

Summer EBT (SuN Bucks) Program

Summer 2025

Frequently Asked Questions for Families

General Questions

What is Summer EBT?

The Missouri SuN Bucks Program is new program to help families purchase food for their school-age children during the summer months of June, July, and August. Families of students who were determined eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL) during the regular school year (2024-25) will receive a one-time \$120 benefit per eligible student. The funds will be loaded onto an electronic benefits transfer (EBT) card and mailed to the household address or loaded onto a SNAP household member's card. These funds can be used to purchase food at authorized locations. Students eligible to receive SuN Bucks can also participate in other summer meal programs.

Who is eligible for SuN Bucks?

Summer EBT benefits are issued to students based on their FRL eligibility status at the end of the school year immediately preceding the summer. Eligible students must have been enrolled in a school district that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and qualifies for free or reduced-price meals.

Students that were determined eligible for FRL at some point during the 2024-25 school year are considered **"Streamlined Certified"**, meaning the student's household does not need to apply for Summer EBT; they may automatically receive the benefit.

Streamlined Certified students include:

- Students determined FRL eligible through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)/School Breakfast Program (SBP) meal application
- Students Directly Certified through SNAP or TANF using the Direct Certification Download (Direct Match)
- Students in foster care
- Students in a homeless, migrant, or runaway status

What is the age range for SuN Bucks eligibility?

Children who are school age and who are enrolled in NSLP/SBP-participating schools may be determined eligible.

School-age includes the years in which a child is required to attend school, or an equivalent program as defined by State or Tribal law. This is also known as the age requirement for compulsory education.

Application Process for Families

Do I need to apply for Summer EBT?

Streamlined certified student may not need to apply.

- Students determined eligible through the free or reduced-price meal application
- Students Directly Certified through SNAP or TANF using the Direct Certification Download (Direct Match)
 - Students that are extended eligible —living in the same household as a student with direct certification benefits
- Students in foster care
- Students in a homeless, migrant, or runaway status

If your child does not fall in one of the categories above, but they receive free and reduced lunches at school, you can apply here: <https://www.healthytogether.co/onboarding/missouri-sun-bucks>.

Who can NOT apply for Summer EBT?

Children that attend a school district that does NOT participate in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Program or families that are NOT enrolled in SNAP may not be eligible to apply. School-age children who are not enrolled in an NSLP/SBP school, including children enrolled in a public or private school that does not participate in the NSLP/SBP and homeschooled children, may be deemed eligible for Summer EBT if they participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), Medicaid (in some cases). Children who are not enrolled in NSLP/SBP participating schools cannot establish their Summer EBT eligibility by filling out a Summer EBT application.

How do I apply for SuN Bucks?

Applications for Missouri SuN Bucks Summer 2025 are available at the Missouri SuN Bucks Eligibility Navigator page <https://mydss.mo.gov/sunbucks-eligibility>.

Why was my SuN Bucks application denied?

Here are some common reasons a SuN Bucks application may be denied:

- Your child's school district doesn't participate in the National School Lunch Program
- You do not meet the income guidelines for the benefit
- Incomplete application (examples):
 - Child's name does not match district records
 - Missing date of birth

If you do not understand why your application was denied, you can call the Family Support Division at 855-FSD-INFO (855-373-4636)

I applied for SuN Bucks, how long will it take to get approved?

When you get your benefit will depend on if your child was automatically eligible or if you had to apply.

My child is automatically eligible: If your child is streamlined certified and automatically eligible and you did not have to apply, their benefits will be issued as soon as possible. EBT cards are processed through DSS. If your mailing address has changed you must notify DSS (855-373-4636). You will either get an EBT card in the mail, or if you already have one for SNAP or TA, your benefit will be added to the SNAP card.

I submitted an application: If you submitted a SuN Bucks application, please allow time for processing and eligibility review. If you qualify, you will receive an EBT card in the mail with instructions on how to use your benefit. If your application was denied, you will receive a letter with an explanation and information about your appeal rights. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) DOES NOT approve or process SuN Bucks applications. If you have questions about your SuN Bucks application, you must contact DSS.

Benefit Information

How much is the SuN Bucks benefit?

Students will get \$120 per summer period. Summer operational period means the benefit period that generally reflects the period between the end of classes during the current school year and the start of classes for the next school year. The payment of \$120 will apply to the entire summer period and be a one-time payment of \$120*.

*Note: DSS has indicated that some benefits will be coming in \$40 increments. DSS processes benefits.

How will my child get SuN Bucks benefits?

Missouri SuN Bucks benefits will be issued to an EBT card. If you receive SNAP or Temporary Assistance, your child's Missouri SuN Bucks benefits will be available on the same card. If you do not have an EBT card, a new EBT card will be mailed to the address provided with your Missouri SuN Bucks benefit applied to it. **Your new EBT card will be used to issue any benefits you are eligible for in the future, so be sure to keep it.**

How long will SuN Bucks benefits stay on my EBT card?

Missouri SuN Bucks benefits expire and are removed 122 days from issuance. Missouri SuN Bucks are removed regardless of usage. Once benefits are removed from an EBT card, they cannot be replaced. Even though the benefits expire, you can keep your EBT card to receive Missouri SuN Bucks benefits faster next summer if you are eligible.

Can my student still participate in meals provided by the school if I receive SuN Bucks benefits?

Yes, students can receive SuN Bucks and still get meals provided by the school district during the summer period.

What if I did not receive benefits for all the children in my household, or I disagree with the benefit amount?

Please call the Family Support Division at 855-FSD-INFO (855-373-4636) and ask our team to review your case.

At my school, all students receive free meals this year, so my child is receiving free meals even though we don't usually qualify for free or reduced meals. Does this make my children eligible for the SuN Bucks benefit?

No. In order to be eligible for SuN Bucks benefits, children must be individually determined eligible for free or reduced-price school meal benefits during the instructional year immediately preceding the summer operational period or during the summer operational period. Children enrolled in provision schools who are not otherwise identified as free or reduced eligible should apply for SuN Bucks using a Summer EBT Application.

Where can I use my EBT benefits and what can I buy?

Participants who receive benefits through a State-administered Program will be able to purchase SNAP-eligible food, as defined in the Food and Nutrition Act, at any retail store approved for participation with SNAP. Supplemental foods are foods that contain nutrients determined by nutritional research to be lacking in the diets of children and promote the health of the population served by the program.

We just received the benefits in the mail, is this for the 2024-25 school year?

If you receive a card before May 31, those benefits were issued for the 2023-24 school year. DSS will start issuing benefits for the 2024-25 school year after June 1.

Who can I contact if I lost my SuN Bucks card?

You can contact DSS at 855-373-4636 for lost or stolen cards.

Who can I contact to see where my benefits are?

You can contact DESE to check if your district sent in the information for your child. If they haven't, we would suggest filling out an application online found here: <https://www.healthytogether.co/onboarding/missouri-sun-bucks>. Families must contact DSS for more information about the status of a benefit, denials, card questions, and benefit amounts.

Other Questions

Are there any restrictions when using an EBT card?

Yes, the same restrictions that apply for regular EBT cards will also apply to SuN Bucks cards. Summer EBT benefits cannot buy any of the following:

- Hot prepared foods
- Foods prepared to be immediately eaten
- Vitamins, medicine, supplements
- Non-food items such as paper products, soap, or pet food
- Alcohol
- Tobacco

What if I have other questions about SuN Bucks?

For any other questions about EBT, please call the Family Support Division at 855-FSD-INFO (855-373-4636).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.