

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. Your child's school offers healthy meals every school day. Your children may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals.

1. **Do I need to fill out an application for each child?** No. You can use one Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application for all students in your household. We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information. Return the completed application to your children's school.
2. **Who can get free meals?** All children in households receiving benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits (formerly the Food Stamp Program) can get free meals regardless of your income. Also, your children can get free meals if your household gross income is within the free limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines.
3. **Can foster children get free meals?** Yes, foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court, are eligible for free meals. Any foster child in the household is eligible for free meals regardless of income.
4. **Can homeless, runaway and migrant children get free meals?** Yes, children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway or migrant qualify for free meals. If you haven't been told your children will get free meals, please call or e-mail your child's school to see if they qualify.
5. **Who can get reduced price meals?** Your children can get low cost meals if your household income is within the reduced price limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Chart, shown on this application.
6. **Should I fill out an application if I got a letter this school year saying my children are approved for free or reduced price meals?** Please carefully read the letter you got and follow the instructions. Call your child's school if you have questions.
7. **My child's application was approved last year. Do I need to fill out another one?** Yes. Your child's application is only good for that school year and for the first few days of this school year. You must send in a new application unless the school told you that your child is eligible for free meals for the new school year.
8. **I get WIC. Can my child(ren) get free meals?** Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please fill out an application.
9. **Will the information I give be checked?** Yes, we may ask you to send written proof.
10. **If I don't qualify now, may I apply later?** Yes. You may apply at any time during the school year. For example, children with a parent or guardian who becomes unemployed may become eligible for free or reduced price meals if the household income drops below the income limit on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines.
11. **What if I disagree with the school's decision about my application?** You should talk to school officials. You also may ask for a hearing to have the decision reviewed.
12. **May I apply if someone in my household is not a U.S. citizen?** Yes. You or your child(ren) do not have to be a U.S. citizen to qualify for free or reduced price meals.
13. **Who should I include as members of my household?** You must include all people living in your household, related or not (such as grandparents, other relatives, or friends) who share income and expenses. You must include yourself and all children who live with you. If you live with other people who are economically independent (for example, people who you do not support, who do not share income with you or your children, and who pay a pro-rated share of expenses), do not include them.
14. **What if my income is not always the same?** List the amount that you normally get. For example, if you normally get \$1000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only got \$900, put down that you get \$1000 per month. If you normally get overtime, include it, but not if you get it only sometimes. If you have lost a job or had your hours or wages reduced, use your current income.

15. **We are in the military, do we include our housing allowance as income?** If you get an off-base housing allowance, it must be included as income. However, if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income.

16. **My spouse is deployed to a combat zone. Is the combat pay counted as income?** No, if the combat pay is received in addition to the basic pay because of the deployment and it wasn't received before the deployment, combat pay is not counted as income. Contact your child's school for more information.

17. **My family needs more help. Are there other programs we might apply for?** To find out how to apply for other assistance benefits contact your local assistance office.

18. The free and reduced lunch statistics allow our schools to receive technology funding from the federal government. It provides access to the Internet and distance learning services. Please help us by returning this form.