**Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) Communication Toolkit for District Use**

**What is P-EBT?**

Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) is a new federal program available to Colorado families whose children attend school districts that implement the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). P-EBT allows families to receive federal funding to purchase supplemental food to combat food insecurity caused by the COVID-19 outbreak. P-EBT provides families a supplemental monetary allotment equal to a free breakfast and lunch at a rate of $5.70/day or up to $279/per eligible child.

**Who qualifies for P-EBT?**

Families with students who receive free or reduced-price meals and attend a school site that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) are eligible to receive P-EBT. This also means families not currently eligible for free or reduced-price meals could potentially be eligible for P-EBT benefits depending on household size and income; including families with school-aged children that have recently lost income during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**How will P-EBT benefits be issued?**

Families who currently participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are automatically eligible for P-EBT and benefits will be loaded onto existing EBT cards without any action required. Families who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals but do **not** receive SNAP benefits will be required to apply for P-EBT. The P-EBT application will ask families to provide a state issued student ID (SASID), or local student ID for private schools, for their children. Schools and Districts will need to notify families about the P-EBT program and provide families with their SASID(s), or student IDs, so they can successfully complete the application.

The benefit of this program is substantial, and districts are encouraged to urge all eligible families to apply. This toolkit contains communication templates for districts to use when communicating with their families.

**What templates does this toolkit include?**

* Sample letter to households containing fields for student name and SASID**\***
* Sample robo-call script
* Sample text messages
* Sample Facebook posts for social media outreach
* Sample Twitter post for social media outreach
* Sample Instagram post for social media outreach
* Grab-N-Go bag stuffers (informational flyers)

**\*** *The SASID must be provided to families securely. Please do not post SASIDs or Student ID information on a public website or other medium. It is a best practice to only provide the SASID in the letter to households or secure online parent portal and urge families to contact the school directly to receive their SASID(s), or for private schools the student ID, in all other communication mediums.*

[Insert District Letterhead]

**Important Information Regarding Pandemic** **Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT)**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

You may have heard about a new program authorized by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) called Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer or P-EBT for short. This program intends to provide financial assistance to families of children eligible for free or reduced-price school meals who have lost access to food due to the school closures caused by COVID-19. The financial assistance will be distributed to eligible families on new or existing Colorado EBT cards. The average P-EBT benefit is $5.70/child per day or up to $279 per eligible child, retroactive to when school initially closed. [Optional language: This benefit is in addition to the grab-n-go meals that the district is currently offering at select locations (optional: provide list of locations).]

If your family is already participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and possesses an EBT card, the P-EBT benefits will automatically be loaded onto your card within the month of July 2020. **If your family is not currently enrolled in SNAP benefits, you must complete an application to receive P-EBT.**

Receiving these benefits will **not** affect your immigration or public charge status. All families who are eligible for P-EBT may receive it, regardless of immigration status. P-EBT is a pandemic emergency benefit based on free or reduced-price school meal eligibility, and similar to other benefits that the Department Homeland Security has stated that it is excluded from consideration in public charge. Household information that is used to determine eligibility is protected under both federal and state data privacy practices.

To successfully complete the P-EBT application, you will need your child(ren)’s State Assigned Student ID (SASID) number [option: change to student ID number for private schools].

**Best Practice and Encouraged Option:**

See below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

SASID [option: change to student ID number for private schools]: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Additional options:**

If you are interested in applying for P-EBT, contact [insert staff name, email and phone number] to obtain the required SASID [option: or student ID] information.

**OR**

[Provide instruction on how families can access the SASID, or student ID for private schools, within in their online parent portal.]

Upon approval, an EBT card with the qualifying amount will be mailed to you. To access the P-EBT application visit: [**https://www.colorado.gov/cdhs/p-ebt**](https://www.colorado.gov/cdhs/p-ebt).

For more information about P-EBT, please visit Colorado Department of Human Services’ Frequently Asked Questions [webpage](https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdhs/p-ebt). If you have further questions, please contact [pebt2020@state.co.us](mailto:pebt2020@state.co.us) and a representative will respond.

If you have other questions or need help, contact **[Name, Address, Phone Number, E-mail]**

Sincerely,

**[Signature]**

**Non-discrimination Statement:**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](USDA%20Program%20Discrimination%20Complaint%20Form), (AD-3027) found online at: <http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html>, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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**Sample Robo-Call Script:**

*Hello* [parent’s name]*.*

*This is an important message from* [school district name]*.*

*We believe you may be eligible to receive $279 per child to help feed your family since schools are closed due to COVID-19. Pandemic EBT, or P-EBT, is a new beneﬁt for families that usually receive free and reduced-price school meals. These P-EBT funds can be used to purchase food at stores that accept EBT.*

*Most families who currently receive SNAP benefits will see these funds automatically added to their accounts and no further action is needed.*

*Other families will need to complete a simple and quick online application in order to receive P-EBT. To complete this application, you must receive a state issued student ID, or SASID, from* [school district name]*.*

*Please contact us at* [district email address and/or phone number] *for more information about P-EBT and to receive your SASID [option: student ID].*

**Sample Text Messages:**

This is an important message from [school/school district name].

You may be eligible to receive up to $279 through Pandemic-EBT, the replacement for school meals, to help feed your child or children because schools closed early due to COVID-19.

For more information call [insert phone number], text [phone number, if this is an option] or visit [link].

Hello [parent’s name]. This is an important message from [school district name].

We believe you may be eligible to receive $279 per child to help feed your family, in addition to any grab-n-go meals you may be getting.

Because schools closed early due to COVID-19, Colorado is providing new food beneﬁts called Pandemic EBT, or P-EBT. Call [insert phone number], text [phone number, if this is an option] or visit [link] for more information.

**Sample Facebook Posts for Social Media Outreach:**

Does your child receive free or reduced-price school meals during the school year, or do you believe you may now qualify based on a recent income change? Pandemic-EBT, or P-EBT, can help you feed your family while schools are closed. You will receive a card with approximately $279 per eligible child that you can use to purchase food at stores that accept EBT. If you already receive SNAP benefits and are eligible for P-EBT, these funds will automatically load into your existing account. If you do not currently receive SNAP benefits, apply here for P-EBT today: [**https://www.colorado.gov/cdhs/p-ebt**](https://www.colorado.gov/cdhs/p-ebt)

Does your child receive free or reduced-price school breakfast or lunch during the school year, or you believe you many now qualify based on a recent income change? P-EBT can help you feed your family while schools are closed and fill the gap of those missing meals. Apply here today: [**https://www.colorado.gov/cdhs/p-ebt**](https://www.colorado.gov/cdhs/p-ebt)

**Sample Twitter Post for Social Media Outreach:**

Does your child receive free or reduced-price school meals during the school year, or you believe you may now be eligible based on a recent income change? Pandemic-EBT can help you feed your family while schools are closed. You will receive a card that you can use to purchase food. Apply here today:[**https://www.colorado.gov/cdhs/p-ebt**](https://www.colorado.gov/cdhs/p-ebt)

**Sample Instagram Post for Social Media Outreach:**

Get help buying food while schools are closed. #COVID19 Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) beneﬁts will be available for Colorado families with children who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Apply here: [**https://www.colorado.gov/cdhs/p-ebt**](https://www.colorado.gov/cdhs/p-ebt)

**Grab-N-Go Bag Stuffers:**

* These mini-flyers can be included in grab-n-go meals served through the Summer Food Service Program

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