

LETTER TO HOUSEHOLD

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Good nutrition is a vital part of a student's ability to learn and to make the most of their educational experience. The Department of Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) offers healthy meals to students every school day. There is no charge for breakfast under Provision 2 in Brevard County. Students may buy lunch for **\$1.80** in elementary school or **\$1.90** in middle and high schools. The information submitted on the Free and Reduced Price Meals application may qualify your child/ren for free or reduced price meals. The price for a reduced meal cost is **\$0.40 daily**. If approved, the free or reduced meal benefits are effective for the entire school year.

Below are some common questions and answers to aid in the process of determining your child's eligibility for meals:

1. **Do I need to fill out an application for each child?** No. Use one Free or Reduced Application for all students in your household. The **fastest** way to submit an application is to fill it out online at www.brevardschools.org. Paper applications are available on line or at your child's school. If you fill out a paper application, return the completed application to your child's school or you may mail your completed paper application to: Brevard Public Schools, Office of Food and Nutrition-Free/Reduced, 2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Viera, FL 32940. We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to **fill out all required information and sign**.

2. **Who can receive free/reduced meals?** All children in households receiving Florida SNAP (Food Stamps), the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) or Florida Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) can get free meals regardless of your income. Also, your children may be eligible to receive free/reduced price meals if your household's gross income is within the free/reduced limits on the Federal Income Guidelines.

IMPORTANT: If you have received a **NOTICE OF DIRECT CERTIFICATION letter** for free meals, **please do not** complete an application. Please notify FNS at (321) 633-1000 x642 if you did not receive a Direct Certification letter for all students living in your household.

REDUCED PRICE MEAL SCALE

Household Size	Annually	Monthly	2 x's Monthly	Biweekly	Weekly
1	22,311	1,860	930	859	430
2	30,044	2,504	1,252	1,156	578
3	37,777	3,149	1,575	1,453	727
4	45,510	3,793	1,897	1,751	876
5	53,243	4,437	2,219	2,048	1,024
6	60,976	5,082	2,541	2,346	1,173
7	68,709	5,726	2,863	2,643	1,322
8	76,442	6,371	3,186	2,941	1,471
<u>For each add'l family member, add</u>	7,733	645	323	298	149

3. **Can Foster Children get free meals?** Yes, however, an application **must** be submitted to FNS. Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals regardless of the child's personal income or the income of the household where they reside. The child may be included as a member of the foster family if the foster family chooses to also apply for benefits. If the foster family is not eligible for free or reduced price meals, it does not prevent a foster child from receiving free benefits.

4. **Can homeless, runaway, head start and migrant children get free meals?** Yes, children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway, or migrant are eligible for free meals. If you believe children in your household meet these criteria and haven't been told your children will get free meals, please call Dr. Sally Shinn, Homeless Liaison, at (321) 633-1000 x366 to see if your child(ren) qualify.

5. **Who can get reduced price meals?** Your children may get reduced price meals if your household income is within the reduced price limits on the Federal Eligibility Income Chart, shown on the back of the paper application.
6. **Should I fill out an application if I received a letter this school year stating my children are approved for free or reduced price meals?** Please read the letter you received carefully and follow the instructions. Call FNS at (321) 633-1000 ext. 642 if you have any questions.
7. **My child's application was approved last year. Do I need to fill out another one this year? YES.** Your child's application is only valid for last school year and for the first 30 days of this school year. You must send in a new application unless you received a NOTICE OF DIRECT CERTIFICATION for the new school year. Please notify FNS at (321) 633-1000 x642 if all of your children are not listed on the Direct Certification letter if you receive one.
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 of the information you submit at any time during the school year.
10. **If I don't qualify now, may I apply again later?** Yes. You may apply at any time during the school year if you have any changes to your household size, income or if you become eligible to receive SNAP (Food Stamps) or TANF. Children with a parent/guardian who becomes unemployed may become eligible for free and reduced price meals if the household income drops below the income limit.
11. **What if I disagree with the decision about my application?** You may call FNS at (321) 633-1000 Ext. 642 or write to Mr. Kevin M. Thornton, Director of Food and Nutrition Services, 2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Viera, FL 32940, to discuss your application or request a hearing.
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 U.S. citizens 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). 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 receive. For example, if you normally get \$1000 each month, but 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 deployed service members in our household size?** Yes, deployed service members are considered part of the household. Families should include the names of the deployed service members on their application. Report only that portion of the deployed service member's income made available to them or on their behalf to the family. The determining official would count the service member as part of the household in establishing a child's eligibility for free and reduced price meals.
16. **Do we include our military housing allowance as income?** If your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income. All other allowances must be included in your gross income.
17. **My spouse is deployed to a combat zone. Is his/her combat pay counted as income?** No, if the combat pay is received in addition to his/her basic pay because of his/her deployment and it wasn't received before he/she was deployed, combat pay is not counted as income. Contact 321-633-1000 ext. 642 for more information.

18. My family needs more help. Are there other programs we might apply for? To find out how to apply for SNAP or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call 211.

If you have other questions or need assistance, please call (321) 633-1000 Ext. 642.

Sincerely,



Kevin M. Thornton, Director
Office of Food and Nutrition Services
2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way
Viera, Florida 32940-6699

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by mail:

*U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410*

fax: (202) 690-7442; or email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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