

**S-EBT**

2024-2025 Instructions to CSI Schools

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# **General Overview**

## Purpose

* Follow the instructions in this document to successfully complete this collection.
* All information provided below is new for this year.
* Send S-EBT related questions to submissions\_csi@csi.state.co.us.

## Program Transition

* The **Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer program (S-EBT)** began during the 23-24 school year.
* It replaced the Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) and is now a permanent annual collection taking place each spring.
* The transition is based on the passing of state legislation ([SB23B-002](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23b-002)).

## Program Details

* This federal program provides households of students who participate in school meals through the National School Lunch Program with:
	+ For 24-25, the benefit award is $40 per child (up to a maximum benefit of $120).
	+ Benefits are provided during the summer months when school is not in session.
	+ Ensures students have access to meals when school meals are unavailable.
* **Note:** Eligibility for benefits may extend to students not attending a school participating in federal school meal programs. More detail on this is provided below.

## Program Participation & Expectations

* The S-EBT collection is mandatory for all CSI schools.
* **All students enrolled during the school year up through February 25, 2025, should be reported regardless of their FRL status for the initial submission.**
* **More detail on the FRL status to submit is noted in the SIS Prep information in the File Submission Process section below.**
* Students enrolled after February 25 can be submitted during a corrections period expected to take place May 19, 2025 - September 3, 2025.
* Because it is the goal of the USDA to have Summer EBT benefits issued at the BEGINNING of the summer, it is not feasible to use existing Student End of Year Data.
* S-EBT benefits are expected to be issued in May 2025.
	+ Families will receive a notice letter included with their S-EBT card or mailed to them as part of auto-issuance which will include instructions for destroying the card and **opting out of the actual benefits** should they wish to decline.

## Eligible Students

1. **Students eligible through Streamlined Certification include:**
	1. Students who have been **directly certified** because of their participation in other public assistance programs, including SNAP, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), and Medicaid.
	2. Students who are categorically eligible for free or reduced-price meals based on their participation in Head Start, or because of their homeless, foster, migrant, or runaway status. This is referred to as “Other Source Categorical Eligibility”.
	3. Students who have already been approved for **free or reduced**-price meals through direct certification, categorical eligibility, or by filling out a federal school meals application (NSLP participating schools) **are automatically eligible** for Summer EBT and will receive benefits without further application.

**Special Notes**:

* FRL eligibilities based on **carryover status** at the start of the current school year do not count toward S-EBT eligibility. Therefore, schools should not report carryover statuses in their S-EBT file even if it was the highest eligibility for the current school year.
* **CEP students** are not automatically eligible for the S-EBT benefits. The following points apply to the 23-24 school year only.
	+ **Students at CEP schools** must individually meet FRL eligibility requirements by direct certification, categorical eligibility, or completing a FEDs form.
* CDE has clarified that students attending a non-NSLP participating school are not eligible for benefits unless they are found to be directly certified.
* Students not currently enrolled at an NSLP school but were enrolled at one at some point in the current school and were free or reduced lunch at the NSLP school will be eligible for benefits.
* Separate benefit cards for one student cannot be issued. Only one primary parent/guardian can be reported. Schools should use the parent/guardian contact and mailing address that they send official mail to.
1. **Students eligible through alternative income forms:**

Students not eligible through the pathways listed in #1 above must apply for Summer EBT benefits by completing either:

* 1. A federal meal application for NSLP participating schools.
	2. A free and reduced-price meal program or family economic data survey (FEDS form).
	3. CSI schools should ensure families complete the applicable forms, if not already done so, **by February 25, 2025, if possible.**

**For 24-25**: students becoming eligible after the initial submission closes and before the end of the school year will need to be submitted during the corrections period.

# **Timeline & Deadlines**

## Collection Basics

* CSI schools will complete this collection similarly to other state collections by following these basic steps:
	+ Prepping their SIS to ensure student data is complete and accurate.
	+ Submitting an S-EBT data file.
	+ Working with the CSI data team staff to clear errors
	+ Signing a certification form confirming the accuracy of the data.

(More information on the general data submissions process is available in the Data Submissions Handbook linked on the CSI [General Resources webpage](https://resources.csi.state.co.us/general-submissions/).)

## Deadlines

* CSI school deadlines are available in the current year **Data Submissions Calendar** linked on the CSI [General Resources webpage](https://resources.csi.state.co.us/general-submissions/).
* There will be:
	+ - An initial submission deadline – February 3, 2025
		- Deadline for clearing errors – February 20, 2025
		- Deadline for submitting a signed certification form – February 25, 2025

## Stay Informed

* Watch the **Weekly Update** emailsfor announcements and the current submission progress for your school. We may also send standalone emails announcements like those announcing the opening of the collection.

