



# FREE AND REDUCED PRICE HOUSEHOLD MEAL BENEFIT APPLICATION

SCHOOL YEAR 2009-2010

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS

This packet contains:

**Required** information that *must* be provided to households:

- Letter to Households
- Free and Reduced Price Household Meal Benefit Application

**Optional** application-related materials that *may* be provided to households:

- Sharing Information With Medicaid/CHIP
- Sharing Information With Other Programs

The pages are designed to be printed on 8½" by 11" paper. Some pages may be printed front and back. You will need to identify the benefits that are offered in your school, such as the Special Milk Program. **[Bold bracketed fields]** indicate where you need to insert school district specific information. If you make additional changes, you must submit your application package to Sandy Souder, Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), for approval.

This prototype application package includes information regarding the exclusion of housing allowance for those in the Military Housing Privatization Initiative. If this is not pertinent to your school district, please modify as appropriate.

If you have questions, contact:

**Sandy Souder, Administrator**  
**School Nutrition Programs**  
**(800) 331-0129, Ext. 76833**  
**ssouder@state.pa.us**

**[Insert School District Letterhead]**

Dear Parent/Guardian:

*Children need healthy meals to learn. [Name of School] offers healthy meals every school day. Breakfast costs [\$]; lunch costs [\$]. Your child(ren) may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals. Reduced price is [\$] for breakfast and [\$] for lunch.*

**1. Do I need to fill out an application for each child?** No. Use one Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application for all students in your household. We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information. **Return the completed application to: [name, address, phone number].**

**2. Who can get free meals?** Children getting Food Stamps or TANF and most foster children can get free meals regardless of your income. Also, your child(ren) can get free meals if your household income is within the free limits on the Federal Income Guidelines.

**3. Can homeless, runaway, and migrant children get free meals?** Please call **[school, homeless liaison, or migrant coordinator]** to see if your child(ren) qualify (ies), if you have not already been informed that they will get free meals.

**4. Who can get reduced price meals?** Your child(ren) can get low cost meals if your household income is within the reduced price limits on the Federal Income Chart, shown on this application.

**5. Should I fill out an application if I got a letter this school year saying my children are approved for free or reduced price meals?** Please read the letter you got carefully and follow the instructions. Call the school at **[phone number]** if you have questions.

**6. 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.

**7. Will the information I provide be checked?** Yes, we may ask you to send written proof.

**8. If I don't qualify now, may I apply later?** Yes. You may apply at any time during the school year if your household size goes up, income goes down, or if you start receiving Food Stamps or TANF. If you lose your job, your children may be able to get free or reduced price meals. Contact your school.

**9. What if I disagree with the school's decision about my application?** You should talk to your school officials. You also may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to: **[name, address, phone number].**

**10. 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 a U.S. citizen to qualify for free or reduced price meals.

**11. 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.

**12. What if my income is not always the same?** List the amount that you normally get. For example, if you normally get \$1000 each month, but you 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.

**13. We are in the military, do we include our 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.

If you have other questions or need help, call **[phone number].**

*Si necesita ayuda, por favor llame al teléfono: **[phone number].***

*Si vous voudriez d'aide, contactez nous au numero: **[phone number].***

Sincerely,  
**[signature]**

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLYING

### If your household gets FOOD STAMPS OR TANF, follow these instructions:

**Part 1:** List child(ren)'s name, school, grade, and a Food Stamp or TANF case number. (9 digits)

**Part 2:** Check the appropriate box, if any, **and contact [your school, homeless liaison, migrant coordinator]**.

**Part 3:** Skip this part.

**Part 4:** Skip this part.

**Part 5:** Sign the form. A Social Security Number is not necessary.

**Part 6:** Answer this question if you choose to.

### If you are applying for a FOSTER CHILD, follow these instructions:

**Part 1: Use a separate application for each foster child.** List the child's name, school, and grade.

**Part 2:** Skip this part.

**Part 3:** Check the box and list the child's personal use monthly income, if any.

**Part 4:** Skip this part.

**Part 5:** Sign the form. A Social Security Number is not necessary.

**Part 6:** Answer this question if you choose to.

### ALL OTHER HOUSEHOLDS, including WIC households, follow these instructions:

**Part 1:** List each child's name, school, and grade.

**Part 2:** Check the appropriate box, if any.

**Part 3:** Skip this part.

**Part 4:** Follow these instructions to report total household income during last month.

**Column 1–Name:** List the first and last name of **each** person living in your household, related or not (such as grandparents, other relatives, or friends). You must include yourself and all children living with you. Attach another sheet of paper if you need to.

