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Governor Abbott, HHSC Announce \$1.4 Billion In Summer Pandemic Food Benefits For Texas Families

AUSTIN — Governor Greg Abbott today announced that the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) has received approval from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for a third round of federal Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) food benefits for families with children who have temporarily lost access to free or reduced-price school meals due to COVID-19.

Summer P-EBT, covering June through August, provides a one-time benefit of \$375 per eligible child and can be used in the same way as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food benefits to pay for groceries. The administration of summer P-EBT is a joint effort by HHSC, the Texas Department of Agriculture and the Texas Education Agency.

"Thank you to HHSC and USDA for working together to ensure Texas families can continue to put food on the table," said Governor Abbott. "This third round of pandemic food benefits will help us continue to provide access to nutritious food for both families and their children."

"As children across the state start going back to school, we're thankful we can provide this added benefit so Texans can provide nutritious food for their families," said Wayne Salter, HHS Deputy Executive Commissioner of Access and Eligibility Services.

In this third round of pandemic food benefits, HHSC received federal approval to provide more than \$1.4 billion in benefits to approximately 3.7 million eligible children in Texas. To date, HHSC has distributed approximately than \$4.7 billion in P-EBT food benefits to Texas families.

Summer P-EBT is for families with children, in

Families who previously received the 2020-21 school year P-EBT benefits will automatically receive the summer P-EBT benefits and do not need to take any action. Children born after August 1, 2014 who received SNAP food benefits at any time between June 2021 and August 2021 will automatically receive summer P-EBT benefits on their Lone Star Card. No action is required by these families.

Families that did not apply for [2020-2021 school year P-EBT](#) can still apply by [Sept. 13](#). If eligible for the school year P-EBT benefit, their children will automatically receive summer P-EBT as well.

Some children who were not eligible for 2020-21 school year P-EBT benefits, but attended a Texas school during the last month of the school year, may still be eligible for summer P-EBT. Schools and districts are sharing additional information with families about NSLP eligibility, including a reminder to complete the household application for free and reduced-price meals (NSLP form) by Aug. 28, 2021. Schools will provide the child's information to HHSC to issue summer P-EBT benefits.

Eligible families will receive summer P-EBT benefits in the fall. Visit hhs.texas.gov/pebt or call the P-EBT Call Center at 833-442-1255 to learn more.

About the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

SNAP provides nutrition benefits to supplement the food budget of families in need, so they can purchase healthy food and move toward self-sufficiency. In Texas, SNAP benefits are put onto the Lone Star Card (EBT card), which can be used just like a credit card at any store that accepts SNAP. Texas Health and Human Services administers the federal program throughout the state.

About the School Meal Programs

The federally funded School Meal Programs include the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and National School Lunch Program. The School Meal Programs serve over 5 million meals a day to Texas children in school and residential child care institutions. The School Meal Programs serve nutritious, low-cost or free meals to students in public and non-profit private schools in Texas. Meals must meet federal nutrition guidelines. The Texas Department of Agriculture administers SBP and NSLP in Texas.

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