



January 2024

## SUMMER EBT 2024 COMING TO TN!

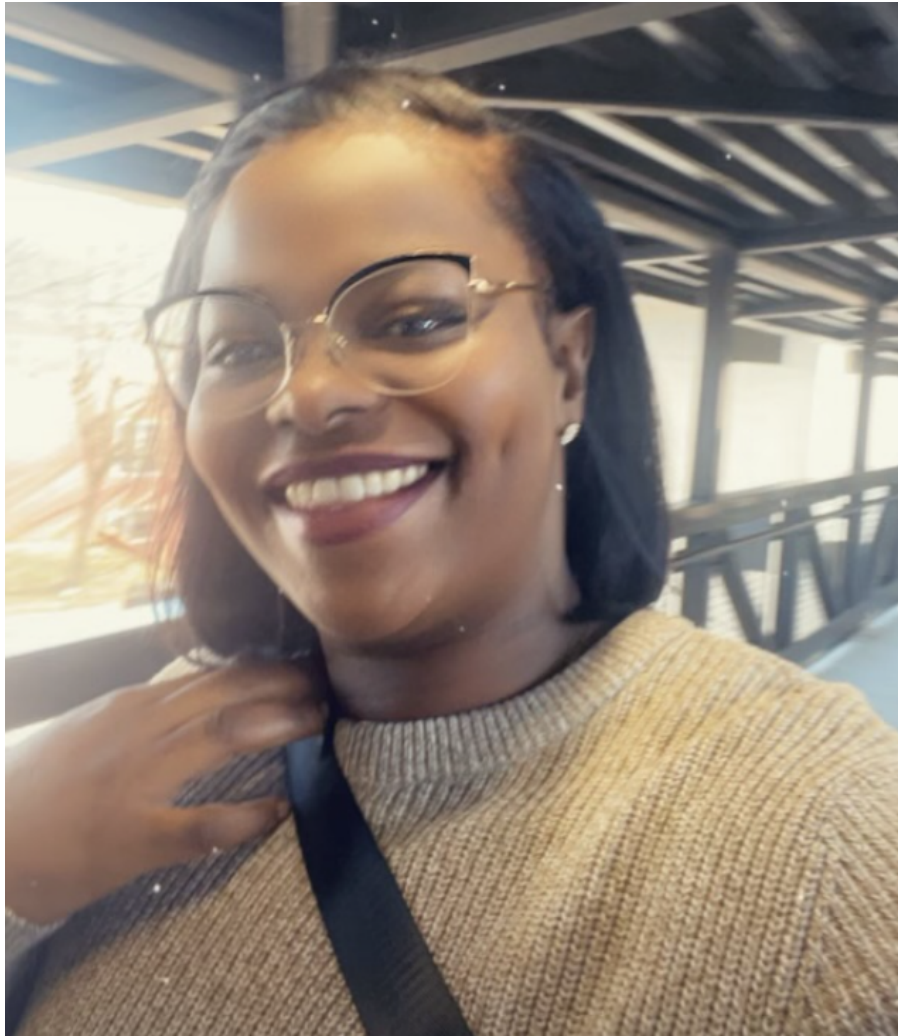


When P-EBT ended, Congress made Summer EBT a permanent program to help support families struggling with hunger during the summer months. Tennessee has taken the first step to ensure that families with school children receive Summer EBT in 2024. The program will provide approximately **\$77 million** to feed **644,00 low-income Tennessee students** for the summer months when families are more likely to experience hunger.

Thank you **Governor Lee**, **Commissioner Reynolds**, and **Commissioner Carter** for your leadership to bring Summer EBT to eligible Tennessee children. This is an important step towards addressing hunger and feeding Tennessee children during summer 2024!

## HUNGER IN TENNESSEE

**SNAP Application Delays and Portal Problems Increase Hunger for Tennesseans**



Jasmine Bryant is one of thousands of Tennesseans who aren't able to access the SNAP benefits they are eligible to receive. Long wait times, disappearing documents, technology issues, understaffing, and more have caused delays in application approval and have wrongfully cut SNAP benefits for exiting SNAP participants who struggle to feed their families without SNAP. Read about Jasmine's experience and hear from Signe Anderson, TJC's Senior Director of Nutrition Advocacy in the Tennessee Lookout.

[READ THE ARTICLE](#)

## SNAP

### USDA Addresses Language Access

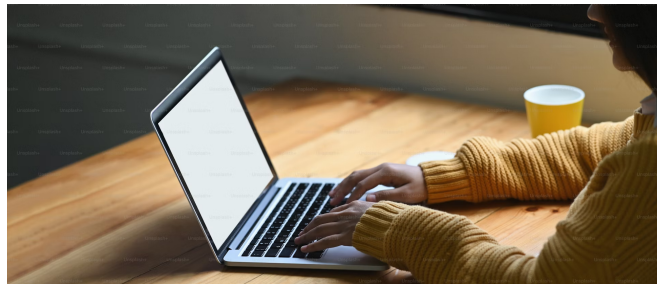


USDA announced new guidance to improve language access. Adequate language access is “the Department’s responsibility, and not that of an individual seeking services.” This guidance addresses the issues faced by people who speak little or no English when accessing programs like SNAP.

