Inside MDHHS

Budget & Finance

Office of Inspector General

Careers With MDHHS

Community & Volunteer Opportunities

County Offices

Equal Employment Opportunity

Executive Staff Bios

Reports & Statistics - Health Services

Hotlines

Legal

MDHHS Audit

Newsroom

Policy and Planning

Reports & Statistics - Human Services

MDHHS / INSIDE MDHHS / NEWSROOM

Michigan approved for food assistance for 810,000 children whose access to free or reduced-cost school meals is affected by COVID-19; More than $741 million in federal dollars will help families put food on the table

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Feb. 5, 2021

CONTACT: Bob Wheaton, 517-241-2112

LANSING, Mich. – Approximately 810,000 Michigan children whose access to nutritious school meals has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic will receive $741.6 million in assistance benefits that their families can use to pay for food at stores or online.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) are announcing that the state has gained federal approval for a second round of Pandemic-EBT benefits.

“The last thing that families should have to worry about during a pandemic is feeding their children,” Gov. Whitmer said. “I am happy that Michigan families will be able to count on this additional support to help them access nutritious meals during the ongoing pandemic. That’s why it’s so important that the legislature passes the COVID recovery plan I put forward that provides an additional $2.1 billion in food assistance as well as the much-needed support for vaccine distribution, small businesses, and getting our kids back in the classroom safely."

Students in grades pre-kindergarten through 12 are eligible if they qualify for free or reduced-price lunches at school and in-person learning is not available at their school or is not available on a full-time basis. Pandemic-EBT will provide another way for students who do not have in-person classes to access food – along with Michigan Department of Education (MDE) programs that provide meals to students at mobile and stationary locations.

Families will receive an estimated $127.53 monthly for each eligible child who has no in-person classes and attends a school that is fully virtual and about $77.06 for each eligible child who attends a school with a hybrid schedule of in-person and remote learning. Monthly benefits will vary based on the number of school days in each month.

Benefits are retroactive to September and will be paid through June. Payments will be paid automatically, so families do not need to apply to receive the assistance.

Households that already receive food assistance will receive the Pandemic-EBT payments on their Bridge Cards. Families that do not already receive food assistance will receive Pandemic-EBT cards in the mail that they can use to purchase food. Payments are expected to begin in late March. MDHHS is working in partnership with the MDE to collect information from local school districts that’s needed to issue the benefits.

Last school year, Michigan was the first state in the nation to gain approval of and distribute Pandemic-EBT benefits. New federal rules for approval of Round 2 funding for this school year delayed Michigan’s approval. President Joe Biden’s administration provided increased flexibility that allowed Michigan to be approved.

“Throughout the pandemic, MDHHS has been committed to providing easy access to food to families who have been impacted by the pandemic,” said MDHHS Director Elizabeth Hertel. “Approval of the second round of Pandemic-EBT payments is the latest example of how we can work with our federal partners to ease the burden on families who are in need.”

The food assistance benefits will go to Michigan families with students ages 5-18 who are enrolled in the MDE program for students eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.

“With waivers from USDA initiated by MDE, school districts across the state have distributed tens of millions of meals to children in approximately 2,000 mobile and stationary feeding operations since the pandemic began. Children need to be healthy and fed to be able to focus on learning,” said State Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice. “The P-EBT program supplements these school meals and helps enormously to feed our children across the state during this difficult time.”

The food assistance benefits will go to Michigan families with students ages 5-18 who are enrolled in the MDE program for students eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services received authorization from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Services to provide the additional food assistance.

Prior to receiving their EBT card, families will receive a letter from MDHHS describing how to use the card, how to set up a PIN and other information about food assistance benefits. The cards can be used much like a debit card for food purchased from Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) retailers.

You can find a list of SNAP retailers on the SNAP Retailers website. They also can use their benefits online to purchase food from Amazon, Walmart or Aldi. Information around coronavirus outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at Michigan.gov/Coronavirus and CDC.gov/Coronavirus.

###

Coronavirus Disease 2019

Online Services

- Child Welfare Licensing Online Complaint Form
- Report Welfare Fraud
- Report WIC Fraud
- MDHHS Policy Manuals
- Child Support
- MI Bridges: Apply for Assistance & Manage Your Account
- Submit a FOIA Request
- Birth, Death, Marriage, Divorce Certificates
- E-license - Renew Health Professional License Online!
- Medicaid Provider Manual
- Verify Health Professional License
- Prescription Drug & Opioid Abuse Prevention

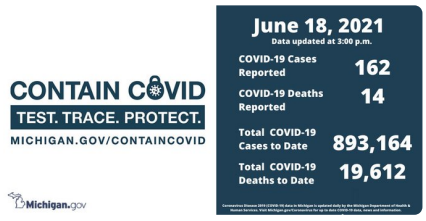
Join The Conversation

Tweets by @MichiganHHS

Michigan HHS Dept Retweeted

Michigan.gov
@migovernment

Stay Smart. Stay Safe. @MichiganHHS reports today, June 18, 2021, 162 new COVID-19 cases & 14 deaths. Michigan's total cases are now 893,164 & 19,612 deaths. Find the latest data & #COVID19 news at Michigan.gov/Coronavirus.



3h

Michigan HHS Dept Retweeted

Michigan.gov
@migovernment

Copyright 2021 State of Michigan