MARYLAND SUN BUCKS

FACT SHEET

September 24, 2024

Children need healthy food year-round to play, grow, and learn. Maryland SUN Bucks helps families stretch their grocery budget during the summer when many children lose access to the free and reduced-price meals at school. To ensure children have access to healthy and nutritious meals, the Maryland SUN Bucks program provides $40 per month for June, July and August ($120 total) for each eligible child. Maryland SUN Bucks gives families the flexibility to choose foods that fit their culture and lifestyle.

While Maryland SUN Bucks is similar to the Summer SNAP program we offered from 2019 to 2023, our new program reaches far more children and provides larger benefits to families.

MARYLAND SUN BUCKS vs. SUMMER SNAP

SUN — SUMMER NUTRITION PROGRAMS FOR KIDS

	2019 Summer SNAP Program	2023 Summer SNAP Program	New 2024 Maryland SUN Bucks Program*
# of Children Served	3,923	90,571	586,266 (9/16/2024)
# of Participating Jurisdictions	4	14	24
Cost to the State	$200,000	$5 million	$5.8 million (FY25 appropriation)
Cost to Local Jurisdictions	$221,967	$4,505,812	$0
Cost to the Federal Government	$0	$0	$76.84 Million (8/5 estimate)
Benefits Issued to Families	$421,967	$9,505,812	$70.59 Million (as of 9/16/2024)
Are FARMS Children Not Enrolled in SNAP Eligible?	No	No	Yes
Eligibility Determination Process	DHS used SNAP administrative data to identify customers	DHS used SNAP administrative data to identify customers	~99% of the customers are categorically eligible based on their participation in free and reduced price school meals, enrollment in SNAP, TCA, or Medicaid.

Eligibility

A school-aged child is eligible for benefits under the Maryland SUN Bucks program if they:

- ➤ Enrolled in a Maryland school that participates in Free and Reduced-Price School Meals (FARMS);
- ➤ Are age 5-18 and live in a household that participates in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), or Medical Assistance/Medicaid (MA);
- ➤ Applied for and were enrolled in FARMS or School Breakfast Program (SBP) during the 2023-2024 school year;
- ➤ Are in foster care, homeless, runaway, child of a migrant worker; or
- ➤ Do not meet the above criteria but apply and are determined eligible for FARMS by August 31, 2024.
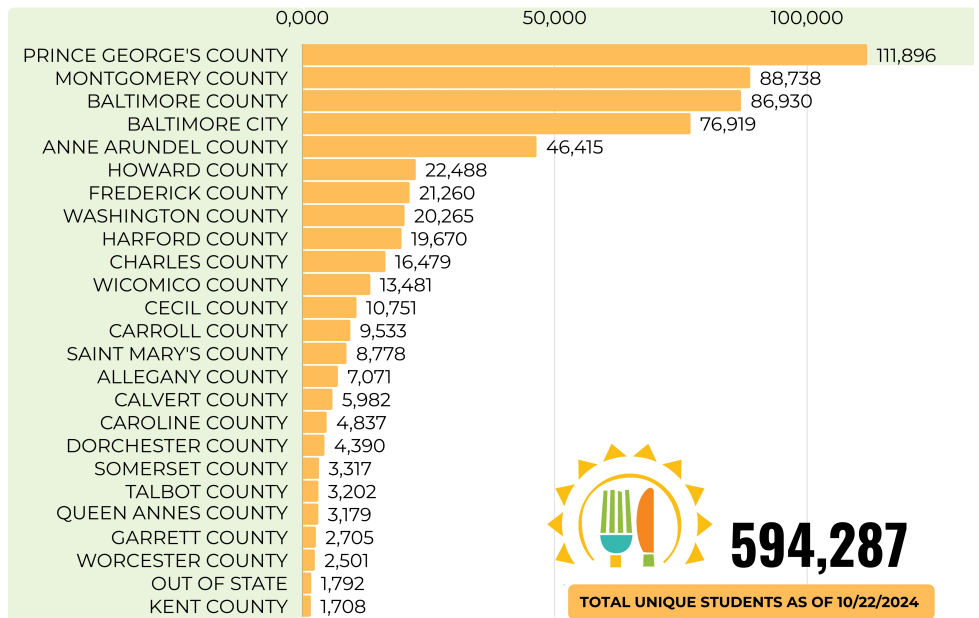
Enrollment

Most eligible children automatically received Maryland SUN Bucks if their household already participated in SNAP, TCA, or Medicaid or applied for and received Free and Reduced School Meals (FARMS) during the 2023-2024 school year. Children were also automatically enrolled if they were in out-of-home care, unhoused/homeless, migrant, or considered "runaway." No application was needed.

