



# SUN BUCKS (SUMMER EBT)

## FAQ

### Q: What is SUN Bucks?

A: The Summer EBT program, now called “SUN Bucks”, was established to provide nutritional resources to students who may not have access to free or reduced priced meals during the summer months.

### Q: Who is eligible for SUN Bucks?

A: Children eligible for SUN Bucks include school-age children who attended a school participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) in the academic year immediately before the summer or during the summer period and are eligible for free or reduced priced meals. There are three categories of eligible students:

1. If your child receives Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, Rhode Island Works (RIW), or Medicaid (and they meet the income standards), SUN Bucks will be automatically issued to school aged students (ages 6 – 18).
2. Students who are already eligible for free and reduced priced meals. These students will automatically be provided benefits after a list is provided by the RI Department of Education (RIDE).
3. Individuals that submit an online or paper SUN Bucks/Summer EBT application will be reviewed for SUN Bucks eligibility. RIDE will verify enrollment in a NSLP school and DHS will confirm that the child meets the income eligibility standards for school meals.

### Q: Should I apply for SUN Bucks if I'm receiving SNAP?

A: No. If you are already receiving SNAP or RI Works, you do not have to apply for SUN Bucks. You will automatically receive the benefits on your existing EBT card.

### Q: How do I apply for SUN Bucks?

A: You can apply for SUN Bucks using the online application, which will be available on <https://dhs.ri.gov/sun-bucks>. Or you can submit a [paper application located here](#). Paper applications should be emailed to [DHS.SummerEBT@dhs.ri.gov](mailto:DHS.SummerEBT@dhs.ri.gov).

### Q: Do I need to submit documentation with my SUN Bucks application?

A: You may need to provide proof of enrollment in your school if you are a private school student. No other documentation is needed with the application unless DHS reaches out to you requesting additional information.

**Q: What can I do if my application for Sun Bucks is denied or I didn't get the benefits that I was entitled to?**

If your application is denied or you believe you did not get the appropriate amount of benefits, you have a right to appeal and request a hearing by November 30, 2024. The appeal form will be included on your denial notice. The appeals form is also or available on the DHS website below:

<https://dhs.ri.gov/programs-and-services/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/supplemental-nutrition-10>

You may also request a conference to discuss the situation.

**Q: What if my child will be newly eligible for reduced priced meals for the 2023-2024 school year?**

A: Students who are not currently eligible but might be for the 2023-2024 school year **are encouraged to complete a Meal Benefit Application by August 31, 2024** in order to be eligible to receive SUN Bucks during the summer months. The application can be found in the Documents, Resources and Links Library section of the National School Lunch Program page on the RIDE website:

<https://www.ride.ri.gov/CNP/NutritionPrograms/NationalSchoolLunchProgram.aspx#2138983-documents-resources-links-library>.

**Q: How much can my child receive in SUN Bucks?**

A: Each eligible child can receive a total, **one-time lump sum of \$120** for the summer months.

**Q: When will my child receive SUN Bucks?**

A: SUN Bucks will be issued for different eligibility groups at different times. Benefits are anticipated to go out from July through September 2024.

**Q: How will I receive my child's SUN Bucks?**

A: If you are receiving SNAP benefits, your SUN Bucks will be added to your current SNAP EBT card. If you are not receiving SNAP benefits, benefits will be added to a SUN Bucks card that you will receive in the mail. This card will look similar to a SNAP EBT card. You may receive more than one card if you have multiple children eligible for the benefit. Call the number on the back of the card to activate it. You will need to enter the card number, your zip code, and the birth date of your child.

**Q: What can I do if I lost my SUN Bucks card?**

A: If you had a card before but no longer have it, you can call 1-888-979-9939 to request a new one.

**Q: Is my child still eligible if we're not receiving SNAP benefits?**

A: Yes, your child may still be eligible. Children who do not participate in SNAP are eligible for SUN Bucks if they meet any of the following criteria:

- They participate in RIW or Medicaid (in some cases) and are ages 6 – 18
- They are enrolled in a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and are approved for free or reduced priced meals
- They are enrolled in a NSLP participating school and have completed an alternate income form and are income eligible for school meals
- They have submitted a SUN Bucks application, are below the income standards for school meals, and are enrolled in a NSLP participating school.

**Q: Are SUN Bucks tied to the learning model at my child's school or child care facility?**

A: No. Unlike P-EBT, Rhode Island does not need to issue benefits in relation to a child's school operating status.

**Q: Our household is enrolled in SNAP and we just welcomed a new baby during the summer period. Are they eligible to receive Summer EBT benefits for the summer?**

A: No, SUN Bucks will only be available for eligible school-age children

**Q: If my child's SNAP enrollment begins or ends during the summer of 2024, will they receive benefits?**

A: Yes. If a child's SNAP enrollment or school meal eligibility is set to begin or expire during the summer of 2024 and they were receiving free or reduced priced lunch during the eligibility period (July 1, 2023 – August 31, 2024), they are eligible to receive the entire SUN Bucks benefit for that summer.

**Q: If my child graduated after the 2023–2024 academic year, will they receive SUN Bucks for the summer of 2024?**

A: Yes. If your child received free or reduced priced lunch at a NSLP school or was eligible for SNAP or another means-tested program and they graduated in 2024, they will be eligible to receive SUN Bucks for summer 2024.

**Q: My child is homeschooled. Are they eligible for SUN Bucks?**

A. Your school age child may still be eligible if they participate in the SNAP, RIW, or Medicaid (in some cases) program.

**Q: My child attends a fully virtual school that does not participate in the National School Lunch Program. Are they eligible for Summer SUN Bucks?**

A. Your school age child may still be eligible if they participate in the SNAP, RIW, or Medicaid (in some cases) program.

**Q: Does using SUN Bucks impact mine or my child's immigration status?**

A: No, it does not. Using SUN Bucks does not impact an individual's immigration status.

**Q: Can I opt out of SUN Bucks?**

A: Yes. Participation in the program is voluntary. If you choose not to participate in the program and received a separate SUN Bucks card, please dispose of your card by cutting through the magnetic stripe on the card and discard it in a secure manner. If you received SUN Bucks on your SNAP or RIW EBT card, please dial 211 to report that you do not want these benefits on your card.

**Q: Can I give my SUN Bucks to someone else?**

A: No. You cannot transfer the card to someone else. Buying or selling SUN Bucks for cash is illegal and may result in disqualification from the program or having to pay a penalty.

**Q: Is my child still eligible for summer meals?**

A: Yes, your family can use SUN Bucks and pick up summer meals if they are available in your city.

**Q: Do these SUN Bucks benefits expire?**

A: SUN Bucks food benefits will remain available for 122 days from the date they are issued.