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Nearly 900,000 Michigan children to receive food assistance benefits this summer *MDHHS offers first-time Summer EBT program*

LANSING, Mich. – To help ensure children are able to access healthy food this summer while school is out, eligible families will soon receive \$120 per child through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' (MDHHS) new Michigan Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) program.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service has approved Michigan's plan for the Summer EBT program to help low-income families feed children over the summer months. Created by the U.S. Congress, the Summer EBT program is based on similar efforts used during the coronavirus pandemic to address food insecurity for students. MDHHS and the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) are working together to get these benefits to families across the state. Funds are being distributed ahead of the Friday, July 19 start date cited in the state's plan.

"Summer should be a time when children can learn, grow and play without worrying about where their next meal will come from," said Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI). "I'm so proud that the Governor and the State Legislature have acted to make sure every Michigan child has access to healthy meals during the school year. My legislative victory is focused on making sure children have the same access to healthy meals in the summer regardless of where they live in Michigan. This is bringing us one step closer to ending childhood hunger."

"Many Michigan children rely on breakfast and lunch provided at their school during the school year and we want to make sure they do not go hungry this summer while schools are on break," said Elizabeth Hertel, MDHHS director. "The Summer EBT program increases family's grocery-buying budgets and we are thrilled to get this funding out earlier than planned. We plan to get these benefits out even earlier next year."

Benefits will come in the form of EBT cards that families can use to buy groceries. Families who already have a Bridge card will have a one-time payment of \$120 per eligible child, the standard benefit amount set by the USDA for the 2024 program year, added to their existing card. Those who don't already have a card will be sent a pre-loaded card in the mail. Eligible families will receive a letter about the program.

“Providing nutritious meals to Michigan children – during the school year and during the summer – helps meet Goal 3 of [Michigan’s Top 10 Strategic Education Plan](#), to improve the health, safety and wellness of all learners,” said State Superintendent Dr. Michael F. Rice. “We need to support children nutritionally in the summer as we do in the school year, and this partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and MDHHS helps children and families.”

Most families eligible for these benefits will receive them automatically thanks to state agencies collaborating to identify kids who qualify based on their participation in other benefit programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or the free or reduced-price meal programs at their school.

A child is eligible for Summer EBT if they are:

- Household participants, between the ages of 6 to 18, who receive Food Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Food Distribution Program on Indian reservations or eligible Medical Assistance households at or below 185% of the federal poverty level.
- Students of any age certified as eligible to receive free or reduced-priced lunch through the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program.
- Approved through the [Summer EBT application process](#).

Additional programs designed to feed children during the summer months include the MDE-administered program like the [Summer Food Service Program](#), also known as Meet Up and Eat Up in Michigan, and the [Rural Non-Congregate Summer Food Service Program](#).

For more information, visit the Summer EBT page on the [MDHHS website](#).

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