

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Income eligibility guidelines updated for school and day care meals

MADISON –The U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service has updated income eligibility guidelines for meals served at schools and day care programs based on federal poverty levels.

[The income guidelines](#), updated annually, are effective July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. The guidelines apply to student eligibility for free and reduced-price school meals offered through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs and milk offered through the Special Milk Program, along with reimbursement for meals served in child and adult day care centers and family child care homes participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

The guidelines establish that students in a household of four, with income of \$40,560 per year or less, qualify for free school meals. If a household's yearly income is between \$40,560.01 and \$57,720, children can receive reduced-price meals. The state's participating public and private schools and day cares typically provide applications for free and reduced-price school meals during registration and in the beginning weeks of the school year. However, applications may be submitted at any time. Only one application is required per household.

Based on household circumstances, certain groups are automatically eligible to receive meal benefits, with eligibility based on program specifics. Those groups include children and adults who participate in or receive benefits from the following programs: Food Share (also known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP), Wisconsin Works (W-2) Cash Assistance (also known as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families - TANF), some income based Medicaid programs, and the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR). Foster, homeless, migrant, or runaway children; children enrolled in Head Start, an At-Risk after-school center, or an emergency shelter; and adults who are Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Medicaid participants are eligible.

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All students are eligible to receive school meals in public and private schools participating in the NSLP or SBP. To receive the meals for free or at a reduced price, parents or guardians of children who are not automatically eligible must complete a form, providing the names and income from all sources for all household members. All information is kept confidential. Most child and adult day care centers and all family childcare homes that participate in the CACFP provide meals to all enrolled participants without any separate charge. Reimbursement to the center or childcare home for meals is based on household incomes of those enrolled for care. A list of the child and adult day care centers in Wisconsin that participate in the CACFP [is available online on the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's website](#).

The goal of both school-based and child and adult day care food programs is to improve the health of students, young children, and eligible adults by increasing the opportunity for them to eat a variety of nutritious foods. The meals and snacks served meet nutrition standards set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). As an agency administering USDA programs, [the Wisconsin DPI is prohibited](#) from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. For additional information on Wisconsin's Child Nutrition Programs and the USDA's full nondiscrimination statement, [visit the DPI's website](#).

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NOTE: This news release [is available online on the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's website](#).