

## **West Virginia Summer EBT 2026 FAQ for Student Households**

### **Q1. What is Summer EBT?**

A1. Summer EBT (SEBT) is a federal nutrition program that provides qualifying families with a one-time payment of \$120 for each eligible school-aged child. This benefit is distributed once immediately before or during the summer period.

### **Q2. Is the SEBT program income-based?**

A2. Yes, the SEBT program is income-based. Applicants may be required to provide income verification after submitting their application.

### **Q3. Where can I find the income guidelines for SEBT?**

Q3. The income guidelines for SEBT are available on the Department of Human Services (DoHS) Bureau for Financial Assistance (BFA) website at [bfa.wv.gov/summer-ebt](http://bfa.wv.gov/summer-ebt).

### **Q4. Is there an age range for this benefit?**

A4. The primary age group for this benefit is children aged 6 to 17.

However, children aged 4–21 who were enrolled during the 2025–2026 school year in a school that participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or who meet streamline certification criteria (such as receiving WV WORKS, SNAP, or certain Medicaid categories) may also qualify.

**NOTE:** *A guardian must apply for children who are outside the 6–17 age range. Students over the age of 19 must have an official Individualized Education Plan (IEP) to be eligible.*

### **Q5. What is the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)?**

A5. The NSLP offers meals to students at no or reduced cost. Many schools in WV operate under the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). This means the school district is located in a low-income area and, therefore, does not require individual applications for the NSLP. Instead, students in these CEP schools automatically receive free or reduced-cost meals simply because they live in that community. As a result, these students are not required to complete an application for free or reduced-cost meals.

### **Q6. If my student attends a CEP school, do I need to complete an application?**

A6. Yes, you need to complete an application if the student attends a CEP school and does not receive this benefit through streamline certification.

### **Q7. What does streamline certification mean?**

A7. Streamline certification is a process where your student will automatically receive the SEBT benefit on your EBT card without needing to submit an application.

### **Q8. How do I know if my student will be streamline certified?**

A8. Many West Virginia households will be automatically enrolled and will not need to apply to receive the benefit. Your household may be streamline certified if your child is currently receiving:

- SNAP,
- WV WORKS/TANF,
- Children's Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) Medicaid categories,
- Free or reduced priced meals through the NSLP based on an income application,
- Foster Care payments known to the DoHS eligibility system with a current student address, or
- Is homeless, a migrant, or a WV HeadStart student (income will be disregarded for these students).

**Q9. How do I know if I need to apply?**

A9. If your child is not enrolled through programs like SNAP, WV WORKS/TANF, MGKS, MGKF, MGPR, Medicaid, then your household must submit an application. You must apply for your child if they have not been streamlined certified to receive the benefit.

**Q10. Is WVCHIP a qualifying benefit for SEBT?**

A10. No. Students receiving WVCHIP should apply. WVCHIP recipients will not be streamline certified.

**Q11. Are homeschool students eligible?**

A11. In most instances homeschooled students are not eligible, unless their enrollment status changed during the 2025-2026 school year, or they are receiving a qualified benefit such as WV WORKS, SNAP, or certain children's Medicaid category.

**Q12. Why was my foster child not streamline certified?**

A12. DoHS must have a good address on file within its eligibility system in order to release the benefit. If your foster child was not streamline certified, it was likely due to an issue with their address. You will need to reach out to a DoHS eligibility worker at your local office.

**NOTE:** *Foster households who are not issued SEBT may complete a SEBT application to provide an update. DoHS will not count income for foster students.*

**Q13. I received an SEBT approval letter in my child's name only. Why?**

A13. If your child is streamline certified and your household does not have an active DoHS case, a case will be established for your student within the DoHS eligibility system so the benefit can be issued.

**Q14. How did DoHS get my child's information?**

A14. DoHS is supplied a master file of enrollment data for students who attend a NSLP school from the WV Department of Education. DoHS obtained your child's information from the protected master file.

