process.

## Responsibilities for Districts and Open-Enrollment Charter Schools:

### 1. Communicate with P-EBT Eligible Families (May 21 – June 30)

- Identify families that were certified to receive free or reduced-price school meals during the 2019-2020 school year.
- Share P-EBT outreach materials attached to this correspondence with eligible families via email and/or mail following the recommended timeline below.
- In the initial communication to families, please include these three resources: May Letter to Families, How to Apply for P-EBT Handout and P-EBT Flyer.

Outreach Materials	Description of Resource	Recommended Date Schools Send Resources to Eligible Families
May Letter to Families	Provides an overview of P-EBT	May 21 - 29
How to Apply for P-EBT Handout	Describes the information needed to complete the application	May 21 - 29
P-EBT Flyer	Provides a general overview of P-EBT	May 21 - 29
Social Media Post	Schools can share this post on their social media to inform families of P-EBT and direct them to the HHS webpage with FAQs.	May 21 - 29
June Letter to Families* *Schools will receive this resource the first week of June	Provides the application link to eligible families. Application link will be active the first week of June through June 30, 2020	First week of June
Robocall and Robotext Script	Send robocall and/or robotext communication to eligible families	Month of June

### 2. Data Verification

Submitted applications will be verified by HHS prior to issuing benefits. TEA and TDA have compiled student eligibility data to help with this process. HHS anticipates receiving some applications that they cannot determine if the student is eligible for benefits. Schools will be contacted by TEA to verify student eligibility on a case by case basis. Schools will not be verifying every student who submitted an application.

#### Do you have questions about P-EBT?

For more information, please visit [hhs.texas.gov/PEBT](https://hhs.texas.gov/PEBT). A P-EBT call center will be available in June when the application is available. The phone number will be included in June outreach information for schools to share with families.

Thank you for your support with the P-EBT program. We appreciate all the work you do to make sure Texas families have access to food during this difficult time.

**Attachments:**

- [May Letter to Families](#)
- [How to Apply for P-EBT Handout](#)
- [P-EBT Flyer](#)
- [Social Media Post](#)
- [Robocall and Robotext Script](#)
  
- [May Letter to Families \(Spanish\)](#)
- [How to Apply for P-EBT Handout \(Spanish\)](#)
- [P-EBT Flyer \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Social Media Post \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Robocall and Robotext Script \(Spanish\)](#)

Spanish versions of these resources will be made available under **Child Nutrition Guidance** on the [TEA Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Support and Guidance website](#).