

COVID-19 Tuesday Check-In Meeting Notes
June 9, 2020

Participants: ~80 participants

Action items are noted in bold.

Agenda

Updates: Governor's Office Update: Katie Rains

OSPI Update Pandemic-EBT & Summer Sites – Bianca Smith

Pet Food Update: Dr. Minden Buswell

General Updates: SFY20 Closeout June 30, 2020; Future Investments; Food Purchasing options outside of the pilots (AMI & Charlie's Produce);

TEFAP Income Eligibility Guidelines Increasing

Questions and Clarifications – YOUR Time

Friday, June 12th 9:00 am – Contractor Focus

Updates

- **OSPI Update Pandemic-EBT & Summer Sites:**
 - **Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) Emergency School Meals Program**
 - Makes up for cost of meals children missed while schools have been closed due to COVID-19
 - P-EBT benefits help families in WA buy food
 - Will be distributed on EBT cards – used like a debit card
 - Available to students enrolled in K-12 school that participates in the National School Lunch Program during the school year **and** 1) is eligible for free or reduced-price school meals **or** 2) is attending a school where all meals are free for all students (CEP or Provision 2 for breakfast and lunch). Only ages 5-18.
 - *See OSPI presentation following today's slideshow presentation
 - <https://www.k12.wa.us/about-ospi/press-releases/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-resources/nutrition-meals-guidance/pandemic-ebt-guidance-school-districts>
 - **Q&A –**
 - I'm assuming that school districts providing meals to ALL students right now do not necessarily qualify as CEP districts.
 - That's correct. Schools are currently providing free meals to all kids through the Summer Meals program. The kids at schools that provided free meals to all kids BEFORE Covid closed schools are the kids eligible for P-EBT (these schools were using the Community Eligibility Provision, or Provision 2)
 - This is Richard Reynolds from FISH in Ellensburg. Could we get a copy of this presentation sent to us. My email is richard@kvfish.org
 - Will be posted on our site

- Another question: Bianca, you said that the P-EBT does not count toward public charge, but if a family does not already access SNAP benefits (for fear that it will count toward Public Charge) is there any other way to access this PEBT benefit? I fear the answer is no.
 - Separate application on the DSHS website. Given the options to apply for basic food, P-EBT or other programs. Not associated with public charge or subject to public charge rule
- Thanks, Christina. Does applying for school meals mean that they can apply for P-EBT as well?
 - Yes. Families that are newly eligible will need to apply before the end of June. If families have already applied and receiving benefits, those families will only need to apply for P-EBT. If already receiving basic food, this benefit is automatically added to their card.
- Best way to get fliers to post at food pantries?
 - Posted on their site to print off posters
- Will school districts be communicating the program to families?
 - Yes, they just announced this information to districts yesterday, so working through districts to get this information out to families. Social media posts as well.
- What other languages will this information be provided in?
 - To name a few, Vietnamese, Chinese, Russian, Somali, Korean and others.
- Families who were concerned about public charge and who were eligible *before* Covid closed schools can still apply for f/rp meals now -- if they apply now, they will get P-EBT benefits only for June (~\$85)
 - Yes, that's correct
- Could we get an update on the petition to OSPI to provide summer meals for all districts in WA?
 - Summer Meals is totally separate from P-EBT. As ever, OSPI works with schools & local orgs to sponsor Summer Meals --- the letter to USDA was about extending the current waiver that allows schools & orgs to serve free meals to all kids w/o having to meet the 50% poverty threshold for where to locate Summer Meals sites.
- Claire Lane: P-EBT is a totally separate program from summer meals or any meals being handed out. Not mutually exclusive at all. OSPI is running summer meals as usual, and they're still receiving application from sponsors. Non-profits, municipalities, schools can all be sponsors. 50% or more kids qualify for meals is what is called "area eligibility". Schools are running summer meals anywhere they can run a meal site due to a waiver on edibility. Got 250 signatures to extend the waiver. If you're running a program, be as robust as possible. Nikki asking for application, Claire to put in chat box

