



**Free and Reduced-Price Meal Application Information & Instructions
School Year 2021-2022**

Dear Jeffco Family:

Children need healthy meals to learn. **Jeffco Public Schools** is pleased to offer healthy meals every school day. **Based on waivers granted by the USDA, all children will eat free during the 2021-22 school year.** Students in all grades are able to receive breakfast and lunch at no charge; however, families are still encouraged to complete a Free & Reduced Meal Application because they may be eligible for other benefits as well.

Families are encouraged to submit applications online at www.SchoolCafe.com, as this allows for the fastest processing and notification to families. Paper applications are available upon request from the Free & Reduced Specialist.

For assistance with the application process, please contact:

Jeffco Food & Nutrition Services
Free & Reduced Specialist
 303-982-6916
FreeandReduced@jeffco.k12.co.us

FEDERAL ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART For School Year 2021 – 2022			
Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$23,828	\$1,986	\$459
2	\$32,227	\$2,686	\$620
3	\$40,626	\$3,386	\$782
4	\$49,025	\$4,086	\$943
5	\$57,424	\$4,786	\$1,105
6	\$65,823	\$5,486	\$1,266
7	\$74,222	\$6,186	\$1,428
8	\$82,621	\$6,886	\$1,589
Each additional person:	\$8,399	\$700	\$162

Free & Reduced Price Meal Application Instructions

1. On your computer or smart phone, log in or create an account at www.schoolcafe.com
 - a. You can also download the SchoolCafé app from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.
 - b. You will need an email address to create an account.
2. If you already have an account but do not remember your password, follow the “forgot password” prompts in SchoolCafé
3. Make sure all student information in the dashboard is current and accurate; if necessary, add any additional students in your household to your account.
4. Under **Benefits** on left hand side, select **Apply**.

Option 1: Assistance Program-Based Applications

If you, or someone in your household, receives **SNAP** (food stamps), **TANF/CO Works** or **FDPIR** benefits, your students may already be directly approved for free meal benefits. You will be notified of their approval; however, you may contact the FNS *Office with any questions*.

Note: *Medicaid and CHP+ are not automatic qualifiers for free or reduced meals.*

STEP 1: List all students first and last names. Optional: Provide date of birth and grade.

STEP 2: List a case number if you or someone in your household participates in SNAP, TANF or FDPIR

STEP 3: Skip the income reporting fields.

STEP 4: Check the box if you would like your information shared with school/district programs in order to have fees waived.

STEP 5: Sign the application. Optional: Provide contact information for purposes of receiving eligibility notification.

Option 2: Categorically Eligible-Based Applications

If you are applying for a Foster Child, Runaway, Homeless or Migrant student, follow the instructions listed below:

STEP 1: List all students first and last names. Optional: Provide date of birth and grade. Check the appropriate box if the student is a Foster Child, Runaway, Homeless or Migrant.

STEP 2: Skip the assistance program (SNAP, TANF, etc.) fields.

STEP 3: Skip the income reporting fields.

STEP 4: Check the box if you would like your information shared with school/district programs in order to have fees waived.

STEP 5: Sign the application. Optional: Provide contact information for purposes of receiving eligibility notification.

Optional: Complete the Children's Racial and Ethnic Survey on the back of the application.

Option 3: Income-Based Applications

If you are applying based on income eligibility, follow the instructions listed below:

STEP 1: List all students first and last names. Optional: Provide date of birth and grade.

STEP 2: Skip the assistance program (SNAP, TANF, etc.) fields.

STEP 3: Income Reporting

- **Report Gross Income** (total income before taxes and deductions) for each Household Member. **For each category and household member, please refer to the “Sources of Income” guidelines listed below.**
 - **Student Income:** Report the combined gross income (before taxes and other deductions) for ALL students' listed in Step 1 in your household in the box marked “Student Income.” Only count foster children's income if you are applying for them together with the rest of your household. It is optional for the household to list foster children living with them as part of the household.
 - **All Other Household Members (including yourself):** Print the name of each household member in the boxes marked “Names of Other Household Members.” Do not include people who live with you but are not supported by your household's income and do not contribute income to your household. Do not list any household members you listed in STEP 1.
- **Report total number of household members.** The total must equal all names listed within the student and household member's fields.
- **Provide the last four of the Social Security Number (SSN), or “Check if no SSN.”** This information is not reported to anyone.

STEP 4: Check the information-sharing box if you would like your information shared with school/district programs in order to have fees waived.

STEP 5: Sign the application. Optional: Provide contact information for purposes of receiving eligibility notification.

Optional: Complete the Children's Racial and Ethnic Survey on the back of the application.

Sources of Income to Report:

Sources of Income for Students:

- Earnings from work
- Social Security – Disability or Survivor's payments
- Any other type of regularly received income

Public Assistance/Child Support/Alimony:

- Public assistance payments
- Welfare payments
- Alimony payments
- Child support payments
- Social Security Benefits

Earnings from Work:

- Wages/salaries/tips
- Strike benefits
- Unemployment Compensation
- Worker's Compensation
- Net income from self-owned business or farm

Sources continued on next page **6**

Sources of Income to Report (Continued):

Pensions/Retirement/All Other Income:

- Pensions
- Supplemental Security Income
- Retirement income
- Veteran's benefits
- Social Security
- Disability benefits
- Cash regularly withdrawn from savings
- Interest/Dividends
- Income from Estates/Trusts/Investments
- Regular contributions from people not living in the household
- Net royalties/annuities/rental income
- Any other regularly received income, whether federally recognized or not, must be reported

Free & Reduced Meals Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Who can receive free or reduced-price meals?

