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## PRESS RELEASE

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# DHS ANNOUNCES SUMMER 2022 PANDEMIC ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFER (P-EBT) FOR ELIGIBLE SCHOOL CHILDREN

**U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS** - The VI Department of Human Services (DHS) today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) has approved the Virgin Islands 2022 Summer Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) Plan for **eligible** School Children.

Summer P-EBT benefits will be issued through the U.S. Virgin Islands' Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) EBT card system to households with eligible children who were enrolled in USVI public and private schools during the last month of the 2022 school year, (May 2022) **which** participated in the National School Lunch Program. DHS will begin issuing Summer P-EBT benefits to eligible school children on Tuesday, October 11, 2022.

### What is SUMMER 2022 P-EBT?

P-EBT was funded by the Family First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA as amended by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Benefits are available for all Virgin Islands SNAP and non-SNAP households with children who were enrolled in locally registered public, private, and parochial schools, grades (K – 12) who have temporarily lost access to free meals due to pandemic-related public and private school closures or due to Covid related absences.

Summer 2022 P-EBT is an extension to the FNS State approved plan to operate Pandemic EBT for eligible school children during Summer 2022. The benefit provides food assistance via an Electronic Benefit Card that can be used in participating grocery stores and convenience stores for food items. Unlike regular SNAP, which is renewable based on eligibility, Summer P-EBT is a one-time benefit issuance for households with eligible children who were enrolled in in USVI public, private, and parochial schools, which **participated in the National School Lunch Program**, in May 2022, effectively the last month of the 2021/2022 school year.

Commissioner Causey-Gomez stated, *"I am excited for DHS to be able to issue this one-time Summer P-EBT Benefits of \$455.00 to all eligible children in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Even though we are seeing lower numbers of COVID positive cases in both districts, we know that families are still experiencing residual financial challenges because of the Pandemic. This year's issuance of Summer P-EBT will give some additional help to our families with children to avoid food insecurity. I am thankful for the continued above and beyond services our Division of Family Assistance provides to our Virgin Islanders."*

## Who is eligible for Summer 2022 P-EBT?

### School-Age Children

- a. All students (K through Grade 12) who were enrolled in USVI public, private, and parochial schools, which participated in the National School Lunch Program during the month of May 2022.
- b. Students will receive Summer P-EBT across all learning modes: In- Person, Full Virtual or Hybrid-Mix of Virtual and In-Person.
- c. There is no application process. The Virgin Islands Department of Education and eligible private or parochial schools provided DHS the names of students during the month of May 2022.

## How will the Summer 2022 P-EBT be issued and how much will you receive?

1. For eligible children who currently receive Regular SNAP, benefits will be loaded on the household's existing EBT card.
2. For eligible children who **do not** receive SNAP but were issued a card for P-EBT in the past rounds, their P-EBT benefits will be automatically loaded to those cards.
3. If you lost or damaged your P-EBT Card, contact the P-EBT hotline at (340) 772-7120, email [pebt@dhs.vi.gov](mailto:pebt@dhs.vi.gov) or come to the DFA Issuance Offices located at Knud Hansen Complex (St. Thomas) or DHS Mars Hill to pick up a card. Picture IDs are required.
4. **For new, eligible Non-SNAP Children:** New P-EBT Cards will be mailed to the addresses provided by the parents or guardians to
  - a. The card will be issued in the student's name. Households with more than one eligible student will receive multiple cards.
  - b. Instructions will be provided on how to set-up and utilize the card to access their benefits.
5. DHS will issue P-EBT benefits for SNAP and Non-SNAP school children beginning *October 11, 2022*.
6. School children who will receive Summer P-EBT must have been enrolled in eligible Virgin Islands public, private, and parochial schools during May of 2022. **Note:** If you were not officially enrolled in school during May of 2022, you will **not** receive Summer P-EBT.
7. **Please note that the amount being issued to children for Summer 2022 PEBT is a one-time payment of \$455.00.**
8. Friendly Reminder:
  - Summer P-EBT benefits can only be used to purchase food items at the stores of authorized SNAP retailers.
  - Summer P-EBT benefits are not transferrable! You must destroy the card if you do not want the benefits.

**For more information about P-EBT, visit the DHS website at [www.dhs.gov.vi](http://www.dhs.gov.vi) or families may call the P-EBT Customer Service Number (340)772-7120 or email [pebt@dhs.vi.gov](mailto:pebt@dhs.vi.gov) with the subject P-EBT.**

The Department of Human Services (VIDHS) exists to provide social services to members in our community with diverse needs. In times of national uncertainty and hardship we act as a safety-net and exist to inspire hope and empower change through non-judgmental, quality delivery of needed services and resources. Please visit the Department of Human Services website, [www.dhs.gov.vi](http://www.dhs.gov.vi) for more information. For general information, please visit the Department of Human Services website, [www.dhs.gov.vi](http://www.dhs.gov.vi) or on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/usvidhs>).

The Bryan-Roach Administration is investing in the Territory's people, infrastructure, and future through transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in the government, and ensuring that recovery projects are completed as quickly as possible. Visit [transparency.vi.gov](http://transparency.vi.gov).

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