Children who were enrolled in a Community Eligibility Program (CEP) school that receives FARMS but were not on SNAP, TCA, or Medicaid, and did not fall into the previously mentioned categories, had to apply for the program. To be eligible for summer 2024, families had to apply by August 31, 2024.
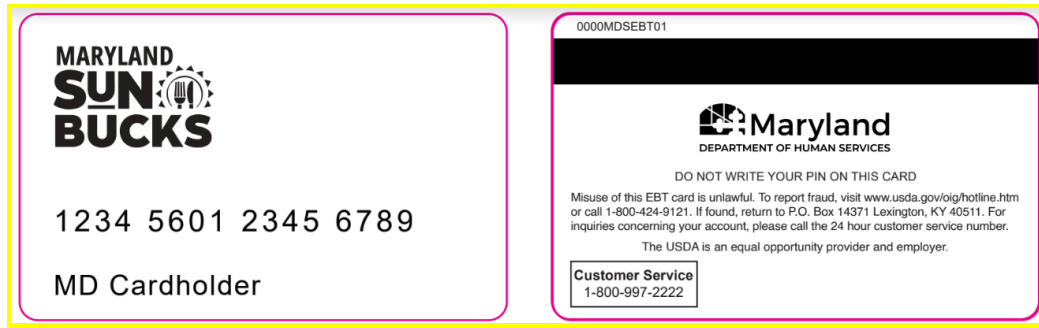
SUN BUCKS ISSUANCE BY JURISDICTION SUMMER 2024

Jurisdiction	Value
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY	111,896
MONTGOMERY COUNTY	88,738
BALTIMORE COUNTY	86,930
BALTIMORE CITY	76,919
ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY	46,415
HOWARD COUNTY	22,488
FREDERICK COUNTY	21,260
WASHINGTON COUNTY	20,265
HARFORD COUNTY	19,670
CHARLES COUNTY	16,479
WICOMICO COUNTY	13,481
CECIL COUNTY	10,751
CARROLL COUNTY	9,533
SAINT MARY'S COUNTY	8,778
ALLEGANY COUNTY	7,071
CALVERT COUNTY	5,982
CAROLINE COUNTY	4,837
DORCHESTER COUNTY	4,390
SOMERSET COUNTY	3,317
TALBOT COUNTY	3,202
QUEEN ANNES COUNTY	3,179
GARRETT COUNTY	2,705
WORCESTER COUNTY	2,501
OUT OF STATE	1,792
KENT COUNTY	1,708

594,287

TOTAL UNIQUE STUDENTS AS OF 10/22/2024

594,287 total includes 1,792 Maryland students with out of state addresses

How Maryland SUN Bucks Works

Maryland SUN Bucks benefits were issued on existing SNAP EBT cards for families who already received SNAP or TCA benefits. For children that did not receive SNAP or TCA benefits on an existing card, the benefits were issued on a new, white "Maryland SUN Bucks" card in the child's name, pictured below.

The benefits can be used at authorized SNAP retailers, like grocery stores and farmers markets, to purchase healthy foods like fruits, vegetables, meats and other protein sources, whole grains, dairy, and other food products.

How Might You Help?

Your partnership is vital to making the Maryland SUN Bucks program successful. Here are ways you can help:

- Spread the word! Help educate local officials, community partners, school system contacts about the program. Share our website address: http://dhs.maryland.gov/sunbucks/

- Inform parents and guardians who need to apply for Maryland SUN Bucks that they may do so year-round at https://mymdthink.maryland.gov.