

## **PEBT (Pandemic-EBT) Information**

\*Presented by Lexi Welch, Community Partnership Coordinator and Kendall Scott, Teen Parent Family Coach. *Although this comes from State employees, on behalf of the Department of Human Services, and information is derived from policy transmittals, it is not an absolute answer to each family's individual situation. Please visit <https://govstatus.egov.com/or-dhs-benefits> or email [EBTschoolmeals@dhsosha.state.or.us](mailto:EBTschoolmeals@dhsosha.state.or.us) for case-specific questions or concerns.*

PEBT benefits are intended to replace the free and reduced meals that children would be receiving if they were currently in school. The allotments are:

- March \$69.00
- April \$126.00
- May \$120.00
- June \$69.00

### **FAQ:**

- **Why are March and June benefits significantly lower than April/May?**
  - March benefits reflect the remainder of the month that statewide school closures went into effect as a result of COVID-19 concerns. June benefits reflect the original “summer break” that would have happened in mid-June.
- **Are these cash benefits or food benefits?**
  - These benefits are for food items only. Previous press releases incorrectly stated that these are cash benefits. PEBT benefits will work similarly to SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits.
  - Example: if you go to WinCo and purchase pasta, tomato sauce and toilet paper and these are all rung up, you would run your Oregon Trail/EBT card and select the food options first. This (if funds on card are sufficient), will cover the pasta and the tomato sauce. You will be left with a balance for the toilet paper which will need to be paid for via another payment method.
- **What do PEBT benefits cover and what do they not cover?**
  - PEBT Eligible items: bread, cereal, dairy, fruits, vegetables, meats, snack foods, seeds/plants which produce food to eat, non-alcoholic

- beverages such as juice, frozen food such as frozen meals/pizza, *some* bakery items (check with store), coffee, cooking oils, condiments.
- NOT eligible: alcohol products, tobacco products, vitamins/OTC medications, some energy drinks, **hot foods/made to eat in store foods** (i.e. hot pizza made in store, hot/premade deli food (including rotisserie chicken), in-store coffee shops), fast food establishment items, coffee-shop purchases, restaurants, pet food, cosmetics, cleaning supplies, grocery bag fees.
  - Neither of these lists are all-inclusive. Some items that are not on the lists may or may not be eligible to be purchased with food benefits.
- **If I applied May 15<sup>th</sup> and was approved, will I start receiving benefits in May or June?**
    - Once you have received your Oregon Trail Card, you will receive benefits for the month that you applied (in this case, May) and any remaining/eligible months
  - **A flyer that I saw earlier said that if I was already receiving SNAP benefits, and my kids were on free/reduced lunches, I would be receiving benefits in late May. Why have I not received these benefits yet?**
    - Due to technical/policy barriers, it has been decided that it would be most effective to issue benefits in June along with existing SNAP benefits. If you currently receive SNAP benefits, your allotment would be issued on the day of the last number of the “head of household” on the case’s Social Security Number. If the last number of your social is 0 or 1, your SNAP benefits, as well as PEBT benefits for March-June (\$384.00/eligible child) will be issued on June 1, 2020; from there it aligns with the last digit of your SSN (SSN ending in 0004 = SNAP + PEBT benefits 06/04/2020).
  - **Where do I apply for PEBT benefits if my kids were not receiving free and reduced lunches previously, but I think that I will qualify now?**
    - Through the Oregon Department of Education’s website, <https://www.ode.state.or.us/apps/FRLApp/Default>.
  - **How long will it take to find out if I am eligible?**
    - Per the Oregon Department of Education’s website, <https://www.ode.state.or.us/apps/FRLApp/Default>, “school district nutrition services eligibility officials have 10 working days to determine meal benefits for students”

- **Will P-EBT benefits be counted when determining public charge?**
  - No. P-EBT benefits are not considered in a public charge test.
  - <https://govstatus.egov.com/or-dhs-benefits>
- **Myself, a friend, or family member does not speak English, can DHS aid us in gathering information on SNAP or other assistance programs?**
  - Yes, each of our local offices is staffed with employees speaking a variety of languages. There will always most likely be a Spanish speaking Eligibility Worker available. If there is no employee available who speaks your language, each DHS office utilizes Language Link interpretation services in order to best serve Oregonians.

Useful websites:

- Oregon DHS Benefits and Assistance: <https://govstatus.egov.com/or-dhs-benefits>
- Confidential Household Information for Free and Reduced Price Meals: <https://www.ode.state.or.us/apps/FRLApp/Default>
- PEBT explanations in various languages: <https://oregonhunger.org/pandemic-ebt/>
- Additional FAQ: <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/childnutrition/Documents/FAQ%20-%20Parent%20-%20Website.pdf>