# **File Submission Process**

## S-EBT File Layout

* Access the CSI [S-EBT webpage](https://resources.csi.state.co.us/summer-ebt/) to download and review a copy of the S-EBT file layout.
	+ The file layout contains:
		- An overview of S-EBT benefit eligibility. **Note**: There is some additional detail not included in the file layout that is outlined
		- Data definitions to aid in understanding how the data should be reported for each field.
		- Indicates fields that are required or optional.

## SIS Help Documentation

* Schools are also encouraged to review the S-EBT report documentation provided by their SIS vendors.
* This documentation, available within each SIS state specific Help resources, should:
	+ Specify the origin of each S-EBT data field within the SIS.
	+ Provide details on criteria used in the S-EBT report extract.

## SIS Prep

* **Make sure FRL eligibilities are up to date in your SIS**.
	+ Instructions on how to enter data into your SIS is available on the CSI [FRL Eligibility](https://resources.csi.state.co.us/free-and-reduced-lunch-eligibility/) webpage. For NSLP participating schools, consult with your SFA as needed if you need a new student eligibility status data set.
	+ The **Eligible Students** information in the **General Overview** section above provides additional detail on eligibility and how students should be reported in the S-EBT submission file.Please be sure that you review that section prior to completing the steps outlined here and below.
	+ The FRL eligibility status reported in the S-EBT submission file should be of the highest level (i.e., free versus reduced or paid) determined at any time during the 24-25 school year.
		- Any adjustments to meet this S-EBT reporting requirement for students should be made in the S-EBT file itself and not in the SIS.
		- This can make it a bit complicated to report if a student happened to be free lunch eligible at the start of the school year (but not based on a carryover status) and has a more recent paid determination for example.
		- Like the example above, schools may find that they need to manually adjust the records in their S-EBT submission file.
* **Ensure that your SIS has current parent/guardian contact and address information** for all students to ensure that there are no errors in your data submission and that S-EBT cards are sent to the correct household contact and address.

## S-EBT Report Extract

* Once your SIS has been prepped as noted above, then extract an S-EBT file from your SIS (look under state report extracts).
	+ **BE SURE TO IMPORT FILES TO AN xlsx FORMAT BEFORE MAKING ANY EDITS IF THEY ARE IN csv format TO BEGIN WITH.** See how to do this in our [Excel for Data Submissions](https://resources.csi.state.co.us/excel-for-data-submissions-part-1/) resource.
* Review each field in the file for accuracy and update it as needed using the file layout resource and this instruction document.
	+ If your file is missing the following:
		- Required data within each record then it will generate errors.
		- Leading zeros then we cannot process it.
		- Student records, then families may miss out on S-EBT benefits. Since there are multiple ways that students can qualify, including scenarios for mid-year transfers, it’s crucial that you report all enrolled students.
* Name the file with the following format: school code\_schoolAbbreviation\_SEBT\_currentdate.
Example: **1234\_XYZ\_SEBT\_02032025**
* Upload the file to G-Drive under Submissions/S-EBT/24-25/Files to Run.
	+ The Submissions level folder is shared with all main school submission contacts, providing access to all subfolders beneath it. Please let CSI know if nutrition staff need access.
* Send an email to submissions\_csi@csi.state.co.us to notify the data team that you have uploaded your file. CSI will process your file and let you know if there are errors and any next steps.

# **Correcting Errors**

* CSI will notify schools if there are errors that need to be corrected.
* To resolve errors, consult the [Troubleshooting Errors](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1qzfnPLqbc3oNdp1Y_Q5HkbV6Jxibbnh-_cSLEbkaNE8/edit?pli=1#gid=732912027) Google document as needed. Oftentimes, the file layout or this instructions document will provide helpful information/clues on fixing errors.
* Please be sure to update the current date in each corrected file version you upload to G-Drive so that CSI can keep track of the most recent file. If you submit multiple files on the same date, then leave the date the same in the file name and just add V2, V3, etc.

# **Certification Form**

Schools must complete the S-EBT [**Certification of Assurance form**](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd9BjhjT-KD8TLWloCPJr9sRQolO53q-Kkk30CCARbgLsVB5A/viewform?usp=header) once they are error free as confirmation that the student data reported is complete and accurate to the best of your knowledge.