

PERMANENCY PLANNING POLICY, PROTOCOL, AND GUIDANCE
SUN Bucks - also known as Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (S-EBT)

Purpose

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) SUN Bucks program will officially operate in 2025, its second year of operation in North Carolina. SUN Bucks provides grocery-buying benefits to qualifying families with school-aged children during the summer months when schools are on summer break. SUN Bucks is sometimes referred to as Summer EBT or S-EBT. SUN Bucks benefits are issued to debit-like cards (EBT cards) that families can use to purchase nutritious food during the summer period. Benefit amounts will be disclosed at the beginning of each calendar year on the SUN Bucks website: ncdhhs.gov/sunbucks. The SUN Bucks total benefit for summer 2025 will be \$120 issued in a single payment. The amount may vary each year. Benefits are meant to be used during the summer and will expire 122 days after they are issued. In addition to receiving SUN Bucks, families also are encouraged to have their children, ages 18 and younger, participate in other federal summer nutrition programs available at no cost to them. More information can be found at SummerMeals4NCKids.org.

Legal Authorization

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (PL 117-328) (the Act) authorized a permanent, nationwide Summer EBT program beginning in 2024. The Act gives the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture authority to issue guidance and approve State Agency plans.

Guidance

The NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI) will continue their collaboration to administer the program in 2025. Many children will be automatically eligible for SUN Bucks, but some will need to apply. An [online application](#) for SUN Bucks 2025 is now available. Eligibility notices will be sent to families in the Spring (targeting April/May 2025) via email, text, and robocall. Families should be encouraged to review the notice for important information about SUN Bucks.

Eligibility will be reviewed every two weeks from May through September 2025, with cards being mailed as additional children qualify. Once eligibility is confirmed, benefits will be loaded onto the SUN Bucks cards and issued on the next scheduled distribution date. Most children who automatically qualify will begin receiving their benefits in May.

Important information about SUN Bucks cards for foster children:

- New SUN Bucks cards will be mailed for all students identified as foster children.
- The cards will be issued in the student's name and will not be grouped together with multiple children.
- SUN Bucks cards will be mailed to the local county DSS office with *custody* of the child in foster care.
- **The student's foster care social worker will provide the card and print a copy of the Eligibility notice to provide with the card or assist with transfer of the card to the student's placement provider, whether that is a family foster home or congregate care setting. It is imperative that the child's foster care social worker facilitates the transfer of the card with the child should they change caregivers.**
- The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) provide additional information about where cards will be sent and is available on the [NC DHHS website](#).

Resources

- Attached to this guidance is the JOB AID to be referenced when assisting families with SUN Bucks questions.
- More information on the new SUN Bucks program including FAQs, an informational flyer, a toolkit and additional resources can be found at ncdhhs.gov/sunbucks.



NC DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES

North Carolina Department of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION