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USDA Publishes Free and Reduced-Price Meal Income Guidelines for the 2025-2026 School Year

(BOISE) – Families in Idaho can now view the 2025-2026 income guidelines and apply for free and reduced-price meals for the upcoming school year.

Each year, the Idaho Department of Education Child Nutrition Programs department announces the income guidelines for free and reduced-price meals for students in schools operating the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs, and for free milk in schools operating the special Milk Program. The operation of these programs mandates that no child will be discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

Free and reduced-price meals are available for eligible students, and qualifying schools may offer the Special Milk Program. Eligibility is determined by household size and income, and categorically eligible children qualify for free or reduced-price meal benefits. Students may receive milk and meals free of charge or for a reduced price of no more than 40 cents for lunch and 30 cents for breakfast, depending on household qualification for the program.

Children from households whose income is at or below the following levels are eligible for free or reduced-price meals or the Special Milk Program if meals are not offered and the school participates in that program:

Reduced-Price Meals Participants may qualify for reduced price meals if the household income falls at or below the limits on this chart					
Household Size	Annual	Monthly	Twice Per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	28,953	2,413	1,207	1,114	557
2	39,128	3,261	1,631	1,505	753
3	49,303	4,109	2,055	1,897	949
4	59,478	4,957	2,479	2,288	1,144
5	69,653	5,805	2,903	2,679	1,340
6	79,828	6,653	3,327	3,071	1,536
7	90,003	7,501	3,751	3,462	1,731
8	100,178	8,349	4,175	3,853	1,927
For each additional family member add	10,175	848	424	392	196
Free Meals Participants may qualify for free meals if the household income falls at or below the limits on this chart					
Household Size	Annual	Monthly	Twice Per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	20,345	1,696	848	783	392
2	27,495	2,292	1,146	1,058	529
3	34,645	2,888	1,444	1,333	667
4	41,795	3,483	1,742	1,608	804
5	48,945	4,079	2,040	1,883	942
6	56,095	4,675	2,338	2,158	1,079
7	63,245	5,271	2,636	2,433	1,217
8	70,395	5,867	2,934	2,708	1,354
For each additional family member add	7,150	596	298	275	138

Children in households receiving benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance to Families in Idaho (TAFI) or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) are eligible for free or reduced-price meals and may be directly certified or may submit an application for these children with abbreviated information. In August, households receiving SNAP, TAFI or Medicaid benefits will be directly certified to receive free or reduced-price meal or milk benefits and will be advised through a letter from the schools advising them of their eligibility. No other application or verification of eligibility is required for students who are directly certified.

When identified, the household will be notified of any child's eligibility for free meals if the individual child is receiving educational support through migrant, Head Start, homeless or runaway education or is in court-ordered foster care.

Households notified of their children's eligibility must contact the school if they choose to decline the free meal benefits. The household will be notified by their district or charter if the

school is operating a Special Provision Option, such as Provision 2 or the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), which provides free breakfasts and/or lunches to all students.

Households who do not receive notification of eligibility for free and reduced-price meals or free milk may apply for benefits by completing a confidential application through their district.

Children in eligible households may receive meal benefits regardless of immigration status, and applications may be submitted anytime during the school year as circumstances change.

Parents or guardians who become unemployed may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals or for free milk during the period of unemployment, provided that the loss of income causes the household income during the period of unemployment to be within the eligibility criteria. Information provided in an application may be verified at any time during the school year. An application cannot be approved unless it contains the following information:

- A Food Stamp, SNAP or TAFI number for each child or an indication that the household is receiving FDPIR and the signature of an adult household member.

OR

- The names of all household members, the amount and source of income received by each household member in the prior month, the signature of an adult household member, the actual number of household members and the last four digits of the social security number of the adult household member who signs the application (or an indication that the signer has no social security number).

The information on the application may be verified at any time during the school year. Parents or guardians dissatisfied with the ruling of the school official who determines eligibility may discuss the decision with the official. Parents wishing to make a formal appeal may make a written or oral request to the school's food service hearing officer for a hearing on the decision.

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Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language) should contact the responsible State or local Agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY).

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 [AD-3027](#) (PDF, 351 KB), 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 Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (OASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted 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; or
email: program.intake@usda.gov

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