

FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE BENEFITS IN SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE PROGRAMS

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program, the federal School Breakfast Program, and the federal Special Milk Program. In these programs, the District follows state and federal requirements regarding a child's or household's eligibility for free or reduced-price meals, including the applicable income eligibility guidelines and all applicable nondiscrimination requirements. The primary means of establishing eligibility for free or reduced-price meals are:

1. Through the annual submission of an application for the free or reduced-price benefits;
or
2. Through direct certification, which is based on a match to state-provided data that confirms an individual child's status as a child in foster care or that confirms a household's participation in a qualifying means-tested benefit program, including Wisconsin's version of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, also called FoodShare) and Wisconsin Works (also called W-2) cash assistance.

For any individual child or household whose eligibility for free or reduced-price benefits is based on the application process, the District is required to conduct a variety of verification procedures on a sub-set of all applications. The purpose of verification is to ensure overall quality control and to confirm the eligibility of specific applicants. The Director of Food Services has primary administrative responsibility for ensuring that appropriate verification occurs on a timely basis.

The District Administrator or his/her designee, in consultation with the Director of Food Services as needed, shall designate the staff positions that are authorized to make eligibility determinations and to serve as confirming and verifying officials on behalf of the District. The individuals who hold the designated positions, whether employees of the District or contracted service providers, shall have such authority.

The District Administrator or his/her designee shall likewise designate one or more individuals who are authorized to serve as a fair hearing official to address appeals of eligibility for, or the discontinuation of, free or reduced-price benefits.

Initial Eligibility and Carryover and Transfer Eligibility

For any child whose eligibility for benefits is not established through direct certification, the District must make an eligibility determination based on an application. Applications may be submitted at any time during the school year. Once the District makes a determination of eligibility based on an application, the effective date of the child's eligibility for free or reduced-price meals is the date of the District's eligibility determination/approval.

If the District determines that any child is eligible for free or reduced-price meals, the determination is generally valid within the District for the entire remainder of the current school

year, even if the household's circumstances change after the initial application and determination of eligibility. At the start of the subsequent school year, such children retain their previous year's eligibility status for 30 operating days or until a new determination is made, whichever comes first.

When a student transfers or transitions between two schools within the District and the previous school had determined that the student was federally eligible for free or reduced-price meals, the District automatically transfers the prior eligibility determination. However, students who change schools within the District are still required to re-establish their eligibility on an annual basis and when otherwise required by law.

When a student transfers into the District from a school outside the District and there is documentation that the non-district school determined that the student was federally-eligible for free or reduced-price meals, the District accepts a previous school's valid eligibility determination for the maximum period of time required or permitted under applicable federal regulations and state procedures. However, in order to avoid the expiration of such carryover/transfer eligibility, households with students who are transferring into the District should pursue a District determination of eligibility (e.g., by submitting a completed application) as soon as possible.

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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