

CAPITOLWIRE: State announces new summer meal program for low-income school students.

January 11, 2024

The state will provide meals over the summer for students who normally get free meals during the school year, the Shapiro administration announced Wednesday. "Healthy, nutritious meals are vital to the overall health and success of all of Pennsylvania's children, and the Shapiro Administration knows they cannot and should not be expected to go without meals and the basic resources they need to succeed, regardless of the time of year," [said](#) Department of Human Services Secretary Val Arkoosh. The Summer-EBT program was created by the federal Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 to provide school aged children who are income eligible for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) with an additional source of nutrition during the summer months when children are not in school to receive school meals. The total Summer-EBT benefit is set by federal law at \$40 per month per eligible child to cover the three summer months - June, July, and August. Pennsylvania will be issuing the Summer EBT benefit as a single \$120 issuance with all benefits issued by September 30, 2024. Summer-EBT benefits will be issued on a family's existing EBT card, if possible, or a new EBT card will be issued to newly eligible families. An estimated 600,000 to 900,000 children will be automatically issued Summer-EBT benefits based on their eligibility for Free or Reduced-Priced meals under the NSLP. "This program will have enormous value in closing the summer hunger gap when kids are on break and not getting nutritious school meals," said Kristan Delle, MDA, RD, LDN, Secretary/Treasurer of the School Nutrition Association of Pennsylvania. One in eight kids goes hungry every day in Pennsylvania and in rural areas, as many as one in five kids experience hunger, according to SNAP.

<https://www.capitolwire.com/default.asp?tabstucknum=50>