



SUN Bucks / Summer EBT



Summer EBT is now a permanent USDA Summer Nutrition Program for Kids and branded as “SUN Bucks.” This is one of three SUN Programs for school-aged kids who qualify based on income. (There is also a SUN Meals and a SUN Meals-to-Go program.) The goal of the USDA Summer Nutrition Programs is to help kids have access to healthy meals when school is out for the summer.

Need in Washington State

According to the most recent data 43.1% of children in Washington State are eligible to receive free or reduced school lunches.

SUN Bucks Basics

- Each school aged child (typically between 8 and 18 years old) that is eligible and enrolled receives a \$120.
- The \$120 is pre-loaded on a new SUN Bucks electronic benefits transfer (EBT) card. Each child gets a separate card. The child’s SUN Bucks EBT card is mailed to their family.
- Once received, each SUN Bucks EBT card will need to be activated and have a PIN created by the cardholder, parent or guardian. There will be instructions sent with the card.
- The SUN Bucks roll out is expected to take place from mid-June through August.
- The SUN Bucks money can be spent at any time for up to 122 days after the benefits are loaded on the card. Note: if card arrives later in the summer, then the time SUN Bucks can be spent may extend into the fall.
- SUN Bucks can be spent at farmers markets, grocery stores, or other retailers.
- SUN Bucks can be used to buy any SNAP-eligible item, including fruits and vegetables, meat, poultry, and fish, dairy products, breads and cereals, snack foods and non-alcoholic drinks.

SUN Bucks at Farmers Markets

- In order to accept SUN Bucks, your farmers markets must be set up to accept SNAP.
- Shoppers come to your Information Booth and then you run the SUN Bucks card on your EBT terminal just like you do for the Quest/SNAP EBT card.
- Shoppers will get the same SNAP EBT tokens (or scrip) you give out for SNAP for their SUN Bucks. Different cards, same tokens.
- Since SUN Bucks must be used within 122 days of issuance, we can encourage people to use their SUN Bucks card this market season which, for most markets, will be within 122 days. Note: SNAP EBT benefits must be used within 274 days of being issued.
- If a customer comes to the market and their SUN Bucks cards have not yet been activated, then they can use the “ebtEDGE” app to activate the card in real time at the market.



If your farmers market is participating in SNAP Market Match, then SUN Bucks can be matched by SNAP Market Match currency. For most farmers markets in 2026, the match is up to \$10 per day. Some farmers markets are matching \$25 or more.

SUN Bucks Bookkeeping

Record SUN Bucks transactions and match exactly the same way you record SNAP EBT and SNAP Market Match transactions. There will be no differentiation between the two.

SUN Bucks for Vendors

Shoppers will use the same EBT tokens or scrip for SUN Bucks that you use for SNAP. Therefore, your market vendors will not know if the source of benefits was SNAP or SUN Bucks. They should be treated the same. Only SNAP-eligible foods can be purchased with the EBT tokens (scrip) and no change is given.

How do Children get SUN Bucks?

Scenario 1: School-aged children are automatically enrolled in SUN Bucks.¹

Most children are *automatically enrolled* in SUN Bucks. This happens when they are either:

1. Enrolled at a school that offers the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program **AND** they are individually approved for free or reduced-price meals at a school that isn't a Community Eligibility Provision or Provision 2 school².

¹ In the past, DSHS was able to automatically enroll children automatically in SUN Bucks if they were in the Food Assistance Program and State Funded Assistance. However, FNS no longer allows states to do this.

² Community Eligibility Provision or Provision 2 schools are those that serve breakfast or lunch at no cost to all students without the requirement to apply. Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) website: <https://ospi.k12.wa.us/policy-funding/child-nutrition/school-meals/national-school-lunch-program/community-eligibility-provision-cep-and-provision-2>

OR

2. Age 8-18 and a member of a household that receives benefits from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or SNAP.

Scenario 2: School-aged children must apply to get SUN Bucks

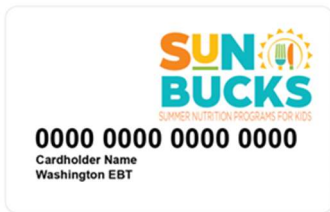
Parents of children who are not automatically enrolled in SUN Bucks may *submit an online SUN Bucks application* by going to the DSHS website for SUN Bucks: <https://sunbucks.dshs.wa.gov/en/>



To apply you may need:

- To provide the name of your child(ren)'s school they attended prior to the start of summer and
- To reference earnings statements or pay stubs to report income for any jobs, Social Security, or retirement benefits for anyone in the household (you will need both the amount and frequency) and
- If you participate in either state or federal SNAP or TANF, you will need to provide your child(ren)'s client IDs

What Do Children Get



Once validated, each child will receive an approval notice with detailed program information, a SUN Bucks card, and information on how to activate the card.

The SUN Bucks card is an Electronics Benefits Transfer (EBT) card that will be pre-loaded with \$120.

Customer Support

SUN Bucks Customer Service Contact Center can be reached at (833) 543-3230 between the hours of 8 am and 5 pm, Monday through Friday.

Families may also opt into text message alerts about SUN Bucks at textsunbucks.dshs.wa.gov.

More Information

- WA State Information: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sunbucks>
- Federal Information: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/summer/sunbucks>
- USDA Promotional Toolkit: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/summer/promotion>
- WSFMA Info for Shoppers about Food Benefits that they can use at farmers markets: <https://wafarmersmarkets.org/food-access-2/shopper-info/>

The WSFMA can be reached at (206) 706-5198 or info@wafarmersmarkets.org if you have any further questions.