Deadline extended for pandemic food benefits for families affected by Covid-19 school closures

Greg Abbott announced on June 29, 2020, that the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) is extending the application deadline for the Pandemic-Electronic Benefit Transfer program (P-EBT) to July 31. Extending the deadline will help ensure eligible families have time to apply for this one-time food benefit.

P-EBT is a one-time benefit of \$285 per eligible child and can be used in the same way as Nutrition Supplemental Assistance Program (SNAP) food benefits to pay for groceries. Eligible families include those with children who lost access to free or reduced-price school meals through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) due to school closures.

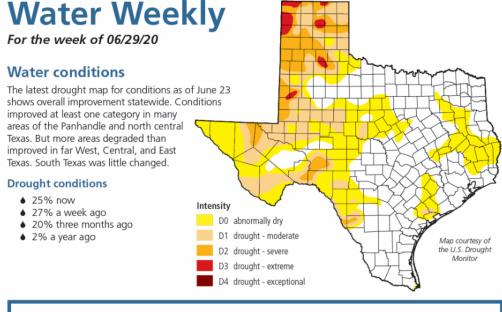
"The extension of the P-EBT deadline helps ensure that Texans have time to apply for this program and provide nutritious food to their families as the state continues to combat COVID-19," said Governor Abbott. "Ensuring access to healthy food in our communities is an important part of our response to this pandemic."

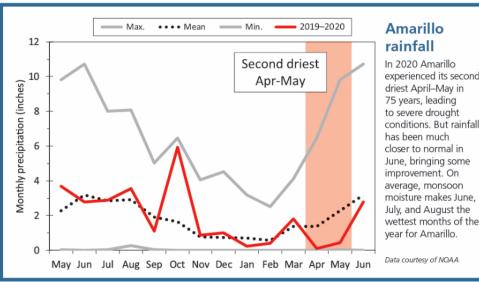
"We remain committed to ensuring access to healthy and nutritious foods for eligible Texans, and P-EBT provides that to those who need it most," said HHS Access and Eligibility Deputy Executive Commissioner Wayne Salter. "This extension provides more time for families to apply for this emergency assistance."

More than three million children in Texas were certified to receive free or reduced-price meals at school during the 2019-2020 school year. Families who are eligible for P-EBT were notified by their school districts in May. After completing the online application, families receive their benefits on a new Texas P-EBT card in the mail.

HHSC partnered with the Department Agriculture and the Texas Education Agency to launch the \$1 billion federal program on June 1 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. To date, nearly \$700 million in P-EBT has been issued to families, benefiting more than 2.5 million children.

Visit hhs.texas.gov/pebt to learn more about P-EBT. For questions regarding eligibility or to learn more, people may also contact the P-EBT Call Center 833-613-6220, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Central Standard Time. When applying, it is especially important to include a valid phone number on their application. HHSC staff may need to call families to get additional information approve P-EBT benefits.





In 2020 Amarillo experienced its second driest April-May in 75 years, leading to severe drought conditions. But rainfall has been much closer to normal in June, bringing some improvement. On average, monsoon moisture makes June, July, and August the

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