COVID-19: Information and Latest Updates

State of Hawaii
Department of Human Services

HAWAIʻI TO PROVIDE FOOD PURCHASING ASSISTANCE FOR CHILDREN WHO RECEIVE FREE OR REDUCED-COST SCHOOL MEALS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Hawaiʻi to Provide Food Purchasing Assistance for Children Who Receive Free or Reduced-Cost School Meals

Honolulu, Hawaiʻi – The Hawaiʻi Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Hawaiʻi Child Nutrition Programs under the Hawaiʻi Department of Education announced today that families with children who are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals will receive temporary food purchasing assistance, due to the impact of school closures during the COVID-19 public health crisis.

What is P-EBT?

The Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) program is part of a food assistance plan approved by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, and authorized by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.

This temporary assistance program will provide Hawaiʻi P-EBT Pandemic School Meals Replacement Benefits to more than 93,000 students (Kindergarten – 12th Grade) receiving free or reduced-price school meals in Hawaiʻi, including almost 48,000 students already receiving SNAP benefits.

“The P-EBT program provides resources that give families healthy food options for children during

this public health and economic crisis," said DHS director, Pankaj Bhanot. "Together, in collaboration with the Department of Education, we are able to share this vital and timely information about the P-EBT program with Hawai'i families, statewide."

[Hawai'i Pandemic EBT Flyer – click here] [Hawai'i Pandemic EBT FAQs –click here] [Hawai'i Pandemic EBT Flyer and FAQs in Translated Languages – click here]

How Does this Work?

There are two ways the P-EBT will be distributed:

1. Eligible Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) households will have their March, April, and May P-EBT benefits automatically deposited to their existing Kokua EBT card. The P-EBT benefits can be used the same way as their Kokua EBT card and can also be used in the ***Da Bux*** program.
2. Students who receive free or reduced-price school meals but do not receive SNAP benefits will automatically receive a Hawai'i P-EBT card in the mail. The Hawai'i P-EBT card will be issued under the name of the oldest student in the household. Benefits for all eligible school-aged children in the home will be loaded onto this one Hawai'i P-EBT card. The Hawai'i P-EBT card can be used where EBT cards are accepted and can also be used in the ***Da Bux*** program.

Hawai'i households are eligible if they have children who are either enrolled for free or reduced-price school meals

OR

enrolled in a school that provides free meals to all students through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) or another provision.

A list of CEP schools can be found here:
http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/TeachingAndLearning/HealthAndNutrition/StudentHealthReso
(http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/TeachingAndLearning/HealthAndNutrition/StudentHealthReso

Do I need to apply for P-EBT?

No, households do not have to apply for P-EBT. A notification letter will be sent to eligible students' homes. If you believe there are eligible students in your household but you do not receive the P-EBT by July, 20, 2020, email **hi.pebt@dhs.hawaii.gov.**

What If I Had a Recent Change of Address or Will Have a Change of Address?

If you've recently moved or will be moving soon, please report your change of address to your child's school. DHS will receive the change of address from the Hawaii Department of Education.

How Much Will Families Receive?

Eligible families can receive up to the following amount for each child enrolled in school:

- $80 for March
- $147 for April
- $133 for May

Combined: $360 per child. Please note that this Pandemic EBT payment is a one-time supplement.

The amount received will be based on the month the eligible student was enrolled for free or reduced-price meals. If enrollment began prior to or during the month of March, then the eligible student receives all three months. If enrollment began in April, the student will receive benefits for April and May. If enrollment began in May, the eligible student receives May P-EBT only.

To learn more about applying for free or reduced-price meals, click here (http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/TeachingAndLearning/HealthAndNutrition/StudentHealthReso for more information.

The P-EBT benefits for each eligible child will be loaded on the Hawai‘i P-EBT card by mid-July.

DHS will continue to work with federal partners to provide assistance to Hawai‘i’s families in need. To apply for SNAP and Financial assistance, visit humanservices.hawaii.gov.

FOR QUESTIONS, EMAIL **hi.pebt@dhs.hawaii.gov**

To Check Your Child’s Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) Food Assistance Status –click here

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