

How states and school districts can ensure that four million children will receive the Summer EBT benefit they are eligible for under the law (June 2026 Update)¹

- 1. Solid successful results:** Overall, based on the summer 2025 participation records, the Summer EBT (also known as SUNBucks) program is showing solid successful results! A FOIA data request sampling of 20 states showed a total of \$2 billion was issued to cover the cost of summer meals for low-income children. The families of 16.6 million children were issued the \$120 benefit².
- 2. 18% expungement:** The same Summer FOIA sampling of 20 states also showed that \$363 million was never spent last year by eligible families (18% of the total). The \$120 was issued on a Summer EBT card, but after 122 days of no spending, the money was expunged and stayed with the Federal Government.
- 3. 122 day clock starts ticking regardless if a family kept their card:** The 122 day time limit begins on the day the \$120 payment is issued onto a card. If a state issues payment in June, but the family lost the card they received in the prior summer, they still have only 122 days to spend down the money. The sooner families are alerted that they need to request a Replacement Card, the greater likelihood they can fully spend down the \$120 payment (requesting a Replacement Card will not stop the 122 days clock from ticking and reset the deadline).



¹ David Rubel Associates posted [How states and school districts can ensure that millions of families receive the Summer EBT benefit they are eligible for under the law](#) in 2024 and 2025. The two earlier policy report focused on the limitations of the 122 day Summer EBT expungement rule. The 2025 update focused on the untapped potential for eligible families to submit an income verification application. The report includes a database showing how many applications were submitted in Summer 2024 based on a sampling of 18 states and analysis.

- 4. SNAP cards make a big difference:** Many states issue the \$120 on a family's SNAP card. States that did not load benefits onto existing SNAP cards and instead required parents to reuse the Summer EBT/SUN Bucks card from the previous summer had the highest expungement rates. Many parents did not know they needed to keep the card in a safe place so it could be used again the following summer.

Chart 1. 20 States Sampling based on FOIA requests Summer 2025

States Sampling ³	Total Summer EBT \$ distributed 2025	Total Expunged Summer EBT Dollars	2025 Expungement Rate	Summer EBT \$ issued on a SNAP EBT Card
Arizona	\$77,631,960	\$17,213,640	22.1%	x
California	\$508,477,381	\$118,475,230	23.3%	-
Colorado	\$53,841,360.	\$17,338,440	32.2%	-
Connecticut	\$38,257,800	\$8,294,350.	21.6%	-
District of Columbia	\$8,639,520	\$714,360.	8.2	
Illinois	\$136,413,480	\$13,300,966	9.7%	X
Kansas ⁴	\$16,061,880	\$79,080	.5%	X
Louisiana	\$70,824,480	\$12,000,000	17%	X
Massachusetts	\$64,059,240	\$7,905,240	12.5%	-
Maryland	\$75,961,920	\$15,193,760	19.5%	X
Minnesota	\$53,595,960	\$8,575,353	16%	-
Missouri ⁵	\$57,030,480	\$3,466,200	6%	X
Nebraska	\$14,549,520	\$2,830,440	19.4%	-
New York	\$239,437,560	\$62,198,880	26%	-
Nevada	\$37,427,160	\$7,461,696	20%	-
New Mexico	0	0		
North Carolina	126,631,440	17,552,760	13.8%	
Ohio	124,557,720	24,177,360	19.4%	X
Pennsylvania	135,202,680	7,733,280	5.7%	X
Washington State	65,524,920	14,978,280	22.8%	X
Wisconsin ⁶	53,809,920	4,394,280	8.1%	X
Total	\$1,957,936,381.	\$363,169,235	18%	

- 5. Summer EBT applications:** while most eligible families are automatically enrolled, there are still around 15% of families that must submit an income

³ A FOIA request was filed with both California Department of Social Services and California Department of Education (CDE). CDE does not have a separate breakdown for applications received.

⁴ Kansas Department of Children and Families is the only one of two states (and District of Columbia) that do not include Medicaid for automatically eligible. Without Medicaid, thousands more families must rely on their school district to submit the income eligibility documentation or a family can submit an application in order to receive Summer EBT. USDA-FNS estimated that there are 266,000 eligible children in Kansas. The FOIA showed that only 133,000 children received the Summer EBT benefit in 2025.

⁵ Missouri applications included July and August 2024

⁶ Wisconsin sent out 80,726 new cards in 2025. Of these new cards, 36,619 were never used and expunged. All other families received their \$120 benefit on a SNAP card (Quest) or a Summer EBT previously issued.

verification application. Between the first and second year of Summer EBT, the 20 states sampling shows that overall there was a significant increase in applications submitted, but there is still much room for improvement.

