



OFFICE OF SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

MEDIA RELEASE 2023-2024

POLICY FOR PROVIDING FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEALS

Date: June 30, 2023

School Division: Virginia Domestic Dependents

today announced its policy for providing free or reduced-price meals for children served under the National School Lunch, and/or School Breakfast Programs. Each school and/or central school nutrition office has a copy of the policy, which may be reviewed by any interested party.

Household size and income will be used to determine eligibility for free or reduced-price meal benefits. Children from households whose income is at or below the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines, shown in the chart below, may be eligible for either free or reduced-price meals. Children who are members of households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits (formerly the Food Stamp Program) or who receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) may be automatically eligible for free meals. Children who are homeless, migrant, or runaway may also be automatically eligible for free meals. Foster children, who are the legal responsibility of a welfare agency or court, are eligible for free meals regardless of the income of the household with whom they reside. Children who are members of households participating in WIC **may** also be eligible for free or reduced-price meals based on the household's income.

Household Size	Maximum Household Income For Free Meals	Household Income For Reduced Price Meals
1	\$18,954	\$18,954.01 - \$26,973
2	\$25,636	\$25,636.01 - \$36,482
3	\$32,318	\$32,318.01 - \$45,991
4	\$39,000	\$39,000.01 - \$55,500
5	\$45,682	\$45,682.01 - \$65,009
6	\$52,364	\$52,364.01 - \$74,518
7	\$59,046	\$59,046.01 - \$84,027
8	\$65,728	\$65,728.01 - \$93,536
For Each Additional Family Member - ADD	\$6,682	\$9,509

Application forms are being distributed to all households with a letter informing households of the availability of free or reduced-price meals for their children. Applications are also available at the principal's office in each school and at the central office. To apply for free or reduced-price meals, households must only fill out one application per household and return it to the school division. Applications may be submitted at any time during the school year. The information households provide on the application will be used for determining eligibility and verification of data. Applications may be verified at any time during the school year by school or other program officials. For school officials to determine eligibility for free or reduced-price benefits, households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) only have to list their child(ren)'s name and SNAP or TANF case number and an adult household member must sign the application. Households who do not list a SNAP or TANF case number, including WIC households, must list the names of all household members, the amount and frequency of the income received by each household member, and the last four digits of the social security number of the adult household member who signs the application. If the household member does not have a social security

number, the household member must indicate that a social security number is not available. The application must be signed by an adult household member in order to be approved.

Under the provisions of the free and reduced price meal policy, Emily Colleen Wyatt, Supervisory Food Services Specialist will review applications and determine eligibility. An application for free or reduced-price meals cannot be approved unless it is complete. Households dissatisfied with the ruling of the eligibility determining official may wish to discuss the decision with the official on an informal basis. Households wishing to make a formal appeal for a hearing on the decision may make a request either verbally or in writing to:

James A. Lee, School Meals Program District Director, 910-907-0565 or james.lee@dodea.edu.

Households may apply for free or reduced-price meals at any time during the school year. If a household is not eligible now but has a change, such as a decrease in household income, an increase in household size, becomes unemployed or qualifies for SNAP or TANF, the household should contact the school for an application. Such changes may make the children of the household eligible for benefits if the household's income falls at or below the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines.

Households that receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits (formerly the Food Stamp Program) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) may not have to complete an application for free or reduced-price student meals. School officials will determine eligibility for free meals based on documentation, obtained directly from the Virginia Department of Social Services, that a child is a member of a household currently receiving SNAP or TANF. School officials will notify these households in writing of their eligibility. Households who are notified of their eligibility, but who do not want their children to receive free meals, must contact the school. SNAP and TANF households must complete an application if they are not notified in writing of their automatic eligibility within the first 10 days of the new school year.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
program.intake@usda.gov

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