



MEPD and TW Bulletin 22-19

Date: November 17, 2022

To: Eligibility Services Supervisors and Staff
Program Managers
Regional Directors
Regional Attorneys
Hearings Officers

From: Access and Eligibility Services Program Policy
State Office 2115

Subject: **1. Electronic Benefit Transfer Card Processing Primary
Cardholder Updates**
**2. COVID-19 Update: Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-
EBT) for Summer 2022**

The information in this bulletin will be included in a future handbook revision. Until the handbook is updated, staff must use the information in this bulletin. If you have any questions regarding the policy information in this bulletin, follow regional procedures.

Active bulletins are posted on the following websites:

- [Medicaid for the Elderly and People with Disabilities Handbook \(MEPDH\)](https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/mepd/policy-bulletins) at <https://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/mepd/policy-bulletins>;
- [Texas Works Handbook \(TWH\)](http://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins) at <http://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins>.

1. Electronic Benefit Transfer Card Processing Primary Cardholder Updates

Background

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) issues Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits via Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) to a recipient's Lone Star Card. When a household is certified, HHSC establishes an EBT account and issues a Lone Star Card to the primary cardholder (PCH). The process for updating PCH records is now integrated into the Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS).

Current Policy

[SNAP and TANF](#)

Staff complete [Form H1175](#), EBT Change Request, and give the completed form to EBT issuance staff to:

- split or merge PCH records ([TWH B-261.3](#), Splitting and Merging Primary Cardholder Records);
- update the PCH record ([TWH B-261.4](#), Updating a Primary Cardholder Record); or
- send SNAP priority benefit records. ([TWH B-261.5](#), Creating a SNAP Benefit Record)

New Policy

[SNAP and TANF](#)

Staff complete the **EBT Card Details** Logical Unit of Work (LUW) in TIERS to update PCH records. Staff manually complete Form H1175 to split or merge an EBT account. If TIERS becomes unavailable, staff use Form H1175 to send a priority benefit record to the EBT system.

Automation

Changes to TIERS are currently scheduled to be implemented with TIERS Release 113.2 on December 10, 2022.

Correspondence

Correspondence changes are not required.

Handbook

Updates to the MEPDH are not required.

The TWH is currently scheduled to be updated in the July 2023 revision.

Training

Training will be made available in PALMS titled R113.2 EBT Automation Phase III on Friday, December 2, 2022.

Effective Date

This policy is effective with the implementation of TIERS Release 113.2 currently scheduled for December 10, 2022.

2. COVID-19 Update: Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) for Summer 2022

Background

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (the ARP, P.L. 117-2) extends P-EBT to the summer of 2022 for children who were eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals during the 2021-2022 school year (SY 21-22) and children under age six in SNAP households.

In coordination with the Texas Department of Agriculture and the Texas Education Agency, HHSC received federal approval to operate the P-EBT program for Summer 2022 to provide eligible Texas families with P-EBT payments.

COVID-19 Policy

SNAP

P-EBT for Summer 2022 provides food benefits for families with children who:

- were eligible for free or reduced-priced meals through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) for the SY21-22 and were enrolled in school during the last month of the school year;
- became eligible for the NSLP by applying between July 1 and Aug. 29, 2022; or
- are receiving SNAP and have children under six years of age.

Benefit Amount

The benefit amount for Summer P-EBT is \$391 for each eligible child.

Application

There is no P-EBT application for Summer 2022.

Issuance

P-EBT benefits will be issued in two phases.

- The week of Nov. 28, 2022, P-EBT benefits will be issued for eligible children over six years of age.
- The week of Dec. 12, 2022, P-EBT benefits will be issued for families receiving SNAP with children under six years of age.

Households who currently receive SNAP will receive the P-EBT benefits loaded onto their current Lone Star Card.

Non-SNAP households who previously received P-EBT will receive the P-EBT benefits for the Summer 2022 period on their existing P-EBT Card. Households who

no longer have their card can call the Lone Star Help Desk at 800-777-7328 for a replacement.

Non-SNAP households who have never received P-EBT benefits will receive a letter informing them about their eligibility. The letter will include a unique, six-character alphabetic claim code beside the child's name. These households can redeem their P-EBT benefits by creating an account on the YourTexasBenefits.com website or by calling the P-EBT Call Center at 833-442-1255 and providing the claim code(s) for their child(ren). Households have 90 days to claim their benefits and will receive a P-EBT Card in the mail.

Note: P-EBT benefits can be used in the same manner as SNAP benefits following [TWH A-1554](#), Use of SNAP Benefits, and online through authorized FNS retailers, following policy in [MEPD and TW Bulletin 20-12, SNAP Online Purchasing Pilot, released on May 12, 2020](#). However, P-EBT benefits are not considered SNAP benefits.

Staff Procedures

No staff action is required at this time.

If staff receive questions about P-EBT, FAQs have been posted to the following HHSC webpage: hhs.texas.gov/pebt. Families with additional questions about P-EBT should be referred to the hhs.texas.gov/pebt webpage for information or to the P-EBT Call Center at 833-442-1255, which is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Central Time).

Automation

P-EBT benefits will be issued to the household's current Lone Star or P-EBT Card beginning Nov. 28, 2022, for school-age children and between Dec. 12 – Dec. 16, 2022, for children under six in families receiving SNAP.

P-EBT benefits for non-SNAP households who have never received P-EBT benefits will be processed after they complete the claim code process through YourTexasBenefits.com or contact the P-EBT Call Center.

Correspondence

Correspondence changes are not required.

Handbook

Handbook updates are not required.

Training

Training is not required.

Effective Date

This policy is effective with the release of this bulletin.