- a. All children in households receiving benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Family (TANF/Colorado Works – Basic Cash Assistance or State Diversion), are eligible for free meals.
- b. Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals. Foster children may be added as a household member of the foster family if the foster family chooses to apply. Including foster children as household members may help other children qualify for benefits. If the foster family is not eligible, it does not prevent a foster child from receiving benefits.
- c. Children who qualify for their districts Head Start program are eligible for free meals.
- d. Children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway, or migrant are eligible for free meals.
- e. Children may receive free or reduced-price meals if your household's income is within the limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines. Your children may qualify for free or reduced-price meals if your household income falls at or below the limits on the income guidelines on page one of this letter.

2. How do I know if my children qualify as Homeless, Migrant, or Runaway?

- a. Do the members of your household lack a permanent address? Are you staying together in a shelter, hotel, or other temporary housing arrangement? Does your family relocate on a seasonal basis? Are any children living with you who have chosen to leave their prior family or household? If you believe children in your household meet these descriptions and have not already been notified that your children will receive free meals, please call Community and Family Connections at 303-982-1144 or Office of Migrant Education Program at 303-365-5817

3. Do I need to fill out an application for each child?

- a. *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.

- 4. Should I fill out an application if I received a letter this school year saying my children are already approved for free meals?**
 - a. No, but please read the letter you received carefully and follow the instructions. If any children in your household are missing from your eligibility notification, contact the FNS Free & Reduced Specialist.
- 5. Can I apply online?**
 - a. Yes! You are encouraged to complete an online application instead of a paper application if you are able. The online application has the same requirements and will ask you for the same information as the paper application but may be received and processed more quickly. Please allow up to 10 business days for application processing. Visit **www.schoolcafe.com** to begin or to learn more about the online application process. Contact the FNS Free & Reduced Specialist with any questions.
- 6. My child's application was approved last year – do I need to fill out a new one?**
 - a. Yes. Your child's application is only valid for that school year and for the first 30 days of this school year. You must send in a new application unless the school notified you that your child is eligible for the new school year.
- 7. I receive WIC. Can my children receive free meals?**
 - a. Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Please send in a completed free and reduced-price school meal application.
- 8. Will the information I give be checked?**
 - a. You may be selected to provide written proof of the household income you report on the application.
- 9. If I don't qualify now, may I apply later?**
 - a. Yes, you may apply at any time during the school year. For example, children with a parent or guardian who becomes unemployed may become eligible for free and reduced-price meals if the household income drops below the income limit.
- 10. What if I disagree with the school's decision about my application?**
 - a. You should talk to school officials. You also may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to: **Beth Wallace, Jeffco Public Schools Food and Nutrition Services**. 809 Quail Street, Building 1, Lakewood CO 80215. 303-982-6748. Beth.wallace@jeffco.k12.co.us
- 11. May I apply if someone in my household is not a U.S. citizen?**
 - a. Yes. You, your children or other household members do not have to be U.S. citizens to apply for free or reduced-price meals. Immigration, migrant, citizenship or refugee status is not required to be provided during the application process, and families should continue to apply for free or reduced-price school meals. The application does require the last four numbers of a Social Security number or an indication that there is no Social Security number. Social Security number information is not reported to any organization outside of **Jeffco Public Schools**.
- 12. What if my income is not always the same?**
 - a. List the amount that you normally receive. For example, if you normally make \$1000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only made \$900, put down that you made \$1000 per month. If you normally get overtime, include it, but do not include it if you only work overtime sometimes. If you have lost a job or had your hours or wages reduced, use your current income. The last four digits of the Social Security Number of an adult household member (or an indication of "none") is required to process a complete income application.

13. What if some household members have no income to report?

- a. Household members may not receive some types of income we ask you to report on the application, or may not receive income at all. Whenever this happens, please write a 0 in the field. However, if any income fields are left empty or blank, those will also be counted as zeroes. Please be careful when leaving income fields blank, as we will assume you meant to do so. The last four digits of the Social Security Number of an adult household member (or an indication of “none”) is required to process a complete income application.

14. We are in the military – do we report our income differently?

- a. Your basic pay and cash bonuses must be reported as income. If you get any cash value allowances for off-base housing, food, or clothing, or receive Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance payments, it must also be included as income. However, if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income. Any additional combat pay resulting from deployment is also excluded from income.

15. What if there is not enough space on the paper application for my family?

- a. List any additional household members on a separate piece of paper, and attach it to your application. Contact the FNS Free & Reduced Specialist for assistance.

16. My family needs more help. Are there other programs we might apply for?

- a. To find out how to apply for other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office. Colorado PEAK is an online service to screen and apply for medical, food and cash assistance programs. It can be accessed at <http://coloradopeak.force.com/>.

If you have other questions or need assistance, please contact the FNS Free & Reduced Specialist.

Sincerely,

Free and Reduced Program Specialist

Non-discrimination Statement:

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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