



WISCONSIN SCHOOL NUTRITION **IN A NUTSHELL**

Overview of a Completed Free & Reduced Meal Application

A complete application is an application that includes all required information that is needed to provide a meal benefit. The School Food Authority's (SFA) Determining Official (DO) is required to follow up on incomplete applications before processing it. The DO must clarify uncertain information on the application. Below is an overview of information that is required for the various types of applications to ensure they are considered complete applications.

Types of Applications

Categorical-Household participates in the following programs that automatically qualify the student for free meal benefits.

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is FoodShare in WI.
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is W-2 Cash Benefits in WI.
- The Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR).

Other Source- The student has been identified as meeting the requirements for one of the following categories and is automatically eligible for free meal benefits.

- Homeless
- Runaway
- Migrant (Immigrant or Refugee do NOT fall under this category.)
- Foster
- Benefits do not extend to other household members.

Income-The Household provides income information for all household members to determine if eligible for meal benefits and can include the following income sources:
Household income

- Child earnings
- Public Assistance
- Child support, Alimony, Supplemental Security Income or Veterans Assistance
- Pensions, Social Security, Railroad, Retirement, other Income

Required Sections for Completed Applications

Required sections are listed under each type of application. The steps listed under each type of application need to be completed to provide a meal benefit. When following up with households, the DO must document any information received, date of follow-up and initials. Best practice is to mark up the application with a different color ink.

Categorical

- Step 1: Child names listed and grade level.
- Step 2: Program name and case number
- Medicaid, Badger Care, Forward Health, Quest, and Summer EBT do not qualify.

- The DO must follow up with the household if any nonqualifying program(s) is listed, or the case number is not the correct number of digits.
- Adult Signature and Social Security number is not required.

Other Source Categorical

- Step 1: Child names listed, grade level, and check the appropriate box.
- Step 4: Adult signature required.
- Source documentation must be received for benefits to be provided if the following boxes are checked: migrant, homeless or runaway.
- Foster applications are taken at face value.
- **Note:** When applying for both foster and non-foster children, Step 3 must also be completed. Foster children are included in the total household members field.

Income

- Step 1: Child names listed and grade level.
- Step 3: All income sources, adult household members listed, total household member box and Social Security number is required or the check box for no social security number.
 - Household members box needs to match with the number of household member names listed.
- Step 4: Adult signature

Additional Notes

There are some additional items to note when making sure applications are complete.

- Adult signatures may be printed or in cursive and in some cases, it may be just a mark.
- Annual income should only be reported if this is how the household receives it or is self-employed.
- Gross income must be reported **not** Net income, in the frequency it is received.
- Effective date of eligibility is the date the DO approves the application, matches a student on DC, or receives supporting documentation for other source categorical eligibility.
- More information is available on the [Free & Reduced Meal Application Webpage](#).