[READ THE PRESS RELEASE](#)

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### **Trouble Applying for or Keeping SNAP? Share Your Experience and Help Improve the Program**



Have you or someone you know had issues with SNAP (Food Stamps) such as long wait times, portal issues, wrongful denials, language or disability issues, missing paperwork, long application times, or something else?

[TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE](#)

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### **Stop the Benefits Cliff**

Around 16,000 Tennesseans must make the choice between receiving SNAP benefits and furthering their careers because of the Benefits Cliff. Tennessee and Mississippi are the only two states in the Southeast that have not adopted policy to address the cliff. If TN adopted the Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) policy, it could help thousands of families climb out of poverty. Contact Governor Lee and urge TDHS to adopt this policy.

[CLICK HERE TO SEND LETTER TO GOVERNOR LEE](#)

Watch our recent [webinar](#) to learn more!



## CHILD NUTRITION

### Healthy Meals, Healthy Kids TN



No-cost school meals for Tennessee students have bipartisan support! The Tennessee General Assembly reconvened this week, and we will continue to champion the [proposed bill](#) that was introduced in 2023 by Republican legislators Representative Raper and Senator Lowe. The bill would provide school meals for all Tennessee students. Every child deserves to learn without hunger.

[Sign Up for the Healthy Meals, Healthy Kids TN Partner Group](#)

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### More Funding for School Meals in 2024: CEP Expansion in Tennessee



Many schools in Tennessee participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), a school meal policy that allows eligible schools to provide free meals to all students. [Recent changes](#) in the program, make more schools eligible to receive funding to serve free school meals for all students. This helps schools and districts in Tennessee from [Knoxville](#) to [Cleveland](#) and beyond, giving more kids access to healthy meals for all in 2024! For more info on CEP in TN, click below.

CEP IN TN

**WIC**

**Protect Access to WIC for Families**



**2 million** parents and children nationwide could lose access to WIC, unless Congress fully funds the WIC program by January 19, 2024. A new [report](#) from Center on Budget Policy Priorities (CBPP) takes a closer look at the impact to WIC if it is not funded. Urge your legislators to fund the program by signing the letter below.

SIGN THE LETTER!

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## Healthcare Provider Survey



Are you a healthcare provider? Do you see patients who might be eligible for WIC? Take this survey! TJC together with Monroe Carrell Hospital and VUMC are researching how healthcare providers screen for and refer WIC eligible participants. The survey closes at the end of January, so get your responses in now!

TAKE THE SURVEY

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### Shelby County's Baby Café!



The Baby Café is the first ever facility in Shelby County to provide drop-in access to breastfeeding professionals. Baby Cafés are free, informal breastfeeding support groups that offer professional lactation counseling, nutrition education, fatherhood initiatives,

referrals, and more to benefit the infant and entire family support system. Call 901-831-3690 to make an appointment. Virtual assistance is also available.

VISIT THE WEBSITE

## LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY AND ACTION CENTER

### State of Tennessee:



The General Assembly convened on Tuesday, January 9. Now is the time to contact your elected official and check in for new legislation that might impact your work or the people you serve.

### Support No Cost School Meals

[HB 255/SB 208](#) would provide all children in TN with no-cost meals while in school. Contact your legislators today and tell them that children learn best when they are fed and focused.

CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS

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### FEDERAL:





Help us end hunger! Here are some actions you can take today!

### **Protect WIC!**

Congress must act to fully fund the WIC program before January 19; over **2 million Americans** could lose access to nutrition if they don't. Urge your legislators to fully fund WIC by sending a letter.

[SEND A LETTER](#)

## **UPCOMING WEBINARS AND EVENTS**

### **TODAY! WIC Champions Group**

Thursday, January 11 at 9:00am CT – Connect moms and young children to nutritious food and health resources. This group meets monthly and is for people & partners who are interested in improving access for women, children, and caregivers of young children to the WIC program. Sign-up to get program updates, alerts and to receive the WIC Champions call information!

[JOIN US!](#)

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### **SNAP Access**

Thursday, January 18 at 10:00am CT – Join us to discuss SNAP advocacy, casework best practices, and nutrition program updates. We meet every month on the third Thursday at 10:00a CT, so join us to discuss SNAP!

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CONTACT US TO JOIN

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### **Webinar: Anti-Hunger Advocacy Challenges in Tennessee**

Thursday, January 25 at 1:00p CT – Most everyone agrees that Tennesseans should not go hungry, and most people are quick to help those in need. However, advocating for policy change and protecting the safety net program can be a challenge in Tennessee. These programs have historically enjoyed bipartisan support, and while rule making can feel polarized there have been bipartisan efforts to support the safety net programs. Join us to discuss advocacy challenges in TN and how to overcome them. For those who are not able to lobby for legislative change we will also talk about the important role that educating and other advocacy efforts play in creating change.

REGISTER HERE

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### **HEALTHY MEALS, HEALTHY KIDS TN**

Thursday, February 1 at 1:00pm CT - Healthy Meals, Healthy Kids Tennessee are partners working to expand school meals for all Tennessee kids. Childhood hunger is a serious problem for Tennessee and access to school meals is a solution. If we work together, we can ensure more kids have access to nutritious, free meals.

JOIN US!

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Tennessee Justice Center  
155 Lafayette St.  
Nashville, TN 37210  
United States

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