



## State of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

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Date: September 25, 2006

To: District Homeless Liaisons, ESEA Coordinators, Title I Coordinators

From: Maxine Hough, Director, Title I  
Jessica Sharkus, Assistant Director, School Nutrition Team

Subject: Free School Meals for Homeless Students

Last year the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) made an important policy change regarding free meals for homeless students. Please review the last paragraph of the attached USDA Memo. It states: "Once a LEA or school official established a child's eligibility as homeless, runaway or migrant, that eligibility remains in effect for the entire school year, provided that the child was correctly certified."

This USDA policy change means that once a student is designated as being homeless and starts receiving free school meals, if the student becomes permanently housed during the school year, the eligibility for free school meals continues through the duration of the school year. At the time of identification, and even after finding permanent housing, a family originally designated as homeless does NOT have to complete a free and reduced school meal application.

Documentation to substantiate free meal eligibility consists of the child's name or a list of names, effective date(s), and the signature of the homeless liaison. This documentation is acceptable in lieu of a free and reduced price meal application.

If you have any questions about obtaining free meals for homeless children, youth, or unaccompanied youth, please email [DPIHomeless@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:DPIHomeless@dpi.wi.gov)  
Thank you!