



Free & Reduced Meal Program

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the National School Lunch Program? The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federally funded meal program which provides both food and cash donations to subsidize the cost of school lunch in participating schools. The NSLP was established by President Harry Truman in 1946 and is presently operating in more than 96,000 public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care centers. The program is managed at the federal level by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service and at the state level by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

In order to receive the benefits of the NSLP, participating schools must offer free or reduced-price meals to eligible children. The schools must also comply with nutritional requirements outlined by the federal government. These guidelines follow the Dietary Guidelines for Americans which recommend no more than 30 percent of a person's calories come from fat and less than 10 percent from saturated fat. Lunch menus must also be designed to provide children with 1/3 of the key nutrients they need each day (calories, protein, Vitamins A and C, calcium, and iron).

Can my child eat breakfast at school? In addition to participating in the National School Lunch Program, District 227 also operates a daily breakfast program under the National School Breakfast Program (NSBP) which functions in a very similar manner.

How do children qualify to receive free or reduced-price meal benefits? Any child at a participating school may purchase a meal through the NSLP or NSBP. Some children may qualify for free or reduced-price meals based on their household income. Children who do not qualify are required to pay a full price although their meals are still subsidized to some extent.

How to apply for free or reduced-price meal benefits? Where to apply? Applications for free or reduced-price meal benefits may be picked up at any District 227 school office, Food Service Department, or click here to download application. You can also contact the Food Service Office at 708-679-5728 for further information. Return the completed application to:

Rich Township High School District 227
Attn: Food Service Department
20000 Governors Drive – Suite 200
Olympia Fields, IL 60461

Who is eligible?

- If you or any member of your household (adult or child) now receives SNAP (formerly food stamps) or (TANF) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.
- A foster child may receive free regardless of household income.
- If your total household income is the same or less than the amounts on the Income Eligibility Guidelines, your child(ren) can receive free or reduced-price meal benefits.

Eligibility begins on the date the application is approved by District Office and remains in effect for the remainder of the school year unless the verification process finds a discrepancy.

Verification? Your eligibility may be checked by school officials at any time during the school year. School Officials may ask you to submit papers showing that your child(ren) should receive free or reduced-price meal benefits.

Fair Hearing? You may talk to school officials if you do not agree with the school's decision on your application or the results of verification. You also may ask for a fair hearing. You may do this by calling or writing:

Ilandus Hampton, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations
20000 Governors Drive – Suite 200
Olympia Fields, IL 60461
708-679-5719

Confidentiality? School officials use the information on the application only to decide if your child(ren) should receive free or reduced-price meal benefits. Parent or legal guardian signature is required on the application to allow school officials to release the application information and Social Security number for purpose of identifying household members for other services.

Reapplying? You may apply for free or reduced-price meal benefits any time during the school year. If you are not eligible now but have a change such as: A decrease in household income, an increase in household size, or become unemployed or receive Food Stamps or TANF for your child(ren), you may complete an application at that time.

In accordance with Federal law and U. S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to:

USDA
Director, Office of Adjudication
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

Or call toll free: (866)632-9992 (voice); Hearing impaired (800)877-8339; Spanish (800)8456-6136

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.