# Delaware Households Affected by School Closings During Pandemic Will Receive Additional Temporary Food Benefits

## Eligible Families Will Be Reimbursed for Cost of Meals That Would Have Been Available in Schools

NEW CASTLE (March 29, 2021) – Delaware households with children affected by school closures during the COVID-19 public health emergency will receive additional temporary food-assistance benefits under the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) program. Eligible households will receive P-EBT benefits for each school day that their child did not receive meals at school during the current school year.

The state's Division of Social Services, collaborating with the state's Department of Education, will issue P-EBT benefits beginning today, March 29. Benefits will be available on recipients' EBT cards the day after they are issued. The dates that benefits will be issued to individual households depend on when the Division of Social Services receives eligibility and attendance data from each school. Some households may experience a delay in receiving benefits; benefits may become available one to two weeks from the first issuance date. The date range that households may receive monthly benefits is listed in the schedule below.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 extended P-EBT through the 2020-2021 school year. Delaware began issuing P-EBT benefits for the current school year to eligible households last September, to cover August and September 2020. The new benefits will cover October 2020 through June 2021 and will be issued using the following schedule:

| **P-EBT benefit month** | **Date benefits will be loaded to EBT cards** *(Households will receive one benefit issuance during each issuance period)* |
|---|---|
| October 2020 & November 2020 | March 29, 2021, to April 15, 2021 |
| December 2020 & January 2021 | April 22, 2021, to May 6, 2021 |
| February 2021 & March 2021 | May 13, 2021, to May 27, 2021 |
| April 2021 & May 2021 | June 3, 2021, to June 17, 2021 |
| June 2021 | July 1, 2021 |

***Please note:*** *These issuance date ranges may change. Check Delaware's P-EBT website for up-to-date information.*

P-EBT benefits may be used to purchase food at stores that accept SNAP EBT cards. SNAP households will have P-EBT benefits loaded to their existing SNAP EBT cards. Households that do not receive SNAP will have P-EBT benefits loaded to the P-EBT card that was sent to them in the spring or fall of 2020. Newly eligible non-SNAP households will receive a P-EBT card in the mail along with details on how to use the card.

A child is eligible for P-EBT benefits for the 2020-2021 school year if two conditions are met:

1. The child is certified to receive free or reduced-price meals or attends a Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) school where all students receive free meals through the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program, and
2. The child does not receive free or reduced-price meals at school because the school is closed or has been operating

with reduced attendance or hours for at least 5 consecutive days in the current school year.

Households will receive $6.82 for each school day that their child did not receive meals at school because the school was closed or the child was participating in remote learning. The P-EBT benefit amount equals the federal reimbursement rate for breakfast, lunch, and a snack of $6.82 per child per eligible school day. Households will receive P-EBT benefits for all eligible children in their home in monthly issuances. Households will not receive P-EBT for the days that their children attended school in-person and received meals at school.

The state estimates that it will issue $91.3 million in P-EBT benefits to approximately 93,000 children for school closures and reductions in attendance and hours from October 2020 through June 2021.

“The pandemic emergency has created significant health and educational challenges for vulnerable families in Delaware, with schools closed or operating with reduced hours,” said Department of Health and Social Services Secretary Molly Magarik. “This temporary assistance will help affected families continue to provide a nutritious diet, which is essential to their children’s health.”

Eligible households will receive written notification in the mail regarding P-EBT benefits for the 2020-2021 school year. Households do not need to take any action to receive P-EBT benefits. P-EBT eligibility is based on information received from Delaware schools.

Please contact the Division of Social Services at 1-866-843-7212 if you have questions about Delaware’s P-EBT Program.