**Q15. What is the cut-off date to submit an application?**

A15. Applications will be accepted at any time. However, the SEBT benefit will only be made available during the summer months. Applications for the 2025-2026 school year will be processed until the end of the operational period on August 20, 2026. Any applications received after this date are presumed to be for the 2026-2027 school year.

**Q16. How do I apply?**

A16. Applications are available at any DoHS county office. You may complete the form there or print it and return it to your local DoHS office. Please note that online applications are not available. To receive an emailed or mailed application, please call DoHS Customer Service at 1-877-716-1212.

**Q17. I submitted an application, now what?**

A17. DoHS eligibility workers will first confirm if the student participated in the NSLP during the school year. If necessary, additional verification—such as income verification or other eligibility factors—may be requested. Guardians have 15 days from the date of the verification request to submit the required documents. If the requested verification is not provided within this 15-day period, the application will be denied.

**Q18. How will I be informed of my eligibility determination?**

A18. All students will receive an approval or denial letter from DoHS. All denial letters will include denial reasons and next steps you can take if you disagree with the decision made, including your right to a fair hearing. You will receive an evaluation notice for the next school year benefit if applying after August 20, 2026.

**Q19. Why was my student denied SEBT?**

A19. Students will be denied if:

1. They are not a WV resident;
2. They are over the income limit for their household size;
3. The child did not attend a NSLP school;
4. The household failed to provide the requested verification; or

5. The student has already received the benefit in another case or state.

**Q20. What if my student was denied, but now the household's situation has changed?**

A20. If your household situation has changed since being denied, such as a change in income, address, or household members, you may reapply until August 21, 2026 for the 2025-2026 school year.

**Q21. What if I disagree with the decision of DoHS?**

A 21. If you disagree with the decision of the DoHS you have the right to a fair hearing. Please reach out to your case worker, or call 1-877-716-1212 for more information.

**Q22. What card will this benefit load to?**

A22. The Summer EBT benefit should load to the same EBT card as last year. For students new to SEBT, a card will be mailed to the address on file provided with the WVDE or the SEBT application.

**Q23. I've lost my EBT card from last year. How can I get a replacement card?**

A23. If you need to re-order a new card, you may contact your local office, the Office of EBT at 304-558-4126, Client Services at 1-866-545-6502, or WV Customer Service at 1-877-716-1212.

**Q24. When will the benefit be received?**

A24. Benefits will be issued once, at the beginning or during the summer operational period. In WV, the program period is June 1, 2026- August 20, 2026. Initial issuance is anticipated for May 24, 2026.

**Q25. What if I don't want this benefit for my child?**

A25. Benefits will be expunged (or removed) from EBT cards after 122 days. In order to avoid expungement, all benefits must be used within 122 days. If you choose not to participate in SEBT, you may also contact the West Virginia Office of Inspector General at 1-833-734-0965.

**Q26. How long are Summer EBT benefits good for?**

A26. SEBT cases where benefits are not used within 122 days of issuance will have their benefits expunged (removed) after advance notice. If your student has a remaining balance, a letter will be mailed 30 days prior to expungement.

**Q27. How is the guardian determined for this benefit?**

A27. If the student is receiving a DoHS benefit already, the guardian is the primary person of that case. If the student is in multiple cases, the guardian is determined by benefit. WV Works first, followed by SNAP, and lastly Medicaid. For students who must apply, the guardian is the individual filing the application. Guardians of students who are homeless, migrant, runaway, or enrolled in WV HeadStart are established by the WVDE.

**Q28. How do I report a change for SEBT?**

A28. If you have active benefits, please contact your eligibility worker. If you do not receive benefits through DoHS, call 1-877-716-1212.

**Q29. What if my child does not attend a NSLP school or receive WV WORKS, SNAP, or Medicaid?**

A29. Your child is not eligible for this benefit.

**Q30. Who can I contact if I have additional questions?**

A30. If you have further questions, you can:

- Contact your case worker at your local DoHS office.
- Call 1-877-716-1212.
- Visit [bfa.wv.gov/summer-ebt](https://bfa.wv.gov/summer-ebt)