



## **What is P-EBT?**

Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT) is a program to help families buy food for their children who normally would get free or reduced-price meals at school before the closures. The benefit for each eligible, school-age child is \$416, which covers the days schools were closed due to COVID-19. The funds will be available when you activate your card, which is similar to a bank card and protected with a Personal Identification Number (PIN).

You can use P-EBT benefits to purchase food items. You cannot, however, buy prepared foods, such as a rotisserie chicken or a hot meal. It is also against the rules to allow someone else to use your card.

## **Do I need to apply for P-EBT?**

No. An application is not necessary. If your family already receives SNAP, your P-EBT benefits will be added automatically to your Families First EBT card. If your household does not receive SNAP, an EBT card will be mailed to your house and your benefits will be available when you activate your card.

As long as you use a portion of your benefits each month, the funds will not expire. Once you use all the funds, keep the card. It is possible that benefits may be added at a later date.

## **When will I get my P-EBT benefits?**

P-EBT benefits are scheduled to be issued in June, but an exact date is not known at this time. Your one-time benefit will be available when you receive and activate your card.

## **How do I activate my P-EBT card?**

Instructions to activate your card are included in the envelope with your card. If you have any questions, call the number on the back of your P-EBT card.

## **Why did I only get one card when I have more children in school?**

Benefits for families are issued on the same card. If you have more than one child who received free or reduced-price school lunch, your card will contain benefits for all eligible children.

## **How do I use my card to purchase food?**

Before you begin shopping, make sure the store accepts the card. Look for the SNAP EBT image or visit the Using Your Benefits page on [NJSNAP.gov](https://www.njsnap.gov) for a list of stores that accept SNAP. Benefits can be used online at Amazon, Walmart, and at some ShopRite and The Fresh Grocer locations. Benefits cannot be used to pay for delivery or service fees. Be sure to confirm an online store delivers to your home address before ordering.

## **How do I get my balance?**

Go to [NJ FamiliesFirst](https://www.njfamiliesfirst.com) to create an account to view your current card balance and transaction history, as well as report lost or stolen cards. Call Customer Service at 1-800-997-3333 to use the automated phone system to get your balance. Or, check your last store receipt.

## **What if my EBT Card is lost, stolen or damaged?**

If your card has been lost, stolen or damaged, it is important to immediately report it online at [NJ FamiliesFirst](https://www.njfamiliesfirst.com) or by calling 1-800-997-3333. This will “freeze” your card so no one can use your benefits. After reporting it, contact your local board of social services for a replacement card. There may be a fee to replace the card.

## **Is P-EBT safe for immigrants to use?**

Yes. Immigration status is not factored into eligibility. If your child was receiving free or reduced-price lunch as of March 18, 2020, he/she should be eligible for P-EBT. Receiving P-EBT benefits will not affect the ‘public charge’ status for non-citizen households.

**If you have not received your card or have additional questions, call the New Jersey Department of Human Services customer service at 1-800-997-3333 or 1-800-792-9773.**

Source: New Jersey Department of Human Services