

May 20, 2020

Dear Parent(s) and/or Guardians(s),

The District of Columbia (the District) remains committed to ensuring that families with children who receive free and reduced-price meals continue to have access to healthy meals during school closures. This letter is to inform you that the District received approval from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to implement the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) provision in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. P-EBT provides additional food assistance to the families of children who receive free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). These families will receive food benefits to subsidize the cost of meals they would have normally received while at school in response to this public health emergency. P-EBT benefits are intended to cover breakfast and lunch and are valued at \$28.50 per week, per child. P-EBT will deliver an estimated \$26 million in federal food assistance to more than 68,000 children in the District.

Any District child who qualifies for free or reduced-price school meals will receive P-EBT benefits. This includes children in a school that provides free meals to all students. **Children whose families have experienced a change in income may also qualify for P-EBT, even if they have not previously received free or reduced-price meals.** These families should contact their school to complete a Free and Reduced-price Meal (FARM) application as soon as possible to ensure they can receive P-EBT if FARM-eligible. Newly FARM-eligible families will receive P-EBT for the month they are certified through June 19. FARM applications certified after June 19 will not be eligible for P-EBT.

P-EBT benefits will start being issued in May. For District children whose family receives Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits, an additional payment, on top of regular monthly benefits, will be automatically loaded onto the household's Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card. For District children whose family does not receive SNAP or TANF, or does not have an active EBT card, an EBT card loaded with P-EBT benefits, will be mailed to them. This new EBT card will need to be activated to access the funds. If these families do not want to use P-EBT, they must destroy the new EBT card they received in the mail.

Similar to SNAP benefits, P-EBT benefits may be used to purchase food at SNAP authorized retailers or online for delivery at Amazon: amazon.com/snap-ebt. Residents who receive P-EBT benefits can find their nearest SNAP authorized retailer by visiting fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer-locator.

Enclosed, please find an FAQ and information flyer about P-EBT. In addition, more information on the District's P-EBT program can be found online at dhs.dc.gov/p-ebt or by calling the P-EBT Call Center at (202) 868-6663, Monday – Friday from 7:30 am – 4:45 pm.