



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

September 9, 2020

To: Complex Area Superintendents
Principals
School Administrative Services Assistant
Registrars
Student Information System Clerks
School Food Services Branch
Communications Branch

From: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto
Superintendent

A blue ink signature of Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto.

Subject: **Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer Program**

The Hawai'i State Department of Education (HIDOE) and the Hawai'i Department of Human Services (DHS) have secured \$34 million to provide temporary food purchasing assistance to families with children who are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals due to the impact of school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This temporary food assistance program will provide Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) School Meal Replacement Benefits to more than 93,000 students receiving free or reduced-price school meals in Hawai'i, including nearly 48,000 students already receiving SNAP benefits.

During the 2019-20 school year, eligible families were provided up to \$360 per child due to school closures in March, April and May. This school year, families are eligible to receive up to \$225 per child for the months of August and September.

Families do not need to apply for P-EBT. The HIDOE will be responsible for qualifying families for P-EBT through its free or reduced-price school meals program for the 2020-2021 school year. The DHS will then distribute P-EBT cards to families based on the eligibility data provided by the HIDOE. Children who attend a Community Eligibility

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Provision school and direct-certification students will automatically be qualified for this program.

Eligible families will be directed to work with their school to ensure that their current primary mailing address is correct.

To receive the P-EBT cards, families must submit free and reduced-price school meals applications and address changes by the following deadlines:

- **September 15:** Deadline for hard-copy free and reduced-price school meal applications to the school (Schools to forward completed applications to the Office of Facilities and Operations - School Food Services Branch)
- **September 15:** Deadline to submit address changes to the school
- **September 21:** Deadline for [online](#) free and reduced-price school meals applications

Schools should be aware that there may be an increase in families contacting them to update their addresses as well as an increase in inquiries regarding this program. Schools can refer to [this FAQ](#) or to the [DHS website](#) for answers to any questions.

CMK:cm
Attachment

c: Phyllis Unebasami, Deputy Superintendent
Rodney Luke, Assistant Superintendent, Office of Strategy, Innovation and Performance
Randall Tanaka, Assistant Superintendent, Office of Facilities and Operations