



SUMMER NUTRITION PROGRAMS FOR KIDS

SPRING 2024: VIRGINIA UPDATE

Nice to Meet You

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Today We Will:

- Provide an overview on recent changes to federal child nutrition programs.
- Share more about how these changes impact Summer Meals.
- Provide an update on Summer EBT & what you can expect





**SUMMER NUTRITION PROGRAM
UPDATES**

New Ways to Combat Summer Hunger

- When school is out for summer, millions of kids lose access to USDA's school breakfast and lunch programs, putting them at higher risk of hunger.
- This summer USDA is launching flexible strategies for providing children with food and nutrition support in the summertime.
- This enhanced suite of tools is called SUN Programs: USDA's Summer Nutrition Programs for Kids.



Traditional in-person group meals and snacks provided at sites in communities with high rates of poverty.



Meal service available in some rural communities for pick-up or home delivery



Grocery electronic benefit transfer (EBT) program for families with eligible school-aged children, referred to as Summer EBT



VIRGINIA SUN MEALS & SUN MEALS TO-GO

Virginia SUN Meals Program

- Formally known as the Summer Food Service Programs (SFSP) and Seamless Summer Option (SSO).
- Children residing in areas where 50% or more qualify for free or reduced-price meals in the National School Lunch Program may receive two meals per day, at no charge.
- Sponsoring organizations are reimbursed by the VDOE-SCNP for all eligible meals served.

Virginia SUN Meals Program, Cont'd.

- Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, meals were required to be consumed on-site, in a congregate setting.
- COVID-19 flexibilities allowed meals to be consumed off-site, which proved to be an effective practice for increasing meal access.
- The interim final rule, published in December 2023, codified non-congregate meal service in rural areas.

Virginia SUN Meals To-Go

Formally known as rural non-congregate meal service in the SFSP and SSO.



Non-Congregate

SFSP and SSO sponsors in **rural areas** may operate non-congregate meal services in areas that do not have congregate meal services.



Multiple Days of Meals

Participants may receive up to 10 days worth of meals



Delivery & Pick-Up

Non-congregate meal services include home delivery and pick-up.

Rural Areas in Virginia



Where We Are Right Now

- The VDOE-SCNP is providing ongoing training and technical assistance to SFSP and SSO sponsors operating rural non-congregate meal service in summer 2024.
- The VDOE-SCNP is updating application materials to track rural non-congregate meal service and ensure sponsors have procedures in place to ensure program integrity.
- Lastly, the VDOE-SCNP is developing outreach materials to expand program access: updated branding that features the SUN logos, Outreach tool kit including flier, media release, and social media templates, printed fliers and poster promoting the texting number



SUMMER NUTRITION PROGRAMS FOR KIDS

**SCHOOL IS
OUT**

**SUMMER MEALS
ARE IN**

**TEXT "FOOD" TO 304-304
TO FIND A SITE NEAR YOU!**





VIRGINIA SUN BUCKS

Background on the Virginia Sun Bucks Program

- The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (PL 117-328) authorized a permanent, nationwide Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (Summer EBT) program beginning in 2024. In our state, this program will be known as Virginia Sun Bucks
- Through Virginia Sun Bucks, children deemed eligible will receive \$120 to purchase additional food in the summer. Benefits will be delivered in one lump sum.
- Based on the most recent PEBT numbers, we estimate that 750,000 children will be eligible for this program.

Who Will Receive the Benefit

- Most children will be enrolled automatically. This applies to children who **applied for and receive** any of the benefits listed below:
 - SNAP
 - TANF
 - Medical Assistance
 - Free or Reduced Priced Meals

Children who are not automatically enrolled will have an alternative way to verify their income and receive benefits.



Where We Are Right Now

- We submitted a state plan to the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) on February 15.
- Once the plan has been approved, we will be able to share more detail and materials that you can share with families.





OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS



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