

2025 Summer EBT Program

Guidance for CEP/Provision and Private Schools

What is the S-EBT Program?

- Annual program that provides food assistance to households with school-age children who are eligible for free or reduced-priced school meals during the summer when they don't have access to meals at school.
- This program is a partnership between the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, and the USDA, Food and Nutrition Services.

What is the benefit?

- Each eligible student will receive an EBT card loaded with the full amount of the benefit. \$120 per child.
- S-EBT cards are mailed to each eligible child.
- Benefits can be used just like SNAP benefits.
- Benefits expire 122 days after issuance.

How are children determined eligible?

- **Streamline Certification (automatically enrolled)**

- Children are determined eligible, through data collection, for benefits without having to fill out a S-EBT Alternative Application.
- NO APPLICATION NECESSARY

- **S-EBT Alternative Application**

- This eligibility method is ONLY for those students who are not Directly Certified or determined eligible for free or reduced-price meals based on a household income application.
- The SEBT portal will be open soon for those households needing to apply.
- The SEBT Alternative Application is currently available on our website until the portal is live.
- NDDPI processes S-EBT applications

Streamlined Certification – DATA Collection

NDDPI and *NDHHS* will gather data for all children who are:

- Attending an NSLP school, **AND** eligible for federal free or reduced-price meals (at PRIVATE schools this excludes those eligible for State 200) or
- Receiving SNAP, Medicaid, TANF, or FDPIR benefits between the ages of 7-16, or
- Experiencing homelessness or is a migrant student or is in foster care. (Data is collected is STARS)
- ***The goal is to streamline certify as many children as possible to circumvent the application process.***

DATA Collection

How does NDDPI and NDHHS get the data for Streamlined Certification?

- NDDPI gathers school enrollment data from STARS
- For schools not using STARS, NDDPI will request enrollment information for all children including those that have been determined eligible for free or reduced-price meals through the NSLP application process or through DC.
- Critical data includes:
 - **Student Info:** Name, date of birth, NSLP eligibility status
 - **Parent/guardian Info:** Primary parent or guardian name, email address, mailing address and phone number

Challenges with DATA Collection

Two of the biggest challenges faced so far with data:

- **School data with errors** – mailing address, children birth dates, email and phone contact information.
- **Returned cards** – due to incorrect or incomplete addresses, physical address vs mailing address

Streamlined Certification and S-EBT Applications - Parent/guardian Contact Information

- All addresses will be run through the **US Postal Service National Change of Address Database**
- Last year, more than 4,000 were found to be undeliverable
- Address problems:
 - Address doesn't exist
 - Addressee not registered with USPS at address
 - Apartment, unit, lot numbers, etc. missing from mailing address
 - Physical address given instead of mailing address (PO Box)
- All data uploaded into the SEBT Portal
- Upon notice of eligibility for S-EBT benefits, the parent/guardian listed will be sent a unique link to access the portal for each student listed in their household.
- Final check for address errors that can be corrected before benefits are issued starting May 1.
- Cards will not be forwarded and are returned to NDHHS for address correction then remailed.
- **Benefits could be delayed,** and participants only have 122 days to use the benefit. Each bad address takes a minimum of 21 days to potentially get back to the client.

Communication to Families

How can I help ensure eligible children receive this benefit?

Communication to families and students at your school (two categories):

- **Directly certified students** – Streamlined certified for SEBT
- **All other students** – who may be income eligible but who are not directly certified

Communication to Families

How can I determine which students fit in which category?

Schools with access to STARS can use enrollment data to determine which students would be considered streamlined certified for S-EBT and those that would need to apply. (Lunch status will come from Power School)

Coming SOON! We will provide you with communication templates (letters to households, emails, texts, etc.) specific to each category of students.

Communication to Families

What would focused communication direct to families include?

- Families who need to complete a S-EBT application should receive guidance on how to apply through the S-EBT portal.
- Families who are streamlined certified for S-EBT should receive guidance on NOT needing to apply for S-EBT and how to access the S-EBT portal to review contact information when they receive a notice of eligibility email.

Communication to Families

How else can I ensure that families are aware of the S-EBT program?

Share general S-EBT program information through:

- Emails
- School Websites
- Social media
- Newsletters
- Menus
- NDDPI can provide schools with outreach materials and program links

*Be prepared to refer families to the S-EBT email when there are program questions or concerns: **NDSEBT@nd.gov***

Communication to Internal School Staff

How can other departments within my school help ensure eligible children receive S-EBT benefits?

- Share S-EBT information with:
 - School administration and foodservice personnel
 - Cross communication between those responsible for food service and administration
- Have a conversation and share S-EBT program information with school staff who work with homeless and migrant students.
- Visit with your school counselors to make them aware of benefits and assist students if needed.

Communication with NDDPI

Who is the main contact at the school who can assist NDDPI in obtaining information for SEBT?

- Enrollment and demographic information
- Students eligible for free and reduced-price meals

***NDDPI will put out a survey to collect this contact information!**

THANK YOU!

Meet the NDDPI S-EBT Team:

Lynelle Johnson

Scott Egge

Melissa Anderson

Kayla Ekart

S-EBT Office Hours