- Bianca Smith: **Application for Summer Food Service Program Sponsor**. Call me if you have questions (360-742-4175). <https://www.k12.wa.us/policy-funding/child-nutrition/school-meals/national-school-lunch-program/new-sponsorsKa>
- **Governor's Office Update - Katie Rains:**
 - I'm here but it wouldn't let me unmute. No big updates today - still always seeking input about staffing plans as national guard looks to reduce missions this summer, welcoming feedback about the emergency food boxes! krains@agr.wa.gov
- **Pet Food Update: Dr. Minden Buswell**
 - About 50-60% of people have pets, and those pets may need food. If you see anyone who needs help, elevate to county emergency management.
 - They get donated pet food. King Co is covered, but others may need more pet food distribution. Easiest way to distribute is in conjunction with people food banks.
 - You can also call her to help: 360-280-6499
 - Q&A – Are there any donations going on?
 - Yes, King Co got a truckload from greatergood.org. They have the capacity to send trucks to other areas in the state. May need other hubs for distribution. [Greatergood.org](http://greatergood.org) may be able to team up with humane society for distribution & storage. A lot of the pet food is near expiration dates, but that's how they get these donations.

Food Assistance

- **Food Assistance – Kim Eads:**
 - **Focusing in on close-out**
 - This year will be a little complicated due to extra funding sources.
 - Subcontractors, please help out your contractor by submitting on time, spending funds down. Make sure to spend down all regular EFAP funding by June 30, 2020:
 - Goods & services (food, supplies, equipment) must be received by June 30, 2020
 - Monthly invoice is due to WSDA by the 20th of the month following services
 - Make sure to spend down or obligate EFAP COVID-19 & EFAP CARES Stabilization funding by June 30, 2020:
 - Goods & services (food, supplies, equipment) must be purchased by June 30, 2020
 - May be received after June 30th but no later than October 31, 2020
 - Will release additional funding Monday. Priority is to provide critical and immediate relief. More funding available in July.
 - **Another Refrigerator Rebate.** For smaller equipment purchases.
 - David Bobanick: on the Harvest Against Hunger website, form to fill out.

- A question about the receipt process: Programs fill out the online application first, then email a copy of the receipt. Here is the link to the page on our site: <https://www.harvestagainsthunger.org/refrigerated-capacity-grants/>
 - **Pilot programs:** You may use your funding outside of the pilot program to purchase.
 - AMI: Those foods were sent to our contractors for use in multiple ways. Lots of great response. Frozen, cold meals and emergency food boxes that are shelf stable. *Brochure included in today's slide presentation
 - Lindsey Robinson from Hopelink: "The food is really well received, ready to cook, took burden off meal programs."
 - Penny in Moses Lake: "Great response, tasteful, filling. Went great!"
 - Charlie's Produce: Great responses from folks participating.
 - Opening to tribal organizations end of June
 - You can use your funding for this benefit outside of the pilot program, they will price the same as the pilot program
 - **TEFAP income guidelines**
 - Raising to 400%
 - Based on a study and voted on by a workgroup.
 - Josh Martinez: Broad support for 400%, any concerns can be addressed as they arise.
 - Effective 7/1/2020, will be available in multiple languages.
 - We have to make these changes at statewide level, different counties can't have different rates.

Q&A, Comments

- **Chat box questions:**

- **Claire Lane:** In this time of significant and important conversations about equity and justice for people of color, I'm thankful that new TEFAP guidelines will be inclusive of ALL the people who struggle with hunger.
- **Brent Hunter:** Charlie's Produce boxes are better quality than any CFAP produce boxes out there.
- **Frank Miranda:** I am not sure how unique Seattle area is, but we work with 24 subcontractors. Allocating these funds, and otherwise disbursing for various purposes, especially in such a short amount of time, is an undertaking. Any suggestions for allocations/disbursement/process, and what restrictions may not be imposed on these funds, as opposed to 'regular' EFAP, would be appreciated.
- **Linda Scerbo:** I agree with Brent's comment. I have received nothing but positive feedback on the quality. well received and clients anxious to receive their box
- **Kat Westerdahl:** EFN has 40 programs - so all the help available is needed - getting crazy tracking EFAP

- **Frank Miranda:** In practice, this sounds like a requirement that, at least for us, contractors devote a majority of their time to this until June 30, in order to ensure that their subcontractors receive maximum benefit.
- **Trish Twomey:** Random question - should programs continue with EFAP policies of starting their unduplicated counts over at the start of their fiscal year?
 - Yes, we still expect that all clients are included as new clients throughout the year, so yes that's still in place