

Student Eligibility for Free or Reduced-price Meal Benefits Through the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (S-EBT) Program

The S-EBT is a permanent, nationwide program that began in summer 2024. It was established under the [Consolidated Appropriations Act](#) passed in December 2022. S-EBT gives families with children extra benefits, like SNAP, to help pay for food in the summer. S-EBT benefits can also determine a student to be eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

Households that submit an application for free or reduced-price meals/S-EBT and are approved for S-EBT benefits are also eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. To help local educational agencies (LEAs) identify students eligible through S-EBT, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) will include these students in the [Direct Certification \(DC\) web application](#) starting in school year 2025-26. To support this update, the two new codes below have been added to the Direct Certification S-EBT list.

- FE = Free S-EBT
- RE = Reduced S-EBT

LEAs should notify and work with their point-of-sales (POS) software company regarding these changes and the two new categories.

Although FE and RE students will appear in the DC web application, they are not considered directly certified because their eligibility was determined through a household-submitted application rather than automatic data matching.

Requirements and Guidance

- LEAs are required to issue a parent/guardian notification letter to households where a student has been determined eligible based on a FE or RE status. The parent/guardian notification letters are available in the "[Parent and Guardian Notification Letters](#)" section of the CSDE's Eligibility for Free and Reduced-price Meals and Free Milk in School Nutrition Programs webpage.
- The FE or RE codes are **not** considered to be directly certified since an application was submitted.
- A student with a code of FE cannot count toward a school's Identified Student Percentage (ISP) for the purposes of the Community Eligibility Program.
- Students with these codes are not subject to LEA verification and are not part of the verification pool selected on October 1.

Student Eligibility for Free or Reduced-price Meal Benefits Through the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (S-EBT) Program

- FE and RE free and reduced-price eligibility do not automatically extend to other children in the household. There may be cases where a sibling's name does not appear on the Direct Certification S-EBT list, even though they live in the same household as a student identified as FE or RE on the list. In such situations, free or reduced-price benefits must not be automatically applied to the sibling whose name is missing. When this occurs, the determining official should contact the CSDE's S-EBT Coordinator for guidance (refer to ["Questions"](#) in this document).
- S-EBT letters cannot be used as documentation for free or reduced-price eligibility if the household's NSLP application was selected for verification. This is because an S-EBT letter does not always confer eligibility for free and reduced-price lunches due to differences in requirements for providing social security number information.

Hierarchy of Eligibility

As a reminder, a hierarchy of benefits applies to the Direct Certification S-EBT list.

1. **FS (SNAP benefits):** Free benefits extend to all children in the household.
2. **AF (Temporary Family Assistance [TFA]):** Free benefits extend to all children in the household.
3. **OT (other, foster child):** Free benefits do not extend to all children in the household.
4. **FM (free Medicaid):** Free benefits extend to all children in the household.
5. **RM (reduced Medicaid):** Reduced-price benefits extend to all children in the household.
6. **FE (S-EBT free application):** Refer to the Requirements and Guidance above for extension of benefits.
7. **RE (S-EBT reduced-price application):** Refer to the Requirements and Guidance above for extension of benefits.

Note: Since FE and RE determinations are S-EBT applications, they would be considered lower on the hierarchy.

Student Eligibility for Free or Reduced-price Meal Benefits Through the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (S-EBT) Program

Important Reminder

Do not send any student personal information via email. Only the SASID number and date of birth are permitted to be shared through email.

Questions

Questions regarding S-EBT and student free and reduced-price meal benefits may be directed to the CSDE's S-EBT Coordinator, David Donovan, at david.donovan@ct.gov or 860-807-2013.

For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Direct Certification for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage and [S-EBT](#) webpage, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) at the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841. This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/directcert/eligibility_fr_meals_through_sebt.pdf.



Student Eligibility for Free or Reduced-price Meal Benefits Through the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (S-EBT) Program

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf> from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race; color; religious creed; age; sex; pregnancy; sexual orientation; workplace hazards to reproductive systems, gender identity or expression; marital status; national origin; ancestry; retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, intellectual disability; genetic information; learning disability; physical disability (including, but not limited to, blindness); mental disability (past/present history thereof); military or veteran status; status as a victim of domestic violence; or criminal record in state employment, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes. Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Attorney Louis Todisco, Connecticut State Department of Education, by mail 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, CT 06103-1841; or by telephone 860-713-6594; or by email louis.todisco@ct.gov