

Public Notice

National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program and Child and Adult Care Food Program

The Minnesota Department of Education has announced the household income guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for free and reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program. The income guidelines are effective from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, USDA is allowing schools to operate the National School Lunch Program Seamless Summer Option (SSO) during school year 2021-22. Schools operating SSO provide meals to children free of charge, regardless of household income. Contact your school, childcare center, family childcare home or adult care center to find out whether it participates in these programs.

Even though schools are able to provide free meals through SSO, households are encouraged to fill out and sign the Free and Reduced-Price Meal Application. This information is critical in determining the amount of money that a school receives from a variety of State and Federal supplemental programs like Title I A, At-risk (31a), Title II A, E-Rate, etc. Additionally, completion of meal applications may result in reduced student fees and Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) participation.

Participating schools and childcare centers that charge separately for meals will provide a form upon request to apply for free or reduced-price meals. Some schools have a universal free meal program that provides free school meals to all students without applications from households. Most participating centers and all participating family childcare homes provide meals to all enrolled participants without any separate charge.

At schools and centers that charge separately for meals, households with incomes that are less than or equal to the guidelines for free meals qualify for free meals. Households with incomes that are greater than the guidelines for free meals, but less than or equal to the guidelines for reduced-price meals, qualify for reduced-price meals.

Family Size	Free Meals Monthly Income up to:	Reduced Price Meals Monthly Income up to:
1	1,396	1,986
2	1,888	2,686
3	2,379	3,386

Family Size	Free Meals Monthly Income up to:	Reduced Price Meals Monthly Income up to:
4	2,871	4,086
5	3,363	4,786
6	3,855	5,486
7	4,347	6,186
8	4,839	6,886
Add for each additional person	492	700

An application for free or reduced-price meals can be approved if it contains documentation of qualifying household income, or documentation of current participation in the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR). Other categories in which children qualify for free meals include:

- Migrant;
- Homeless;
- Runaway;
- A foster child; or
- Enrolled in Head Start or an eligible pre-kindergarten program.

An application to an adult care center can be approved if it contains documentation of household income or documentation of current participation in Medical Assistance, SNAP, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or FDPIR.

Participating schools and centers accept applications for free or reduced-price meals at any time during the year. A household may qualify for free or reduced-price meals due to a temporary loss of income during the year, such as a period of unemployment. An appeal procedure is available for households whose applications are denied. Information supplied on an application for free or reduced-price meals may be verified at any time.

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