

Date: June 8, 2020

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Oregon disperses first wave of pandemic school meal benefits

Over 130,000 students began to receive more than \$50 million in benefits in first 30 days

(Salem, Ore.) – One month ago, Oregon received approval to implement Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT) benefits for students who had access to free meals through a school participating in the National School Lunch Program. This includes schools where all students receive free meals.

Families of 130,975 students will receive a total of \$50,294,400 from June 1 – June 9. This initial allotment is to students who currently receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and have been determined eligible by the Oregon Department of Education (ODE).

The next release of funds will begin in mid-June and continue through July. This release will reach eligible students who do not receive SNAP benefits and any students who were not identified on the first release who are in a SNAP household.

“This is the first time Oregon has implemented P-EBT,” stated Dan Haun, Self-Sufficiency Programs Director. “More than 150 staff will be issuing benefits and mailing cards to non-SNAP households to get these benefits to families as quickly as possible. Nutrition is critical to health and helping these families get the food they need is top priority.”

How the benefits are dispersed.

- Families currently receiving SNAP benefits will see the P-EBT benefits on their Oregon Trail Card.
- Families who previously had an Oregon Trail Card, including families who previously received Summer EBT benefits, will have the benefits loaded onto this card.
 - Families can find out if a card is still active by visiting <https://tinyurl.com/y5e3vy4v>.

- Families who are not currently receiving or have not received SNAP or Summer EBT benefits will receive an Oregon Trail Card in the mail.
 - Eligible non-SNAP households will receive a letter and a new card if there is no active one on file.

Most Oregon public school districts have submitted student information to ODE. ODE then sends this information to Self-Sufficiency Programs for processing. Parents can find out if their school has responded online at <https://bit.ly/2BtVhD5>, and check to see if DHS has issued benefits for your district by visiting <https://oralert.gov/benefits>. Updates to this list will begin in mid-June so families have a better idea of when they will receive their P-EBT card.

If a family does not receive their benefits or cards by August 15, they should reach out to the Pandemic-EBT team at ebt.schoolmeals@dhsosha.state.or.us or (503) 945-6481.

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