**Column 2–How often did you get paid last month and what was the Gross amount.** Next to each person's name list each type of income received last month, and how often it was received. For example, *Earnings from work:* List the **gross income** each person earned from work. This is not the same as take-home pay. **Gross income is the amount earned before taxes and other deductions.** The amount should be listed on your pay stub, or your boss can tell you. Next to the amount, write how often the person got it (weekly, every other week, twice a month, or monthly). *All other income:* List the amount each person got last month from welfare, child support, alimony (second column), pensions, retirement, Social Security (third column), and ALL OTHER INCOME SOURCES (fourth column). In the All Other column, include Worker's Compensation, unemployment, strike benefits, regular saving account withdrawals, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Veteran's benefits (VA benefits), disability benefits, regular contributions from people who do not live in your household, and ANY OTHER INCOME. Report net income for self-owned business, farm, or rental income. Next to the amount, write how often the person got it. If you are in the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include this housing allowance.

**Column 3–Check if no income:** If the person does not have any income, check the box.

**Part 5:** An adult household member must sign the form and list his or her Social Security Number, or mark the box if he or she doesn't have one.

**Part 6:** Answer this question if you choose to.

## FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS FAMILY APPLICATION

**Part 1. Children in School (Use a separate application for each foster child)**

Names of all children in school (First, Middle Initial, Last)	School Name	Grade	Food Stamp or TANF case # (if any). <b>Skip to Part 5 if you list a Food Stamp or TANF case #</b>
			-
			-
			-
			-
			-

**Part 2. If the child you are applying for is homeless, migrant, or a runaway check the appropriate box and call [your school, homeless liaison, migrant coordinator at phone #]** Homeless  Migrant  Runaway

**Part 3. Foster Child** - If this application is for a child who is the legal responsibility of a welfare agency or court, check this box  and then list the amount of the child's personal use monthly income: \$ \_\_\_\_\_. Skip to Part 5.

**Part 4. Total Household Gross Income—You must tell us how much and how often**

1. Name (List everyone in household) <i>(Example)</i> <i>Jane Smith</i>	2. Gross income and how often it was received <i>Example: \$100/monthly \$100/twice a month \$100/every other week \$100/weekly</i>				3. Check if NO income
	Earnings from work before deductions	Welfare, child support, alimony	Pensions, retirement, Social Security	All Other Income	
	\$200/weekly	\$150/weekly	\$100/monthly	\$ ____ / ____	<input type="checkbox"/>
	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	<input type="checkbox"/>
	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	<input type="checkbox"/>
	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	<input type="checkbox"/>
	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	<input type="checkbox"/>
	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	<input type="checkbox"/>
	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	<input type="checkbox"/>
	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	\$ ____ / ____	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Part 5. Signature and Social Security Number (Adult must sign)**

An adult household member must sign the application. If Part 4 is completed, the adult signing the form must also list his or her Social Security Number or mark the "I do not have a Social Security Number" box. (See Privacy Act Statement on the back of this page.)

*I certify (promise) that all information on this application is true and that all income is reported. I understand that the school will get Federal funds based on the information I give. I understand that school officials may verify (check) the information. I understand that if I purposely give false information, my child(ren) may lose meal benefits, and I may be prosecuted.*

Sign here: X \_\_\_\_\_ Print name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_  I do not have a Social Security Number

**Part 6. Children's racial and ethnic identities (optional)**

Mark one or more racial identities:

Asian                       American Indian or Alaska Native

White                         Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

Black or African American    Other

Mark one ethnic identity:

