




**FACT SHEET  
(June 14, 2024)**

Children need healthy food year-round to play, grow, and learn. Maryland SUN Bucks will help families stretch their grocery budget during the summer and provide their children with the nutrition they need to thrive.

Summer is a time when many children lose access to the free and reduced-price meals they get at school, and when families might need a little extra help putting meals on the table. To make sure children have access to healthy and nutritious meals, the Maryland SUN Bucks program will provide \$40 per month for June, July and August (\$120 total) for each eligible child to help families buy groceries during the summer break. Maryland SUN Bucks also gives families the flexibility to select foods that fit their culture and lifestyle.

While Maryland SUN Bucks is similar to the Summer SNAP program that we implemented from 2019-2023, our new program will reach far more children and will provide a larger benefit to families.

**MARYLAND SUN BUCKS vs. SUMMER SNAP**

 <small>SUMMER NUTRITION PROGRAMS FOR KIDS</small>	<b>2019 Summer SNAP Program</b>	<b>2023 Summer SNAP Program</b>	<b>New 2024 Maryland SUN Bucks Program*</b>
# of Children Served	3,923	90,571	500,000
# of Participating Jurisdictions	4	14	24
Cost to the State	\$200,000	\$5 million	\$5.8 million
Cost to Local Jurisdictions	\$221,967	\$4,505,812	\$0
Cost to the Federal Government	\$0	\$0	\$65.8 Million
Benefits Issued to Families	\$421,967	\$9,505,812	\$60 million
Are FARMS Children Not Enrolled in SNAP Eligible?	No	No	Yes

Eligibility Determination Process	DHS used SNAP administrative data to identify customers	DHS used SNAP administrative data to identify customers	~90% of the customers are categorically eligible based on their participation in free and reduced price school meals, enrollment in SNAP, TCA, or Medicaid.
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\*Estimated 2024 data

### **Eligibility**

A school-aged child is eligible for benefits under the Maryland SUN Bucks program if they:

- Enrolled in a Maryland school that participates in Free and Reduced-Price School Meals (FARMS);
- Are age 5-18 and their household already participates in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), or Medical Assistance/Medicaid (MA);
- Applied for and were enrolled in Free and Reduced-Price School Meals (FARMS) or School Breakfast Program (SBP) during School Year (SY) 2023-2024;
- Are in foster care; or
- Do not meet any of the criteria above but apply and are determined eligible for FARMS before August 31, 2024.

### **Enrollment**

Most eligible families will get Maryland SUN Bucks automatically. If a household already participates in SNAP, TCA, or Medicaid and/or has applied for and received Free and Reduced School Meals (FARMS) during SY 2023-2024, they will be automatically enrolled in the program. Also, children who are experiencing foster care, unhoused/homeless, migrant, or considered “runaway” will be automatically enrolled. These households do not need to fill out an application.

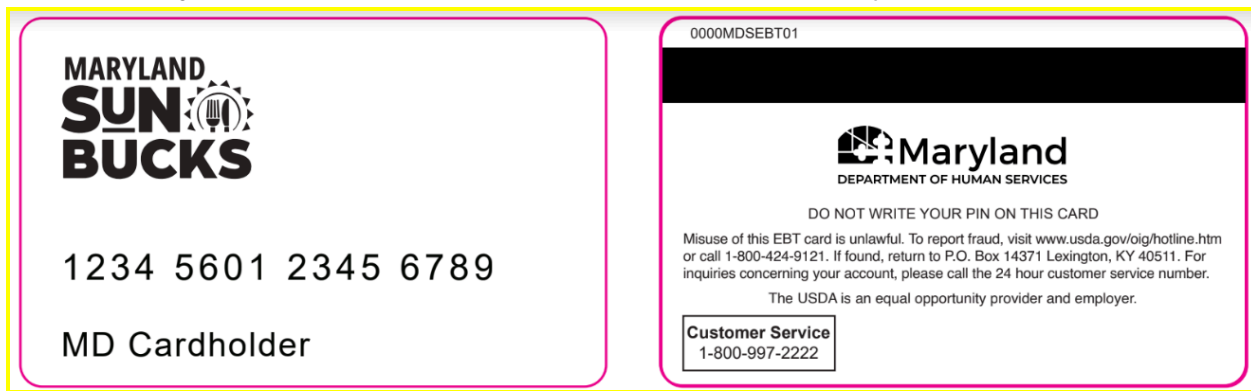
A child who is enrolled in a Community Eligibility Program (CEP) school that automatically receives FARMS, is not actively receiving SNAP, TCA, or Medicaid, and is not in foster care will not be automatically enrolled. The child’s parent/guardian will have to apply and be determined eligible to enroll

in the Maryland SUN Bucks program. Families must **apply by August 31, 2024**, to receive benefits for the summer of 2024.

Families with eligible children will be mailed a notice of eligibility.

### **How Maryland SUN Bucks Works**

Maryland SUN Bucks benefits will be issued on existing SNAP EBT cards for families who receive SNAP or TCA benefits. For children that do not receive SNAP or TCA benefits on an existing card, the benefits will be issued on a white “Maryland SUN Bucks” card in the child’s name, pictured below.



The benefits can be used at authorized SNAP retailers, like grocery stores and farmers markets, to purchase healthy foods like fruits, vegetables, meats and other protein sources, whole grains, dairy, and other food products.

### **How Might You Help?**

Your partnership is vital to making the Maryland SUN Bucks program successful. Here are three ways you can help:

1. Spread the word! Help educate local officials, community partners, school system contacts about the program. Share our website address: <http://dhs.maryland.gov/sunbucks/>
2. Share information about Maryland SUN Bucks with ALL staff so anyone can answer questions about the program as they help serve Marylanders.

3. Inform parents and guardians who must apply for Maryland SUN Bucks that they may do so starting in late June at <https://mymdthink.maryland.gov>.

Visit the Maryland SUN Bucks [website](#) to learn more about this exciting new program, a partnership between the Maryland Department of Human Services and the Maryland State Department of Education made possible by the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service. Together, we can make summer brighter for our children.