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USDA Publishes Free and Reduced-Price Meal Income Guidelines for the 2024-2025 School Year

(BOISE) – The 2024 – 2025 income guidelines for free and reduced-price meals for the upcoming school year are now available to Idaho families for review.

Every year, the Idaho Department of Education Child Nutrition Programs 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. In the operation of child feeding programs, no child will be discriminated against because of race, sex, color, national origin, 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 meal benefits. Qualifying students receive meals or milk without charge or may pay a reduced price of no more than 40 cents for lunch and 30 cents for breakfast.

Children from households whose income is at or below the following levels are eligible for free or reduced-price meals or special milk program if meals are not offered:

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	27,861	2,322	1,161	1,072	536
2	37,814	3,152	1,576	1,455	728
3	47,767	3,981	1,991	1,838	919
4	57,720	4,810	2,405	2,220	1,110
5	67,673	5,640	2,820	2,603	1,302
6	77,626	6,469	3,235	2,986	1,493

7	87,579	7,299	3,650	3,369	1,685
8	97,532	8,128	4,064	3,752	1,876
For each additional family member add	9,953	830	415	383	192

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	19,578	1,632	816	753	377
2	26,572	2,215	1,108	1,022	511
3	33,566	2,798	1,399	1,291	646
4	40,560	3,380	1,690	1,560	780
5	47,554	3,963	1,982	1,829	915
6	54,548	4,546	2,273	2,098	1,049
7	61,542	5,129	2,565	2,367	1,184
8	68,536	5,712	2,856	2,636	1,318
For each additional family member add	6,994	583	292	269	135

Children in households receiving Food Stamps or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance to Families in Idaho (TAFI), Medicaid or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) are eligible for free meals and may submit applications for these children with abbreviated information. Additionally, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) participants may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals. In August, households receiving SNAP or TAFI benefits will be directly certified to receive free meal or milk benefits by a letter from their school advising them of their eligibility for free meal or milk benefits. No other application or verification of eligibility is required for students 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, homeless or runaway education, Head Start, or is in court-ordered foster care.

Households notified of their children’s eligibility must contact the school if the household chooses to decline the free meal benefits. The household will be notified by the district 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 not receiving notification of eligibility for free or reduced priced meals may apply for benefits by completing a confidential application for free or reduced-price meals or free milk. An official at the school will review the confidential application and determine eligibility.

Debbie Critchfield, Superintendent of Public Instruction

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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 on 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, TAFI, or Medicaid 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 signor 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 (contact the school food service office for the name, address, and phone number of the officer) for a hearing on the decision.

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