

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Income eligibility guidelines announced for school and day care meals

MADISON — Each year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service updates income eligibility guidelines for meals served at schools and day care programs based on federal poverty levels.

The income guidelines began July 1 and will remain in effect until June 30, 2017. The guidelines apply to student eligibility for free and reduced-price school meals offered through the National School Lunch or School Breakfast programs and milk offered through the Special Milk Program as well as to reimbursement for meals served in 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 at 130 percent of the federal poverty level (\$31,590 per year or less) qualify for free school meals. If that family’s income is between

Income Eligibility Guidelines		
Effective July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017		
Household Size	Free Must Be at or Below	Reduced-Price (Must Be at or Between)
1	\$15,444	\$15,444.01 & \$21,978
2	20,826	20,826.01 & 29,637
3	26,208	26,208.01 & 37,296
4	31,590	31,590.01 & 44,955
5	36,972	36,972.01 & 52,614
6	42,354	42,354.01 & 60,273
For Each Additional Household Member Add	5,408	5,408 & 7,696

\$31,590 and \$44,955 (185 percent of the federal poverty level), children can receive reduced-price meals. The state’s participating public and private schools and day care centers 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.

“Hunger makes it harder for our kids in schools and day care centers to concentrate and master the positive lessons they’ll need for their next steps in life,” said State Superintendent Tony Evers. “The federal school and day care meal programs are designed to support students and children from low-income families so they are fed and can be eager and attentive learners throughout the day.”

Based on family circumstances, certain groups are automatically eligible to receive meal benefits. Those groups include children and adults who are Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or W-2 Cash

(more)

Benefits recipients in Wisconsin, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or FoodShare in Wisconsin) participants, or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) households, adults who are Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Medicaid participants, and directly certified foster children or children who are enrolled in Head Start, an At-Risk afterschool center, or an emergency shelter.

All students are eligible to eat school meals in public and private schools that participate in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast programs. To receive the meals for free or reduced-price, parents or guardians complete a form, providing the names and income from all sources for all household members. All information is kept confidential. Most day care centers and all family child care homes that participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program provide meals to all enrolled participants without any separate charge. Reimbursement to the center or child care home for meals is based on household incomes of those enrolled for care. A list of the day care centers in Wisconsin that participate in the [Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) is available online at <http://dpi.wi.gov/community-nutrition/cacfp/sites>.

The goal of both school-based and child care food programs is to improve the diets of students and young children and increase 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).

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Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- 2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
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NOTES: More information on eligibility for free and reduced-price meals can be found on the Department of Public Instruction's [Free and Reduced Meal Applications and Eligibility webpage](#), <http://dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/national-school-lunch-program/free-reduced-applications>. Click on Income Eligibility Guidelines. This news release is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2016_74.pdf.