

To: Authorized Representatives of Child Nutrition Programs

From: Child and Adult Nutrition Services

Date: August 07, 2018

Subject: Food Stamp Case Numbers

Memo Number: SNP 214-1
CACFP 214-1
CACFP DCH 214-1
SFSP 214-1

This memo replaces the previous memo on this topic dated July 28, 2000, memo number(s) NSLP-44, CACFP-41, CACFPDCH-25, SFSP-21. The purpose of this memo is to answer questions about the food stamp electronic benefit transfer numbers in Child Nutrition Programs.

This information should be shared with the person who works with electronic benefit transfers. Questions about this memo can be referred to a SD Dept. of Education Child and Adult Nutrition Services staff member.

A question was asked recently as to whether food stamp electronic benefit transfer (EBT) numbers can be used to replace food stamp case numbers in determining categorical eligibility for free meals under Child Nutrition Programs. Using the EBT card number in place of a food stamp case number would not be an accurate representation of a household's eligibility for benefits.

The EBT number (which also may be called a primary account number or PAN) is never the household's case number. That number is assigned by the company that provides the cards and is used to tie the household into its food stamp balance using a personal identification number (PIN). There is also no expiration date on the EBT card because food stamps never expire.

A non-household member could have access to the EBT card or know the EBT number/PAN but not be eligible for food stamps. For example, a person could be the authorized representative for an elderly neighbor but not be eligible for food stamps themselves. Also, once benefits are issued to a food stamp household, they can remain active on the card even after the household is no longer eligible to receive food stamps.

Therefore, categorical eligibility for benefits under the Child Nutrition Programs cannot be based on an EBT card or EBT number/PAN. The household must provide a case number, which can be checked to determine if they are currently eligible.

