

## Illinois Department of Human Services

JB Pritzker, Governor · Dulce M. Quintero, Secretary

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# Summer EBT

## Summer EBT (aka SUN Bucks)

Summer EBT 2026 (aka SUN Bucks) is a benefits program that provides families a \$120 one-time benefit for each eligible school-aged child. The benefits are intended for the household to buy groceries when school is not in session. Summer is a time when many children lose the free and reduced-price meals they get at school and when households may need help putting meals on the table. Most eligible households will receive benefits automatically, but some households will need to apply.

Summer EBT is available in addition to free meals that children of all ages can receive at summer meal sites in their communities.

Summer EBT issuances are planned for May 18-25, 2026 for children that are automatically enrolled.

## Eligibility

Eligibility for the Summer EBT Program include children:

- Ages 6 through 17 with a date of birth between 07/02/2007 through 08/14/2020 that receive Food, Cash, or federally funded Medicaid Assistance with income at or below [185% Federal Poverty Levels \(FPL\)](#), anytime between 07/01/2025 through 08/14/2026; or
- Who attended a school that participated in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) during the 2025-2026 school year and were deemed income-eligible to receive a free or reduced-price lunch through streamlined certification or an application at the school; or
- Who attended a school that participated in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) during the 2025-2026 school year and filed a Summer EBT application and are determined eligible.

**Note:** Children who meet the first two eligibility factors listed above will be automatically enrolled in Summer EBT.

## Initial Notice of Eligibility for Summer EBT Benefits

Beginning in April 2026 households that are determined eligible for Summer EBT will receive an *Initial Notice of Eligibility for Summer EBT Benefits*. These notices will include the child(ren) that are eligible for Summer EBT, information on accessing benefits, information on opting out of Summer EBT benefits, and how to file an appeal. If the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) does not have a current mailing address the notice will state that a valid address is required with instructions on how to report a mailing address. Summer EBT benefits cannot be issued until a valid mailing address is on file.

## Summer EBT Screener

The *Summer EBT Screener* can be used to check whether your child/children will receive benefits automatically or if an application is needed, click on *Check if I Should Apply for Summer EBT* at [abe.illinois.gov](http://abe.illinois.gov) which will take you to the *Summer EBT Screener*.

If you have questions or problems using the *Summer EBT Screener*, you can contact us at 1-833-621-0737.

## Report an Address Change

If you used the *Summer EBT Screener* and need to report an address change, you can do so by:

- Using the Summer EBT Portal;
- Calling the Summer EBT Hotline at 1-833-621-0737; or
- Using the Summer EBT General Inquiry Request.

## Summer EBT Applications

Households can apply through the Summer EBT Portal at [abe.illinois.gov](http://abe.illinois.gov) and by clicking on *Check if I Should Apply for Summer EBT*.

Most children are eligible without a Summer EBT application. Households that have a child(ren) that is not automatically eligible for Summer EBT can apply if the child(ren) attended an Illinois school that participated in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) during the 2025-2026 school year. For a list of NSLP schools visit [www.isbe.net/sebt](http://www.isbe.net/sebt).

Applications for Summer EBT can also be mailed to the IDHS Central Scan Unit (CSU), P.O. Box 19138, Springfield, IL 62794 or submitted in person, mail, or fax to the local Family Community Resource Center (FCRC). Links to the application in English and Spanish can be found below.

**Note:** The Application for Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) is currently being updated for 2026 and a new version will be available soon. You may still apply for Summer EBT benefits for 2026 using the applications below.

[Application for Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer \(EBT\)](#)

[Solicitud De Transferencia Electrónica de Beneficios de Verano \(EBT de Verano\)](#)

Summer EBT applications will be processed by IDHS. In order to be eligible for Summer EBT, households must have a total gross income of at or below 185% of the FPL. Households may be asked to verify their gross income. Once the Summer EBT application has been processed a *Notice of Summer EBT Application Notice of Eligibility* will be sent that will include the child(ren) that are eligible, the child(ren) that are ineligible, the reason for the eligibility decision, information on accessing benefits, and information on filing an appeal.

Households that would like their child(ren) to receive Summer EBT benefits can also apply for Food, Cash, and/or Medical Assistance prior to the end of the summer operational period of 08/14/2026 and they will be automatically enrolled in Summer EBT for Summer 2026 if the child(ren) has a date of birth within the range listed above and determined eligible.

If the Head of Household on the Summer EBT application does not know their date of birth, they may enter the date of birth of 01/01/1900.

If the household applying for Summer EBT does not want to provide their physical address they may answer *Yes* to the Homeless question on the application and provide a mailing address. Note: The household may also choose to use the address of the local Family Community Resource Center.

## Illinois Link Card

For households who received food and/or cash benefits from IDHS during the 2025-2026 school year, Summer EBT benefits will be directly loaded onto the food portion of their existing Illinois Link card account. If the Illinois Link card is no longer active or the household did not receive food or cash benefits during the 2025-2026 school year, a new card will be mailed.

To access your Illinois Summer EBT Link account, visit the Illinois Link Card Website or call 1-800-678-Link. To login, use your personalized log in instructions found on your Summer EBT eligibility letter.

If you do not have access to your personalized Summer EBT eligibility letter, you may log in with:

- the Head of Household's Social Security Number and the Head of Household's date of birth; or
- your child's Social Security Number and your child's date of birth.

If you are still having trouble, please call the Summer EBT hotline at 1-833-621-0737.

[Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)