



## SIX THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SUMMER EBT BENEFITS

The Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Program was established in December 2022 as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023. Here is what you need to know about the program that begins in summer 2024:

Beginning in summer 2024, all states and territories, as well as Indian Tribal Organizations that participate in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) can participate in the Summer EBT Program. To participate, states must notify the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) by January 1 and submit their management and administrative plan by February 15 of each year.

A child must be eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. This includes children who are certified for free or reduced-price school meals and children who can be directly certified (regardless of whether or not they attend a school that participates in school meals). States must make applications available for students who are eligible to receive benefits but were not certified by their school. This includes children who attend community eligibility schools or who become eligible during the summer.

Families will receive \$40 a month per eligible child for the summer benefit in 2024.[1] This will be adjusted for inflation in subsequent years. Families will have no more than four months to use their summer benefits.[2] Children attending year-round schools are eligible for benefits, and the Secretary of Agriculture will establish those guidelines. States must give eligible households a way to opt out of the program.

Summer EBT benefits can be used to purchase food from SNAP retailers in States. Benefits issued in American Samoa, Puerto Rico, and the Northern Mariana Islands can be used to purchase food through the nutrition assistance program. Benefits issued by Indian Tribal Organizations can be used to purchase food approved through WIC.

States, territories, and Indian Tribal Organizations must cover 50 percent of the Summer EBT administrative expenses. This is a change from Pandemic EBT, which covered 100 percent of their administrative costs.

The Summer Nutrition Programs and Summer EBT are complementary programs. They work together to decrease summer hunger. Forty dollars per month per child is an important nutrition support for families, but it works out to be about \$1.33 per child per day and is not enough to cover a full day of meals. The Summer Nutrition Programs provide a maximum of two meals each day at most sites, which is less than the breakfast, lunch, and supper that children can receive on school days during the school year. In addition, most summer meal sites also provide educational, enrichment or recreational activities that keep children learning. By fully implementing both programs, states can help ensure that children return to the classroom in the fall ready to learn.

[1] This amount may be higher due to adjustments for inflation from summer 2023.

[2] States are required to remove (expunge) benefits from the EBT card after four months. The Secretary of Agriculture will determine the exact rules on expungement timelines.