

New SUN Bucks Program Supports Summer Food Access for Washington Children

More than 500,000 children will get \$120 in nutrition benefits this summer

OLYMPIA, WA, USA, May 13, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- More than 500,000 Washington children will receive funds this summer to help buy food through a new Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) program called SUN Bucks.

In December 2022, the federal government authorized a permanent, nationwide Summer EBT program to support children's access to food during the summer months. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) received federal approval to implement SUN Bucks in April 2024 and is partnering with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to distribute these benefits starting this summer.

"Students need nutritious meals to learn and grow," said State Superintendent Chris Reykdal. "The Summer EBT program provides essential support to children across Washington during the summer months when they don't have their regular access to school meals. This program is an important way that we support the well-being of children and families across our state."



Chris Reykdal, State Superintendent of Public Instruction



Jilma Meneses, DSHS Secretary

“No child should suffer from hunger,” said DSHS Secretary Jilma Meneses. “Every bit of support we can provide families is critically important, especially during the summer months when other resources are not as readily available.”

The SUN Bucks benefits, a one-time payment of \$120 per eligible child in each household, will be deposited onto new SUN Bucks cards and mailed beginning in early June.

Some children will be automatically eligible for SUN Bucks, while others will need to apply. Students may be automatically eligible for Summer EBT if they:

- Are enrolled at a school that offers the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP) and [qualify through a meal application or Family Income Survey](#); or
- Are age 8–18 and are a member of a household that receives benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Food Assistance Program (FAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or State-Funded Assistance (SFA).

Students who do not qualify automatically can apply by submitting a Summer EBT application. To qualify for SUN Bucks, these students must:

- Be enrolled at a school that participates in the NSLP or SBP, and
- Live in a household that meets NSLP [Income Eligibility Guidelines](#) to qualify for free or reduced-price meals.

The SUN Bucks application will soon be available online in English and Spanish. Applications will be accepted through August 31.

The Public Charge rule does not apply to SUN Bucks benefits and will not impact immigration status.

SUN Bucks benefits are in addition to other summer [Child Nutrition Programs](#) already offered. Families are encouraged to continue participating in congregate and grab-n-go meals as well as other summer food programs at their local schools and community locations, even if they receive Summer EBT benefits.

Starting May 13, families who need to apply or who have other questions about SUN Bucks benefits can call the SUN Bucks Contact Center at 1-833-543-3230 (TTY: 1-800-833-6348) between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday–Friday (except observed holidays). Later this month, families can opt in for text messaging alerts about their child’s SUN Bucks status at textsunbucks.dshs.wa.gov.

Contact Information

OSPI Contact: Katy Payne, katy.payne@k12.wa.us, 360-764-0201

DSHS Contact: Norah West, norah.west@dshs.wa.gov, 360-902-7833

Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

+1 360-725-6000

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

[YouTube](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/711219081>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.