

FAQs -Upcoming Changes for Meal Plans, Bear Bucks and Virtual Brown IDs

Kara Kelley - 2022-05-23 - Comments (0) - Business Systems

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q: What changes are coming in regard to meal plans, Bear Bucks and Virtual Brown IDs?

A: Brown is working to improve the experience of using a Brown ID to manage meal plans, make purchases with Bear Bucks funds and access a range of other services at Brown more conveniently. As part of an initiative led by the Brown Card Office, Brown Dining Services and the Office of Information Technology, the University will transition to a cloud-based platform, Atrium, for more convenient use and management of Brown ID cards for multiple purposes. Two of the most exciting features will include the introduction of a new virtual Brown ID, and a Brown Dining Services mobile ordering system.

Q: Why are these changes necessary?

A: The University works continually to keep its systems up to date and improve the ways in which technology can support students, faculty and staff. The transition to Atrium will vastly improve the experience of using a Brown ID to manage meal plans, make purchases with Bear Bucks funds and access a range of other services at Brown more conveniently. In addition, it will offer a significant upgrade over our existing systems — the software currently providing declining balance and meal plan management functionality is over 16 years old and can no longer effectively integrate with other systems on campus.

Q: How was the replacement system selected?

A: A competitive bidding process was used to review proposals from four vendors, including our current vendor. Teams from Dining Services, Business & Financial Services and the Office of Information Technology evaluated options, spoke with vendor representatives and ultimately made the final decision.

Q: What improvements can we expect?

A: Two of the most exciting features will include the introduction of a new virtual Brown ID, and a best-in-class Brown Dining Services mobile ordering system. Additional benefits include:

- A new, mobile responsive website as a central place to generate a virtual Brown ID; add, cancel or change meal plans within prescribed timeframes; add funds, view accounts and check transaction histories for meal plans, Bear Bucks and MyPrint
- Reduced wait times for access to “all you care to eat” dining facilities on campus, based on improvements enabled by the new system
- Ability to purchase additional Flex Points online
- Expedited Bear Bucks refunds

Q: When will this change take place?

A: The changes enabled by this new cloud-based platform will be phased in between June and September 2022, and we’ll keep community members informed on any actions they need to take as new features are introduced. Brown will cutover to the new system during the evening of Thursday, June 2, and the new website will be available post cutover. New features and functionality will roll out over the course of the summer.

Q: Who will be affected by this change?

A: All active Brown students, faculty and staff will all be able to use the new website and mobile ordering platform and create a virtual Brown ID.

Q: When will we hear more?

A: Students enrolled for the fall semester will be informed in June about meal plan assignments and making changes. General announcements will be made through Today@Brown as each new change takes place.

Q: Will I need to use a new app to take advantage of the new features?

A: A new app will be necessary for mobile ordering. Meal plan, Bear Bucks and MyPrint management will all be available through the new, mobile responsive website. The Brown app and my.brown.edu will both include links to this site.

Q: What can one use the virtual ID for?

A: The virtual Brown ID is a digital credential that can be displayed on a mobile phone to access a range of services on campus without a physical ID card. Brown community members will be able to generate a virtual Brown ID to pay with meal credits, flex points or Bear Bucks at select dining locations; pay with Bear Bucks at any outlet that accepts them; check out books from the University Library; access ticketed Brown Athletics events where a Brown ID allows entry; access campus recreational facilities; and ride the Brown Shuttle.

Other services will continue to require a physical Brown ID; these include, among others, entrance to Brown buildings that require card access, vending machine

purchase and laundry.

BEAR BUCKS

Q: Will my Bear Bucks transaction history be brought into the new system?

A: No. Your Bear Bucks balance at the time of cutover will be brought into the new system but your transaction history will not. If you want to save this history, you can export transaction history as a PDF from the GET portal. You will have until 5PM on June 2 to access this history through GET. Visit <https://card.brown.edu/bear-bucks/get> to login to GET.

Q: Where can I use Bear Bucks as a form of payment on campus?

A: Purchases using Bear Bucks can be made at all of the following locations. All will accept a physical ID and some may accept a virtual ID.

- Brown Bookstore
- Dining Services including vending machines and sports concessions
- Laundry in residence halls
- Mail Services
- MyPrint
- Pharmacy

Q: Will I still be able to request that my Bear Bucks account be funded by my relatives, and friends?

A: Yes. You will easily be able to request money from family and friends. They will be able to deposit funds in your Bear Bucks account without creating an account on the new platform.

In addition, you will be able to give up to 10 friends/relatives the ability to access your Bear Bucks account and limit what they can view and what actions they can take on your account.

Q: Does this change affect MyPrint?

A: This new system will manage MyPrint free print allowances and subsequent use of Bear Bucks for additional printing needs. The one-time [Multi Media Lab](#) print allowance that some students receive will also be managed through this system.

MEAL PLANS

Q: How will I review my assigned meal plan and make changes?

A: Once fall semester meal plans are assigned in June, students will be emailed and directed to login to the new website to view their assigned meal plans. They will also be able to change, add or cancel meal plans in accordance with Dining Services' [published schedule](#).

Q: When can I make changes to or cancel my fall meal plan?

A: You will be able to change, add and cancel meal plans through the new website over the summer at no charge. After August 31 student meal plans cannot be canceled. **Only one change** is allowed between September 1 and September 14. Any changes made during the first week of classes (9/7-9/14) will incur a \$10 change fee. **After the first week of classes, changes are no longer allowed.** Meal plans may be added at any time throughout the semester. See the Dining [website](#) for more information.

Q: If I need a meal plan this summer, how do I get one?

A: You will be able to add a summer meal plan by contacting Dining Services. Once a summer meal plan is purchased, no changes or cancellations are permitted.

Q: Have the meal plans also changed?

A: No, meal plans have not changed. Information on meal plan options is available on Dining's [website](#).

MOBILE ORDERING

Q: How can I be included in the beta test?

A: Prior to August, an announcement will go out about the mobile ordering beta test. Anyone on campus who wants to participate in the beta will be able to download and install the app. They will need to have Bear Bucks, Flex Points or a credit card to pay for purchases. Dining will restrict the number of mobile orders it accepts daily as it gets accustomed to this new platform.

Q: Which Dining facility will fulfill mobile orders?

A: During the beta period, the Blue Room will be open for mobile orders.

