

Department of Social and Health Services

Olympia, Washington

**EAZ Manual**

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Category: SUN Bucks

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**Summary**

Update information

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SUN Bucks

Revised ~~July 11, 2024~~ June 6, 2025

Purpose:

This section describes the Summer EBT – known as SUN Bucks – program that provides a one-time food benefit to families with school-aged children in Washington during summer months following each academic school year beginning in 2024.

[WAC 388-487-0010](#) - What is the sun bucks program?

[WAC 388-487-0020](#) - Is my child eligible for sun bucks?

[WAC 388-487-0030](#) - General information about sun bucks benefits.

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### **Clarifying Information – [WAC 388-487-0010](#)**

1. SUN Bucks is a one-time \$120 food benefit issued directly to each eligible child.
  - a. Benefits will be issued on individual white cards.
  - b. Benefit amount will be adjusted annually for inflation.
2. SUN Bucks is a child nutrition program ~~administered by DSHS, but is operated separately from Basic Food and administered outside of DSHSACES and other internal eligibility systems.~~ The program isn't subject to the same rules as Basic Food and DSHS staff won't determine eligibility for or issue SUN Bucks benefits.

### **Clarifying Information – [WAC 388-487-0020](#)**

#### **Automatic Eligibility**

Most children will automatically qualify for SUN Bucks benefits through receiving certain public assistance programs or free or reduced-price meals at school.

1. To automatically qualify for receiving public assistance, a child must be between the ages of 8 and 18 years old and included in an assistance unit who receives at least one of the following benefits:
  - a. [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families \(TANF\)](#)
  - ~~b. State Funded Assistance (SFA)~~
  - b. [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP or Basic Food\)](#)

~~NOTE: Zero issuance households are not eligible unless they receive at least \$1 of food benefits.~~

~~NOTE: FAP and SFA recipients were automatically approved in 2024, but will not automatically qualify for 2025. These families may need to submit an application, please see application process~~

~~—Food Assistance Program (FAP)~~

3.2. To automatically qualify through a school, a child must be:

- a. Enrolled at a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP), and
- b. Qualified for free or reduced-price meals; or
- c. Meeting [Income Eligibility Guidelines](#) (IEG - 185% FPL) ~~through a Family Income Survey~~

**Note:** Children who automatically receive free or reduced-price meals in Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) or Provision 2 schools won't automatically qualify for SUN Bucks unless they meet income guidelines through a [Child Nutrition Eligibility and Education Benefit \(CNEEB\) application](#) ~~Family Income Survey~~.

### Application Process

For children who aren't automatically eligible, ~~applications~~ will be available through ~~August 31, 2024~~ [the summer operational period](#)

1. To qualify for SUN Bucks via application, a child must be:

- a. Enrolled at a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP), and
- b. Living in a household that meets child nutrition [Income Eligibility Guidelines](#) (IEG - 185% FPL).
- c. **Note:** *Income Eligibility Guidelines are adjusted every year on July 1. ~~Family Income Surveys or~~ SUN Bucks applications are subject to income limits in place on the date of application.*
- d. **Note:** *Applications are subject to verification on a case-by-case basis. Requested verification must be provided no later than 30 days from the date of application.*

**Example:** Prince receives free meals from the private school he attends. Their school doesn't participate in the NSLP or the SBP and their family doesn't receive any public assistance benefits. Prince doesn't automatically qualify for SUN Bucks. Prince's dad applies for SUN Bucks and their household income is under the IEG limit. Because Prince is not enrolled in an NSLP / SBP school, they aren't eligible for SUN Bucks.

**Example:** Duey attends a school that automatically qualifies every child for free or reduced-price meals due to Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). Duey's family submitted a [Family Income Survey](#) [Child Nutrition Eligibility and Education Benefit \(CNEEB\) application](#) to their school that showed their income is under the IEG (185% FPL) back in September 2023. Duey will be automatically qualified for SUN Bucks.

**Example:** Ender attends a CEP school that offers free or reduced-price meals regardless of household income. His family doesn't receive public assistance benefits. Ender won't automatically receive a SUN Bucks card. Ender's mom submits a SUN Bucks application online, but their household income is over the IEG limit. Ender doesn't qualify for SUN Bucks.

**Example:** Delaney is in Kindergarten and is included in an assistance unit that receives Basic Food assistance. Because she is 6 years old, she doesn't meet age requirements to qualify for SUN Bucks for receiving public assistance. Also, Delaney's school doesn't participate in NSLP. Delaney isn't eligible for SUN Bucks

**Example:** Josie lives in a household where some of the members receive TANF benefits. Josie isn't included in an assistance unit approved for TANF benefits. Josie isn't automatically qualified for SUN Bucks through receiving public assistance. However, she is attending a school that participates in the NSLP and she receives free or reduced-price meals due to meeting income thresholds. Josie will automatically qualify for SUN Bucks for this reason.

#### **Clarifying Information – [WAC 388-487-0030](#)**

#### **SUN Bucks EBT Cards**

Once approved, a notice of approval and a dedicated SUN Bucks EBT card will be sent to each eligible child's last known address as reported to DSHS or their school district. [Newly eligible children will receive a new card, existing children who kept their cards will have benefits reloaded.](#) The SUN Bucks EBT card can take up to 7-10 business days to arrive after notice of approval. [For more information on how to replace a SUN Bucks card please visit the FAQ portion of the DSHS SUN Bucks website](#)

#### **How use the SUN Bucks EBT cards**

Households can activate their SUN Bucks cards and create a secure PIN prior to using the benefits. An authorized parent or caregiver can use the SUN Bucks card on behalf of the eligible child. SUN Bucks can be used to purchase food from any retailer authorized to accept SNAP benefits. Intentional misuse of SUN Bucks, such as selling, transferring or

trading, transferred, are subject to fines or legal action including criminal prosecution. Households can't receive SUN Bucks from more than one state.

### **Removal of benefits**

SUN Bucks benefits expire 122 days from the date benefits are placed on the card. Any unused SUN Bucks benefits will expire after 122 days, regardless of most recent dated used. SUN Bucks benefits that are redeemed, expired, lost or stolen due to skimming, phishing, or other fraudulent activity won't be replaced.

### **Fair Hearing Rights**

Households who disagree with any SUN Bucks decision will need to contact the SUN Bucks Customer Service Contact Center at 833-543-3230 (TTY: 1-800-833-6348) between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday–Friday (except observed holidays) for review and attempt to resolve any issues. If a household wishes to continue with a fair hearing, it will be submitted through the SUN Bucks Customer Service Contact Center. Households have until 90 days following the end of the summer operational period August 31st, 2024 to request a hearing.