



NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

North Carolina State Plan for Pandemic EBT (P-EBT)

April 1, 2020

The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

- 1) **Type of Request:** Initial
- 2) **Primary Citation:** Families First Coronavirus Response Act
- 3) **State:** North Carolina
- 4) **Proposed Alternative Procedures:**

North Carolina proposes to provide P-EBT benefits to SNAP and non-SNAP households with children who have temporarily lost access to free or reduced-price school meals due to pandemic-related school closures. These households are eligible for P-EBT because they:

- Include an eligible child or children, who if not for the closure of their school during a public health emergency designation and due to concerns about a COVID-19 outbreak, would receive free or reduced-price school meals under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, as amended, and
- The child's school or district will be (or has been) closed for at least 5 consecutive days during a public health emergency designation and due to concerns about a COVID-19 outbreak.

The household allotment amount will be no less than the value of school meals at the free rate over the course of five (5) school days for each eligible child in the household. The value of the school meals is equal to the Federal reimbursement rate for breakfast and lunch at the free rate, as specified by USDA.

Verification of P-EBT Eligibility:

NC DHHS will utilize a file from the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) that contains a list of children who receive free or reduced lunch across the entire state of North Carolina. Contained in that file will be the following fields:

- School District Number
- District Name
- School Number
- School Name
- Student First Name
- Student Last Name
- Date of Birth
- Street Address
- City
- State
- Zipcode
- Phone Number
- Home Language

- Social Security Number (SSN)
- Parent First Name
- Parent Last Name
- Parent Address
- Active Student (Y/N)

Calculation of Household Allotments:

- NC DHHS plans to use the date range of school closures based on Governor Cooper’s Executive Order requiring school closures. Currently that began on March 16 and is scheduled to end on May 15th. However, that could be extended to a later date based on subsequent guidance.
- NC DHHS plans to issue P-EBT benefits based on the number of days schools were closed (excluding weekends and holidays) in a given service month, multiplied by the daily reimbursement rate for a free breakfast and a free lunch.
- The first benefit month will be for March (paid in April)
- The second benefit month will be for April (paid in late April or early May)
- The third benefit month will be for May (paid in late May or early June)
- Any additional benefit months will be submitted in an amended plan
- For each benefit month, the DPI – FNS/SNAP file match will be repeated in order to prevent unnecessary new EBT card mailings

Issuing P-EBT Benefits to Households:

NC DHHS will receive the Free or Reduced month recipient file from DPI and will match to current FNS/SNAP recipient records.

The following details what the process will be for those children in the DPI file who are found to match to existing FNS/SNAP active cases for a given P-EBT benefit month:

- The associated NC FAST case numbers for each child/group of siblings will be identified
- A batch file for the P-EBT payments will be generated based on the household’s existing EBT card/account information, the number of children in the household that had a match from the DPI file, and a calculated dollar amount based on the number of children in the household and the daily cost rate for school lunch
- That file will be submitted to NC DHHS’ EBT vendor and the total benefit will be loaded into that household’s EBT account.
- The estimated number of children we are expecting a current FNS/SNAP recipient match on is ~350,000

The following details what the process will be for those children in the DPI file who are found to **not** match to existing FNS/SNAP active cases for a given P-EBT benefit month:

- NC DHHS will utilize the data contained in the DPI file to roll confirmed sibling sets and groups of siblings into consolidated “household” records
- Those household records will then be batched to our EBT vendor to create new EBT accounts
- The calculated benefit amount for the associated benefit month will be loaded into the EBT cards via a batch file to the EBT vendor
- An EBT card along with a notice explaining the P-EBT program will be mailed to the household based on the address listed in the DPI file.
- The estimated number of children we are **not** expecting a current FNS/SNAP recipient match on is ~520,000

- NC DHHS is proposing NOT implementing an application process for P-EBT due to the readily available data from DPI.
- NC DHHS confirms that it has access to sufficient card stock on hand to successfully begin operations for the number of households listed below.
- Name and signature of head of household is kept on file as part of DPI's records for free and reduced lunch for non-FNS/SNAP children and is on record in the NC FAST system for existing FNS/SNAP children
- NC DHHS will conduct a public information campaign to alert those receiving benefits the purpose of P-EBT and how it is to be used
- NC DHHS agrees to complete the FNS-292 form on a timely basis in accordance with requirements as well as all other normally recurring SNAP reporting included the FNS 46 and 388 reports, on a timely basis in accordance with requirements.

5. Justification for Request: Coronavirus COVID-19

Affected Caseload (Monthly Estimates for Existing FNS/SNAP recipients)

- **Number of FNS/SNAP households receiving P-EBT Benefits:** ~200,000
 - **Number of FNS/SNAP children receiving P-EBT Benefits:** ~350,000
 - **Amount of P-EBT benefits to be issued to FNS/SNAP children:**
 - March 2020: \$27,930,000 (12 days * \$6.65 per day * 350,000 children)
 - April 2020: \$46,550,000 (20 days * \$6.65 per day * 350,000 children)
 - May 2020: \$25,602,500 (11 days * \$6.65 per day * 350,000 children)
- Total P-EBT Benefits Issued to existing FNS/SNAP children: \$100,082,500**

Affected Caseload (Monthly Estimates for Non-FNS/SNAP recipients)

- **Number of non-FNS/SNAP households receiving P-EBT Benefits:** ~365,000
 - **Number of non-FNS/SNAP children receiving P-EBT Benefits:** ~520,000
 - **Amount of P-EBT benefits to be issued to non-FNS/SNAP children:**
 - March 2020: \$41,496,000 (12 days * \$6.65 per day * 520,000 children)
 - April 2020: \$69,160,000 (20 days * \$6.65 per day * 520,000 children)
 - May 2020: \$38,038,000 (11 days * \$6.65 per day * 520,000 children)
- Total P-EBT Benefits Issued to non-FNS/SNAP children: \$148,694,000**

TOTAL P-EBT BENEFITS ISSUED TO ALL P-EBT CHILDREN (FNS/SNAP and NON FNS/SNAP):

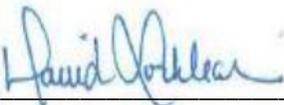
- **March 2020: \$69,426,000**
 - **April 2020: \$115,710,000**
 - **May 2020: \$63,640,500**
- TOTAL: \$248,776,500**

6. Anticipated Implementation Date: April 22, 2020 for both FNS/SNAP and non-FNS/SNAP children (focused first on March service month)

7. Signature and Title of Requesting SNAP and Child Nutrition State Agency Officials:

Signature 

Print Name and Title Director, School Nutrition and District Operations
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Signature 

Print Name and Title: David Locklear, Deputy Director of Economic and Family Services
Department of Health and Human Services

8. Date of Request: 4/1/2020