

## Summer EBT Fact Sheet

In summer 2026, Nebraska will continue the Summer EBT (SEBT) program, which provides families with \$120 per eligible school-aged child to buy groceries when school is out. In summer, many children lose access to free and reduced-price school meals, and households may need extra help putting meals on the table. Most families will get these benefits automatically, but some parents must apply.

### Benefits of Summer EBT:

- Helps parents and caregivers buy healthy food for their children;
- It gives families the flexibility to select foods that fit their culture and lifestyle; and
- Improves food security and diet quality for participating children.

### Eligibility:

School-age children can be eligible for SEBT benefits by meeting one of the qualifying criteria:

- Direct certification: School-age children who receive public assistance programs are automatically eligible for SEBT. Public assistance programs include the following:
  - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);
  - Aid to Dependent Children (ADC);
  - Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservation (FDPIR); and
  - Qualifying income-based Medicaid programs with household income under 185% of the federal poverty level (FPL).
- Children enrolled in schools participating in the National School Lunch/ Breakfast Program (NSLP) and who were approved for free or reduced-priced meals for the 2025-26 school year through a school meals application.
- Children enrolled in schools participating in the NSLP and who are eligible for free or reduced-priced meals based on meeting one of the following criteria:
  - Participation in Head Start;
  - Homeless;
  - Foster Children; or
  - Runaway Status
- Children enrolled in schools participating in the NSLP or School Breakfast Program (SBP) but are not already eligible based on the options above and are determined income-eligible through the SEBT application.

## Enrollment:

Many households will automatically get SEBT if they receive other public assistance benefits, but some may need to apply. An application will need to be submitted if:

- Your student(s) went to a school with the NSLP during the 2025-26 school year, and your student(s) did not qualify for free or reduced-price meals, but you think you are eligible based on the program's income guidelines.
  - Students attending a Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) school, where all students receive meals at no cost and do not receive public assistance benefits, are not automatically eligible for SEBT and need to complete the SEBT application if they believe they qualify.
- You did not apply for free or reduced-price meals at the school during the 2025-26 school year, but you think you are eligible based on the program's income guidelines.
- Your 2025-26 school year application for free or reduced-price meals was denied for being over the income limit, but your household's income has decreased, and you think you are now eligible.
- You are not homeschooling your student(s).

Students approved for free or reduced-price meals during the 2025-26 school year are eligible for 2026 SEBT benefits and do not need to complete an application.

## How Summer EBT Works:

The benefits will be provided on a new SEBT card and can be used to buy groceries. Previous year Summer EBT cards will not be reused. Families will receive \$120 per eligible child for the summer. Benefits can be used at authorized retailers, such as grocery stores and farmers' markets, to purchase healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, meats, other protein sources, whole grains, and dairy. Soda and Energy Drinks cannot be purchased with SEBT benefits. Visit <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer-locator> to learn more.

To learn more about SEBT and complete an application, visit <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Summer-EBT.aspx>.