



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Arizona to Provide 765,000 Children with \$636 Million in Pandemic EBT Benefits

PHOENIX - (March 15, 2021) The Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) and the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) announced today the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) authorized DES to reintroduce Arizona P-EBT Benefits program and provide assistance to households with eligible children. It is estimated over \$636 million will be distributed to approximately 765,000 children across the state. This follows an initial \$200.8 million provided through the program in the summer of 2020. The Arizona P-EBT program is a partnership between DES, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), and the USDA Food and Nutrition Service.

“The \$200 million we were able to distribute last year when the Pandemic EBT program was established made an incredible impact on Arizona families,” said DES Director Michael Wisehart. “The inclusion of children under 6 enrolled in SNAP will help ensure all families in need of assistance are able to support the nutrition of their children. Thank you to Superintendent Hoffman and the Arizona Department of Education for their partnership in getting this critical assistance to children across the state.”

P-EBT is available for every child in the household that either:

- Is enrolled in the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act program in Arizona whose school is either closed or offering a full-time or part-time distance learning model due to the COVID-19 pandemic; OR
- Is under the age of 6 and receiving Nutrition Assistance (Child Care P-EBT)

P-EBT Benefits will be provided to an estimated 631,000 school children eligible for free or reduced-price school meals, covering the months of August 2020 through May 2021. Additionally, Child Care P-EBT will be provided to 134,000 SNAP-enrolled children under the age of 6, covering the months October 2020 through May 2021. DES anticipates it will begin distributing Child Care P-EBT mid-March, and distribution of P-EBT for school children is expected to begin mid-April.

The monthly benefit amount depends on the school's designated learning model (excluding holidays and breaks). A child can receive a full payment, partial payment, or no payment for each month covered by the program.

Households do NOT need to apply for P-EBT benefits. If the eligible family was issued a P-EBT card in 2020 or is currently receiving Nutrition Assistance and/or Cash Assistance, P-EBT benefits for the 2020/2021 school year will be added to their existing P-EBT or EBT card. Otherwise, eligible families will receive a pre-loaded Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card that can be used to purchase groceries.

P-EBT is a complement to the meals and snacks currently provided to children through the Child Nutrition Programs. Receiving a meal does NOT prevent a child from receiving P-EBT.

For additional information about P-EBT, please visit [our website](#).

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