

# News Release

NEWS RELEASE (Note: Spanish language version available)

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## Oregon launching Summer EBT food benefits program for school-aged children

### Need to know:

- Summer EBT is a new federal food benefits program to help families buy food for their school-aged children during the summer.
- Oregon will provide more than \$35 million in Summer EBT food benefits to around 294,000 school-aged children beginning in late June 2024.
- Families with eligible children will receive a one-time payment of \$120 in food benefits.



(Salem, OR) – Oregon Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (Summer EBT) is a new food benefits program to help shrink the hunger gap when children are on summer break and don't have easy access to healthy meals at school. Summer EBT starts in late June and will provide \$120 per eligible child to buy food.

"Summer break is days away for families with school-age children. During the summer, many families must provide another 10 meals per child, per week. The strain that puts on a family's grocery budget can amplify child hunger. Summer EBT is on its way to help," said Dr. Charlene Williams, Director of the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) which is partnering with the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) to provide the new program.

"Summer EBT is an evidence-based program proven to reduce child hunger and support healthier diets. We want to raise awareness about this new program and make sure families know what to expect and do when the program begins," said Fariborz Pakseresht, ODHS Director. "Child hunger can have lasting impacts on health and academic achievement. Getting every eligible child connected to Summer EBT will help Oregon's children thrive year-round and as they grow up."

### Who is eligible for Summer EBT food benefits?

Families can find details about Summer EBT at [sebt.oregon.gov](http://sebt.oregon.gov).

School-aged children are typically eligible for Summer EBT if:

- Their household already participates in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or the Oregon Health Plan (OHP, also known as Medicaid), or
- They are in foster care, or
- They attend a school that offers the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program, and their household's income meets the requirements for free or reduced-price school meals, or
- They attend a school that offers the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program and are:
  - Enrolled in migrant programs
  - Experiencing homelessness
  - Participating in the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
  - Attending Head Start

Families receiving Summer EBT can continue participating in other meal programs in their schools and communities.

Summer EBT benefits are not considered in a public charge test and are available to children regardless of immigration status.

## How will families receive Summer EBT food benefits?

There are two ways families can access Summer EBT benefits. About 70 percent of eligible children will be automatically enrolled in Summer EBT. Families of the remaining 30 percent of eligible children will need to fill out a simple application.

- **Automatic enrollment:** Families that participate in SNAP, TANF or OHP will be automatically enrolled and don't need to apply. Children in foster care also will be automatically enrolled. For families receiving SNAP or TANF benefits, Summer EBT will be added to the household's Oregon EBT card. For families receiving OHP, a new EBT card will be mailed to the address on file. Families will get a letter for each eligible child by mail or email when their benefits have been sent. They will receive the benefits in one payment.
- **Application:** Families with children who are not automatically eligible can apply for Summer EBT. To be eligible, children must be enrolled in a school with free or reduced-price meals and live in a household that meets the income requirements for free or reduced-price meals. At [oregon.gov](http://oregon.gov), families can sign-up to get a notification by text or email when it's time to complete the application. As part of this application, families must provide the child's name, school, date of birth, address and household income. Qualifying families will be mailed an Oregon EBT card. They will receive the benefits in one payment.

Families can use their Summer EBT benefits at stores and farmer's markets that accept EBT.

## More about Summer EBT

Summer EBT became a new, permanent program for states and certain Indian Tribal Organizations through the federal Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023. Most states will start providing Summer EBT in June 2024. Oregon's participation was made possible through an investment from the Oregon State Legislature of \$12 million. That investment will draw \$83 million in federal funding to Oregon, mostly in the form of grocery benefits families will spend in their communities.

## Additional resources to help meet basic needs

- Families can get more support from other summer meal programs as well as through these food resources: Find food resources in your community: [oregon.gov](http://oregon.gov)
- Find a food pantry: [oregonfoodbank.org](http://oregonfoodbank.org)
- Text the word "FOOD" or "COMIDA" to 304-304
- Learn about government programs and community resources for older adults and people with disabilities: Aging and Disability Resource Connection of Oregon at 1-855-673-2372 or <https://www.adrcoforegon.org>.
- Dial 2-1-1 or text your zip code to 898-211, [211info.org](http://211info.org)
- Find local resources and support by contacting your local Community Action Agency: [caporegon.org/find-services/](http://caporegon.org/find-services/)

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