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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**THIRD ROUND OF P-EBT BENEFITS BEGIN TO ROLL-OUT IN APRIL 2021**

HONOLULU - The Hawai'i Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Hawai'i State Department of Education (HIDOE) announced that there will be a third round of Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer Program (P-EBT) benefits allocated to children who qualify for free or reduced-price school meals, or attend a Community Eligibility Provision school during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since Round 1 of P-EBT, DHS provided more than 97,000 eligible students with \$61 million in food assistance support.

There have been a number of changes to the P-EBT program since Round 2 so we ask families to thoroughly review the information below as well as the letter they will be receiving starting this week.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION...**

**What is P-EBT?**

The Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) program is food assistance approved by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, and authorized by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (P.L. 116-127) as amended by the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act (P.L. 116-159) and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116-260).

**Who is it for?**

- Students who are either enrolled for free or reduced-price school meals at a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) OR...
- Students who are enrolled in a school that provides free meals to all students through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) or another provision. See the link below for CEP school listing:

<http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/TeachingAndLearning/HealthAndNutrition/StudentHealthResources/Pages/CEP.aspx>

Important information from Hawaii Department of Human Services: There is no application for P-EBT benefits. Students that either enrolled for free or reduced-price school meals at a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), or Students who are enrolled in a school that provides free meals to all students through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) or another provision, are automatically eligible and enrolled for P-EBT through verification provided by the DOE and NSLP-participating Charter and Private schools.

Important Information from the Hawai'i Department of Education that will help families receive P-EBT benefits:

- If your child is in need and is NOT enrolled in the free and reduced-price school lunch program, (and you would like for them to receive P-EBT benefits) please enroll via EZMealApp.com if your child is attending a DOE school. For children attending a NSLP-participating Charter or Private school, please contact your school.

Note-Children under 6 years of age who are receiving SNAP benefits may also be eligible for P-EBT. The Department will provide further information on this population after the April issuance of P-EBT benefits for the school-aged children.

**How Does this Work?**

Eligible students will have their benefits issued to their own Hawaii P-EBT account that is accessible through, a Hawaii P-EBT card (white card with black lettering) or a Kokua EBT card.

For students that had received P-EBT benefits for August and September of the current 2020-21 school year, benefits continuing from October 2020 through the balance of the school year will be issued their P-EBT benefits to their existing P-EBT account and can be redeemed with their existing Hawaii P-EBT card or Kokua EBT card.

For students on SNAP that had received P-EBT benefits on their family's SNAP Kokua EBT account and card, a Hawaii P-EBT card will be mailed so that you can access benefits continuing from October 2020 through the balance of the school year.

For newly eligible students that have not received P-EBT for the 2020-21 school year, they will be mailed a Hawai'i P-EBT card.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Families new to the program that are mailed a Hawai'i P-EBT card will receive a card in the name of each eligible student. The SNAP and Hawai'i P-EBT cards can also be used in the Da Bux program.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If a replacement card is needed (Kokua EBT or Hawai'i P-EBT) please call the Fidelity Information Service (FIS) customer service at 1- 888-328-4292.

**How Much Will Students Receive?**

Students that had already received P-EBT benefits for the months of August and/or September are eligible to receive a retroactive payment for the increase to the daily meal rate that was authorized by President Biden in January 2021.

Depending on the official start date of the school, the retroactive increase for the month of August can vary. The following is the retroactive payment amounts for the months of August and September 2020:

August: \$1 – \$24  
September: \$25

For the months of October through the balance of the current 2020-21 school year, the amount an eligible student may be able to receive is dependent on the predominant learning model of the student’s school as reported by the Department of Education and NSLP-participating Charter and Private schools. Each month, a school will report the predominant learning model (100% in-person, blended or hybrid, or 100% distance learning). Depending on the learning model of the student’s school, a student will either not be eligible to receive P-EBT benefits, received half a month’s benefit amount, or receive a full month’s benefit amount. The monthly benefit amount per learning models are the following:

100% in-person learning = \$0, not eligible for PEBT  
Blended or Hybrid learning = \$72  
100% distance learning = \$143

**When will benefits be issued?**

The Hawai’i P-EBT benefits will be loaded to the Hawai’i P-EBT accounts beginning April 20, 2021. This first issuance will cover the retroactive increase payments for August and September, and for the benefit months of October – December. Beginning April 27, 2021 payments for the benefit months of January – March will be loaded. Payments for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year will be issued monthly, following this schedule:

<b><u>Benefit Month</u></b>	<b><u>Benefit Availability</u></b>
April 2021	May 17, 2021
May 2021	June 15, 2021

**Where can I check on my child’s P-EBT benefit status?**

Go to [humanservices.hawaii.gov](http://humanservices.hawaii.gov) and click on to the P-EBT status banner.

**Where can I call if I have more questions (such as where can I report a change of address)?**

Contact the P-EBT call center at 1-888-975-PEBT(7328), or send an email message to [hi.pebt@dhs.hawaii.gov](mailto:hi.pebt@dhs.hawaii.gov).

Round 3 P-EBT [FAQs](#) are listed on [humanservices.hawaii.gov](http://humanservices.hawaii.gov).

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