

## **Good News! Stretch Your P-EBT Dollars with Double Up Food Bucks!**

For Colorado families with school-age children, a new food benefit called Pandemic EBT, or P-EBT, is here to help! P-EBT is available for families who qualify for free or reduced meals at school but missed it because of schools closing due to the COVID-19 pandemic; eligible households may receive up to \$279 per child that will support the family in creating healthy, wholesome meal options for kids who are now home during the school day.

Even more good news, P-EBT benefits can be used for Double Up Food Bucks! Check out [www.doubleupcolorado.org](http://www.doubleupcolorado.org) or text your zip code to 1-844-383-2399 to find participating locations so you can double your SNAP and P-EBT dollars and get FREE fruits and vegetables.

You can find more information on Double Up Food Bucks [here](#) and more information on P-EBT [here](#). Hunger Free Colorado is also hosting a webinar on June 30 with more info on P-EBT (Spanish interpretation provided). More info on the webinar [here](#).

### **More Info About Double Up Food Bucks**

See below for frequently asked questions and check out [the website](#) for more info.

#### **What is Double Up Food Bucks?**

With Double Up Food Bucks Colorado, participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or food assistance) will receive vouchers for up to an additional \$20 in Colorado-grown fruits and vegetables. When customers spend their SNAP benefits on their EBT card at participating farmers markets or select retailers, those food benefits will be matched dollar for dollar to be put toward Colorado-grown, fresh fruits and vegetables, up to \$20 per day.

#### **Where is Double Up Food Bucks accepted?**

Double Up Food Bucks is available at almost 100 locations around Colorado, from the farm to the supermarket. Check out [the website](#) or text your zip code to 1-844-383-2399 for locations near you.

#### **How does Double Up Food Bucks work?**

These [short videos](#) guide you through your purchase.

#### **What can customers buy with Double Up Food Bucks versus SNAP/Food Assistance Benefits?**

Customers can buy fresh, Colorado-grown fruits and vegetables with their Double Up Food Bucks. However, SNAP/food assistance dollars can be used to buy any edible food item, except for hot and ready items.

## Upcoming Webinar on P-EBT

### **Pandemic EBT Community Training Details**

Join the Colorado Department of Human Services, Colorado Department of Education and Hunger Free Colorado on Tuesday, June 30th to learn about an exciting new program that will soon be available to Colorado families with school-aged children!

**Date:** Tuesday, June 30th, 2020

**Time:** 3 - 4 PM (MST)

**Call Information:** [Register here](#) to receive Zoom information

For more information on P-EBT, visit [colorado.gov/cdhs/P-EBT](https://colorado.gov/cdhs/P-EBT).

*\*Spanish language interpretation will be provided. To access interpretation, participants will need to use the Zoom app (not a phone number) to join the webinar.*

### **More Info About P-EBT**

Please see below for Frequently Asked Questions from the Colorado Department of Human Services and [check out their website](#) for updates.

#### **What is Pandemic EBT (P-EBT)?**

For Colorado families figuring out how to secure food during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Colorado Department of Human Services and Department of Education have secured USDA approval to issue Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT) benefits to school-age children who would have received free or reduced-price lunches during the time that schools have been closed. Each household with a child receiving free or reduced-price lunches is eligible to receive an amount of \$5.70 per child per school day on a Colorado EBT card that will support the family in creating healthy, wholesome meal options for kids who are now home during the school day.

#### **Who qualifies for P-EBT?**

Households with students who receive free or reduced-price lunches, including through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and those attending a school that operates a Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program are eligible for P-EBT benefits. This also means students who were not already participating in the free or reduced-price lunch program could potentially be eligible for P-EBT depending on household size and income; this could be the case for families with school-aged children that have recently lost income during COVID-19. Key information on applying for P-EBT is anticipated to come directly from family's schools and school districts.

### **How do families get the benefits?**

If a family that is eligible is currently participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), no action is needed; benefits will be automatically issued for the school-aged children in the household. Families that currently do not participate in the SNAP program, and whose children attend a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program, will receive instructions and key information through the family's school or school district on how to receive those benefits in June.

- P-EBT benefits will be loaded onto an EBT card
- For the household. If a household already has a Colorado EBT card, the P-EBT benefits will be issued onto that card. If the household does not have an EBT card in their possession (either active or previously-used inactive cards), one will be issued by mail.
- P-EBT benefits will be issued as quickly as possible.
- Because P-EBT is a new program and statewide system upgrades must be made to issue P-EBT benefits, we are expecting P-EBT benefits will begin to be issued in June 2020. More information on an expected timeline will be available as P-EBT implementation progresses.

### **For what time period will benefits cover?**

- USDA has approved benefits to eligible students based on the average statewide school days that were missed in **March, April, and May**, which is a maximum of 49 days for Colorado.
  - Depending on specific student eligibility (for example, the student was not eligible for free or reduced-price lunch in March, but is eligible in April and May), the specific P-EBT allotment to the household will be prorated on a monthly basis.
- The 49-day breakdown is as follows:
  - March: 12 days
  - April: 22 days
  - May: 15 days

### **How much will be put on the card?**

- \$5.70 per child per school day (to the statewide
- maximum of 49 days, which would equal a one-time issuance of \$279 per eligible child to the EBT card). Benefits will be available for the household to access on the EBT card for one year.
  - If a student is determined to be eligible for only certain portions of the 49 days, the student's household will receive an amount prorated to the number of eligible days.

### **Will P-EBT interfere with any other programs I participate in, such as SNAP?**

No. P-EBT is a separate program that is designed to support the replacement of meals students would have received while at school. P-EBT benefits can be used in a similar way to SNAP benefits, but these are two different programs and sets of benefits which both can be accessed through the EBT card.

### **Do P-EBT benefits replace grab-and-go meal sites?**

No. P-EBT benefits will supplement the grab-and-go meal sites created in response to COVID-19 school closures. They do not replace them. Families can find a meal site in their community through CDE's resource list [here](#). We encourage families to use both resources.

### **Where do I get more information?**

If you are a household with children who receive free or reduced-price lunches through the NSLP, you will receive additional information and key details from your school or school district.

### **Can P-EBT benefits be used with Double Up Food Bucks as well?**

Yes, P-EBT is considered a SNAP benefit. Households can earn Double Up Food Bucks and can make qualifying purchases using P-EBT benefits. For more information on Double Up Food Bucks, please visit: <https://doubleupcolorado.org>

### **Where do I get more information?**

If you are a household with children that are not currently eligible for free or reduced-price lunches, but believe you may now be eligible due to changes in income, please contact your school or school district for information on how to apply. If you are a household with children who do not participate in the NSLP, but could be newly-eligible for free or reduced-price lunches at school based on COVID-19 household income changes and you have not yet received a communication from your child's school, please reach out to your child's school to confirm participation. If your child's school does not participate in free or reduced-price lunch or the NSLP, you may not qualify for the P-EBT benefit. Additional benefits and meal resources can be found through CDE's resource list [here](#) and Hunger Free Colorado's resource list [here](#). You can also send questions by email to [PEBT2020@state.co.us](mailto:PEBT2020@state.co.us).

**Important note regarding P-EBT benefits: The application page is not ready yet. More information will be provided on how to register once it is available.**

**If I get P-EBT benefits, will they be considered in public charge?**

No. All households 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.