



August 17, 2022

PANDEMIC EBT FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions for K-12 P-EBT (Summer 2022)

1. What is Summer K-12 Pandemic EBT (P-EBT)?

P-EBT is an optional federal program designed to provide food benefits to children who have temporarily lost access to free and reduced-price meals at school or child care due to closures triggered by COVID-19.

P-EBT is administered by the South Carolina Department of Education and the South Carolina Department of Social Services.

2. Who is eligible for Summer K-12 P-EBT?

All school children who were approved for free or reduced-price school meals at school under the National School Lunch Program are eligible for P-EBT benefits for the summer of 2022. This includes:

- School children who were approved for free or reduced-price meals during the last month of the 2021-22 school year. Because the covered summer period is an extension of the school year, this includes children who graduate at the end of the school year.
- Children who are determined newly eligible for free or reduced-price school meals during the covered 2022 summer period. This would include students who submitted meal applications during the summer months (June 1, 2022 - August 16, 2022). These meal applications will not be processed until late August 2022. Please contact your student's school to determine if they are newly eligible for Summer K-12 P-EBT.

3. Who is NOT eligible for 2022 Summer K-12 P-EBT?

Children who meet any of the following criteria are **not** eligible for P-EBT:

- Students who were not approved for free or reduced-price meals or not enrolled in schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program for the 2021-22 school year.
- Students who were homeschooled for the 2021-22 school year.

4. How much is the SY 2021-2022 Summer K-12 P-EBT benefit amount?

The number of P-EBT benefit days equals the number of weekdays during the covered summer period. South Carolina adopted the U.S. standard for the length of the summer period which equals 55 days. The benefit amount per child is \$391.

5. Are 4K students eligible for Summer K-12 P-EBT?

Children who attend a 4K program in a CEP school or were approved for a free or reduced-price meals program for the 2021-22 school year are eligible for Summer K-12 P-EBT. Please check the list of participating schools on the DSS website. Children enrolled in 4K programs operated by private child care facilities are not eligible for 2022 Summer K-12 P-EBT. Children who received Children Under Six P-EBT Summer benefits are not eligible for 2022 Summer K-12 P-EBT.

6. Are Head Start children eligible for Summer K-12 P-EBT?

Children who attend a Head Start program in a CEP school or were enrolled in free or reduced-price meals program for the 2021-22 school year are eligible for Summer K-12 P-EBT. Please check the list of participating schools on the DSS website. Children enrolled in Head Start programs operated outside of a public school are not eligible for Summer K-12 P-EBT. Children who received Children Under Six P-EBT Summer benefits are not eligible for a Summer K-12 P-EBT.

7. Do I or my child have to be a citizen to be eligible for P-EBT?

No. Summer K-12 P-EBT benefits are for all children who are approved for free or reduced-price school meals.

8. When can I expect to receive Summer K-12 P-EBT benefits for my child?

P-EBT cards for 2022 Summer K-12 P-EBT benefits are expected to **mail out** after August 26, 2022. Due to the high volume of P-EBT cards entering the mailing stream, delivery times for Summer K-12 P-EBT cards will vary. Please allow a minimum of 15 business days, after the card's mailing, for card arrival.

South Carolina's **benefit issuance** schedule for Summer K-12 P-EBT is outlined below.

Benefit Time Period	Issuance Dates
Currently Eligible Students	Cards will be mailed after 08/26/2022
Newly Eligible Students	Cards will be mailed after 10/26/2022

9. Can I receive my child's P-EBT benefits faster by calling my county office?

Calls to local County DSS offices or to the State DSS office will not result in faster processing of P-EBT benefits. **Please do not call your local DSS County office with questions about P-EBT.**

10. What should I do if I feel my child should have received Summer K-12 P-EBT benefits but did not?

If your student does not receive Summer K-12 P-EBT benefits and they meet the eligible criteria outlined in Question #2, please contact your student's school or school district to determine the student's free or reduced meal status. ***DSS does not determine eligibility status for P-EBT benefits.***

11. What if an eligible household does not want to participate in the Summer K-12 P-EBT program?

If an eligible household receives a P-EBT card and does not want to participate in the program, the household should destroy the P-EBT card. The P-EBT card and food benefit **cannot be transferred** to anyone else or used by someone outside your household.

12. What can be purchased with the Summer K-12 P-EBT benefit?

Purchasing rules are the same for SNAP and Summer K-12 P-EBT. Summer K-12 P-EBT benefits can be used to purchase food for a household, such as:

- fresh, frozen, canned, or dried fruits and vegetables
- meat, poultry, fish, dairy products, eggs
- cereal, bread, pasta, rice
- any ingredients you use for cooking
- baby formula
- diabetic foods
- snack foods and non-alcoholic beverages
- seeds and plants for growing food at home

Summer K-12 P-EBT benefits CANNOT be used to buy:

- beer, wine, liquor, cigarettes, or tobacco
- vitamins, medicines, and supplements
- prepared foods, hot foods
- non-food items (pet foods, cleaning supplies, paper products, hygiene items, or cosmetics)

13. What retailers accept P-EBT?

P-EBT benefits can be used to purchase food items at retailers displaying a SNAP logo/signage. Find the closest retailer where you can use your benefits at:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer-locator>



14. When will my Summer K-12 P-EBT benefit expire?

P-EBT benefits expire 274 days after issuance.

15. How do I request a replacement card?

To check your balance or report your P-EBT card lost, stolen, or damaged, call 1-800-554-5268.

- 16. Do I have to use all my Summer K-12 P-EBT benefit when I get them?**
No. The benefit will carry over from month to month. Benefits not used within 274 days of issuance will be automatically removed from the card.
- 17. Do Summer K-12 P-EBT benefits replace summer feeding programs or other community feeding programs for children and families?**
No. The Summer K-12 P-EBT benefit is provided in addition to other meal programs; it does not replace them.
- 18. I am a grocery retailer interested in becoming an approved SNAP/P-EBT merchant. What do I need to do?**
Grocery retailers/food stores in SC who are interested in accepting SNAP/EBT must contact the USDA for approval. Visit online at:
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/apply-to-accept>.