States Sampling	Potential Applications	2024 Applications Submitted	2025 Applications submitted	Change between 2024 and 2025	Total Potential Dollars
Arizona	110,000	4,926	2,345	-2,581	\$13,200,000
Colorado	67,400	25	2,673	2,648	\$8,088,000
Connecticut	54,600	3,173		-3173	6,552,000
Kansas	138,000	5,686	6,222	536	\$23,160,000
Louisiana	118,800	10,973	21,934	10,961	\$14,256,000
Massachusetts	103,000	21,635	6,808	-14,827	12,360,000
Maryland	100,000	12,978	31707	18729	12,000,000
Minnesota	82,400	221	1,847	1,626	\$9,888,000
Missouri	218,000	24,299	16,261	-8,038	\$26,160,000
Nebraska	35,000	3,103		-3103	\$4,200,000
New York	282,000	17,158	14,387	-2,771	\$33,840,000
Nevada	70,400	6,347	4,746	-1,601	\$8,448,000
New Mexico	44,600	4,088		-4088	\$5,352,000
North Carolina	193,600	37,374	37,213	-161	\$23,232,000
Ohio	167,400	6,801	14,995	8,194	\$20,088,000
Pennsylvania	233,200	7335		-7335	\$27,984,000
Washington	101,400	10,429	30,349	19,920	\$12,168,000
Wisconsin	80,200	3,566	5206	1640	\$9,624,000
Total	2,200,000	180,117			\$270,600,000

6. More publicity matters: The main reason why dollars were never spent is due to a lack of publicity. Many parents still do not know about the Summer EBT program and how it works. School districts, anti-hunger organizations, elected officials, local government, food pantries and other stakeholders need to ramp up the publicity each spring and summer.

7. Summer 2026 starts now! Stakeholders hold the key to getting the word out to eligible families to submit a Summer EBT application. School Districts, elected officials, anti-hunger organizations, community based organizations, food pantries can make the difference here. Summer EBT 2026 applications can be uploaded now! Most states have a cutoff date in late August; check your state website for the applications cutoff date.

8. **\$474 million total expungement in 2025:** When all 38 Summer EBT participating states are factored together, the estimated expungement dollar figure for 2025 amount increases to \$474 million⁷. For 2025, around \$474 million stayed with the Federal Government instead of helping struggling families feed their children.

SUMMER EBT

An additional \$120 food benefit for students during summer months!



How do I get Summer EBT?

Many students will automatically receive a summer EBT benefit based on information gathered from Household Income forms submitted at their school.

If you're not automatically enrolled and believe your student is eligible, please contact the SEBT Support Center.

Students may be eligible if:

- They attend a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and qualify based on household income
- The student's family receives SNAP or Colorado Works
- Your student receives Medicaid AND qualifies based on household income using the NSLP income guidelines
- They are in foster care, a migrant, or experiencing homelessness





What can I buy?

Buy food like fruits, dairy, breads, meats/poultry/fish. Use Summer EBT at stores that accept SNAP, like grocery or corner stores, and online at King Soopers, Safeway, Walmart and Amazon.

Additional resources

Need more food help? Food pantries and other programs (like WIC and SNAP) offer free food, nutrition support and more. Visit Hunger Free Colorado's COFoodFinder.org to learn more!

Scan or visit cdhs.colorado.gov/summer-ebt to learn more!

Summer EBT funds are available to households regardless of immigration status and are not considered part of public charge.



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⁷ The sampling cited in this report is based on 20 states (including the most populous states). The other 18 participating states (along with Puerto Rico and District of Columbia) had a total of 5,742,000 eligible children. Using the percentage factor of 18% from the sampling, the other states had an expungement dollar amount of \$124 million. \$124 million + \$350 million = \$474 million. See Appendix 1 for chart showing all the other 18 participating states with number of eligible children.

Appendix 1:

Summer EBT participating states not included in the 20 state FOIA request sampling.

USDA-FNS SUMMER EBT Estimated Recipients

States	SNAP/NAP EBT-recipient children: NSLP schools and non-NSLP schools (thousands)	All other Summer EBT-eligible children who do not receive SNAP/NAP on EBT cards: NSLP schools (thousands)	Total children eligible for Summer EBT (thousands)	Estimated Summer EBT benefit totals*
Arkansas	103	212	315	\$37,800,000
District of Columbia	47	33	80	\$9,600,000
Delaware	50	30	80	\$9,600,000
Hawaii	48	52	100	\$12,000,000
Indiana	215	454	669	\$80,280,000
Kentucky	180	420	600	\$72,000,000
Maine	46	16	63	\$7,560,000
Michigan	584	252	836	\$100,320,000
Montana	37	31	68	\$8,160,000
North Dakota	16	23	40	\$4,800,000
New Hampshire	23	16	39	\$4,680,000
New Jersey	277	263	540	\$64,800,000
Oregon	205	89	294	\$35,280,000
Rhode Island	38	29	66	\$7,920,000
Tennessee	306	338	644	\$77,280,000
Virginia	289	502	791	\$94,920,000
Vermont	22	12	35	\$4,200,000
West Virginia	103	99	202	\$24,240,000
Puerto Rico	165	115	280	\$33,600,000
Total	2754	2986	5742	\$689,040,000

*This table displays upper estimates for some states. Therefore, **USDA-FNS cautions against summing these figures to generate a national estimate of Summer EBT eligibility.** Summing these figures will generate a figure that exceeds USDA's best national estimate of eligibility.