Hispanic or Latino

Not Hispanic or Latino

**Don't fill out this part. This is for school use only.**

Annual Income Conversion: Weekly x 52, Every 2 Weeks x 26, Twice A Month x 24 Monthly x 12

Total Income: \_\_\_\_\_ Per:  Week,  Every 2 Weeks,  Twice A Month,  Month,  Year Household size: \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility: Free \_\_\_\_\_ Reduced \_\_\_\_\_ Denied \_\_\_\_\_ Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

Temporary: Free \_\_\_\_\_ Reduced \_\_\_\_\_ Time Period: \_\_\_\_\_ (expires after \_\_\_\_\_ days)

Categorical Eligibility: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Withdrawn: \_\_\_\_\_

Determining Official's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Confirming Official's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Verification Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Follow-up Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Results: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-up Official's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Your child(ren) may qualify for free or reduced price meals if your household income falls within the limits of this chart.**

<b>FEDERAL INCOME CHART</b>			
For School Year 2009-2010			
Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$20,036	\$1,670	\$386
2	\$26,955	\$2,247	\$519
3	\$33,874	\$2,823	\$652
4	\$40,793	\$3,400	\$785
5	\$47,712	\$3,976	\$918
6	\$54,631	\$4,553	\$1,051
7	\$61,550	\$5,130	\$1,184
8	\$68,469	\$5,706	\$1,317
Each additional person:	\$6,919	\$577	\$134

**Privacy Act Statement: This explains how we will use the information you give us.**

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires the information on this application. You do not have to give the information, but if you do not, we cannot approve your child for free or reduced price meals. You must include the social security number of the adult household member who signs the application. The social security number is not required when you apply on behalf of a foster child or you list a Food Stamp Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) case number or when you indicate that the adult household member signing the application does not have a social security number. We will use your information to determine if your child is eligible for free or reduced price meals, and for administration and enforcement of the lunch and breakfast programs. We MAY share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them evaluate, fund, or determine benefits for their programs, auditors for program reviews, and law enforcement officials to help them look into violations of program rules.

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**Non-discrimination Statement: This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly.** In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (Voice). TDD users can contact USDA through local relay or the Federal Relay at (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (relay voice users). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Sponsors should only use this IF they have an agreement with the local CHIP Office.**

**SHARING INFORMATION WITH MEDICAID/CHIP**

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

If your child(ren) get(s) free or reduced price school meals, they may also be able to get free or low-cost health insurance through Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Children with health insurance are more likely to get regular health care and are less likely to miss school because of sickness.

Because health insurance is so important to children's well-being, **the law allows us to tell Medicaid and CHIP that your child(ren) is/are eligible for free or reduced price meals, unless you tell us not to.** Medicaid and CHIP only use the information to identify children who may be eligible for their programs. Program officials may contact you to offer to enroll your child(ren) (filling out the Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application does not automatically enroll your child(ren) in health insurance).

If you do not want us to share your information with Medicaid or CHIP, fill out the form below and send in (sending in this form will not change whether your child(ren) get(s) free or reduced price meals).

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**No! I DO NOT** want information from my Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application shared with Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program.

**If you checked no, fill out the form below.**

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

For more information, you may call **[name]** at **[phone]**.

**Return this form to: [address] by [date].**

***Sponsors should use this if they have requests for eligibility information for specific programs; i.e., reduced or free books, graduation gowns, field trips.***

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## SHARING INFORMATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

To save you time and effort, the information you gave on your Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application may be shared with other programs for which your child(ren) may qualify. **For the following programs, we must have your permission to share your information. Sending in this form will not change whether your child(ren) get(s) free or reduced price meals.**

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No! I **DO NOT** want information from my Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application shared with any of these programs.

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Yes! I **DO** want school officials to share information from my Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application with **[name of program specific to your school]**.

Yes! I **DO** want school officials to share information from my Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application with **[name of program specific to your school]**.

Yes! I **DO** want school officials to share information from my Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application with **[name of program specific to your school]**.

**If you checked yes to any or all of the boxes above, fill out the form below. Your information will be shared only with the programs you checked.**

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

For more information, you may call **[name]** at **[phone]**.

**Return this form to: [address] by [date].**