

Governor Phil Murphy

# ICYMI: New Jersey Distributes Summer EBT Benefits to More Than 693,000 Eligible Children

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**TRENTON** – The New Jersey Department of Agriculture, in partnership with the New Jersey Departments of Education and Human Services, announced today that more than 693,000 eligible children across the state will be receiving Summer EBT benefits in the coming days. New Jersey is participating in this permanent, nationwide USDA program, now in its second year of operation, to provide food dollars to low-income families with school-aged children over the summer months when school is not in session.

For Summer 2025, the NJ Summer EBT program will continue to provide families with a one-time Summer EBT benefit amount of \$120 per eligible child to buy nutritious food at grocery stores, farmers markets, and other authorized retailers during the summer months. New Jersey's total Summer EBT distribution is expected to amount to over \$90 million in federal food security benefits that will be infused into New Jersey's local economy. As the school year comes to an end, more than 693,000 eligible children across 736 participating school food authorities are receiving benefits under the NJ Summer EBT program.

"New Jersey students rely on free school breakfasts and lunches to get the nutrition they need to learn, grow, and thrive," **said Governor Phil Murphy**. "With the Summer EBT program, we are bridging the gap to ensure that our students have access to nutritious foods, even when school is not in session. We are proud to have already distributed benefits to more than 693,000 eligible students."

"Through administering federal school nutrition programs, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture will continue engaging in all viable efforts to reduce food insecurity in this state," **Secretary Ed Wengryn said**. "The Summer EBT program is a major component of ensuring that children and families who depend upon school meals will continue to have their nutritional needs met when school is not in session. We are highly aware that these are uncertain times for children whose healthiest and most wholesome foods come through school nutrition programs. That is why we will do everything we can to ensure that all eligible students and their families have access to this vital program."

Under the program, eligible students are certified through their school districts, which must participate in the National School Lunch and National School Breakfast Programs. Eligible students must meet the income threshold for federal free and reduced-price school meals, including those who attend schools that provide free meals to all students through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). Additionally, school-aged children who are enrolled in SNAP, TANF, income-eligible Medicaid, or foster care will be eligible for Summer EBT, regardless of where they attend school.

[The Back to top](#)

Meals and Summer EBT Application will still be accepted throughout the summer. To apply for School Meals and Summer EBT benefits, families should contact their local school district.

The Department of Human Services' Division of Family Development has issued eligible families new benefit cards for Summer 2025. Each eligible child will be provided with a card. Families will be able to use the \$120 per eligible child on each card upon activation. Recipients can check their account balance by visiting [www.NJFamiliesFirst.com](http://www.NJFamiliesFirst.com) (<https://www.connectebt.com/ebtconnect/recipient/NJ/>), using the ConnectEBT mobile app, or by calling the phone number on the back of their card. This funding will be issued only once, and eligible families have 122 days (four months) to use their Summer EBT funds. If families do not use all of the funds within that time, the money will be removed from the card.

"We're proud to partner with the Departments of Agriculture and Education to deliver more than \$90 million in vital food support to families across our state, especially at a time when food and grocery prices remain high," **said Department of Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman**. "Ensuring New Jersey's children have access to healthy meals year-round is an investment worth making, and the Summer EBT program plays a critical role in meeting that need."

"The Summer EBT program is an important tool in supporting the health and well-being of New Jersey's students," **said Department of Education Commissioner Kevin Dehmer**. "Through strong collaboration among state agencies and local districts, this program helps ensure that students continue to have access to nutritious meals when school is not in session. Schools remain trusted community anchors even during the summer months, and we are grateful for the partnership and coordination that make this effort possible. Families experiencing homelessness, including migrant families, may still qualify for benefits and are encouraged to work with their school district to arrange for card pick-up if needed."

"I congratulate the New Jersey Department of Agriculture and our partner agencies, the Department of Human Services and the Department of Education, for once again making Summer EBT a reality for the students of New Jersey and their families," **said Mark Dinglasan, Executive Director of the Office of Food Security Advocate**. "This program is about more than just an EBT card, this is about decreasing burdens on families during the summer, supporting schools and businesses, and generating awareness in their communities. OFSA is proud to support this overall effort, especially the wonderful outreach efforts for Summer EBT and School Meal applications."

"Making sure children throughout New Jersey can get access to nutritious food over the summer is a key priority for all of us across State government," **said New Jersey Chief Innovation Officer Dave Cole**. "Given the various ways children become eligible, we were able to use artificial intelligence to enroll tens of thousands of additional families in Summer EBT while also reducing duplication. Thank you to the Department of Agriculture and other state partners for working with us - once again - to harness innovative technologies in a way that supports New Jerseyans."

For more information about New Jersey's Summer EBT program, including eligibility criteria, frequently asked questions, and additional contact details, please visit the State's official Summer EBT website at:

<https://www.nj.gov/summerebt/> (<https://www.nj.gov/summerebt/>)

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[Home \(/governor/\)](#)

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[Cabinet \(/governor/admin/cabinet\)](/governor/admin/cabinet)

[Office of Climate Action and the Green Economy \(/governor/climateaction/\)](/governor/climateaction/)

[Office of Equity \(/governor/admin/equity/\)](/governor/admin/equity/)

[Office of Health Care Affordability and Transparency \(/governor/admin/affordablehealthcare/index.shtml\)](/governor/admin/affordablehealthcare/index.shtml)

[Boards, Commissions & Authorities \(/governor/admin/bca\)](/governor/admin/bca)

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[Economy & Jobs \(/governor/initiatives/#Economy\)](/governor/initiatives/#Economy)

[Education \(/governor/initiatives/#Education\)](/governor/initiatives/#Education)

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[Health \(/governor/initiatives/#Health\)](/governor/initiatives/#Health)

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[Transportation \(/governor/initiatives/#Transportation\)](/governor/initiatives/#Transportation)

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[Executive Orders \(/infobank/eo/056murphy/approved/eo\\_archive.html\)](/infobank/eo/056murphy/approved/eo_archive.html)

[Administrative Orders \(/governor/news/ao/approved/ao\\_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/ao/approved/ao_archive.shtml)

[Direct Appointments \(/governor/news/appointments\)](/governor/news/appointments)

[Advice and Consent Appointments \(/governor/news/acappointments\)](/governor/news/acappointments)

[Statements on Legislation \(/governor/news/statements/approved/statements\\_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/statements/approved/statements_archive.shtml)

[Administration Reports \(/governor/news/adminreports/approved/archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/adminreports/approved/archive.shtml)

[Transition Reports \(/governor/news/reports/approved/reports\\_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/reports/approved/reports_archive.shtml)

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