

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLYING**  
Meal Benefit Application for Free and Reduced-Price School Meals

Complete the form using the instructions below. Sign the form and return it to the school. If you need help, call 410-363-3300 x 501

**STEP 1 – STUDENT INFORMATION - ALL HOUSEHOLDS COMPLETE**

List the enrolled child(ren’s) first and last name and school. Indicate if a foster child, homeless, migrant, runaway, or in Head Start, Early Head Start or Even Start by checking the box. If **ALL** students listed are foster, homeless, migrant, runaway, or in Head Start, Early Head Start or Even Start, skip to Step 4.

**STEP 2 – CASE NUMBER**

If **any** member of your household receives benefits from the Food Supplement Program (FSP) or Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), write the case number in the space provided and skip to Step 4.

**STEP 3 – NAMES OF ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS AND GROSS INCOME**

- List the first and last name of everyone in your household, whether they receive income or not. Your household includes all those living as one economic unit. Include yourself, all children living with you, including foster children and any other person living in your household, related or not. List each type of income received last month and how often it is received. You must indicate how much in whole dollars, and how often received (weekly, bi-weekly, twice a month, monthly, yearly). **If a household member has no income—write ‘0’ in the income box.**
- Report all income as **gross income**. Gross income is the amount earned before taxes and other deductions. This is not the same as take-home pay. Gross income includes unemployment benefits, Worker’s Compensation, Supplemental Security Income and Veteran’s Benefits, Social Security, private pensions or disability, strike benefits, income from trusts or estates, annuities, investment income, earned interest, rental income and regular cash payments from outside household. For self-owned business, farm, or rental income, report income as **net income**.
- If you are in the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income. Do not include combat pay.
- Indicate the total number of household members in the space provided.
- The form must have the last four digits of the Social Security Number of the primary wage earner or adult who signs unless the adult does not have a Social Security Number. If the adult does **not** have a Social Security Number, check the box. The last four digits of the Social Security Number are not needed if you listed a FSP or TCA case number, or if you are only applying for foster children.

**STEP 4 – SIGNATURE - ALL HOUSEHOLDS COMPLETE**

All forms must have the signature of an adult household member. Mail completed form to: 6300 Smith Ave, Baltimore, MD 21209.

**STEP 5 – RACIAL/ETHNIC IDENTITY**

You are not required to answer this question to get meal benefits. This information will help ensure that everyone is treated fairly.

**STEP 6 – SHARING INFORMATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS**

Check the boxes to indicate your preference for sharing or not sharing application information with the programs indicated. Your decision will not change whether your children get free or reduced-price meals.

**Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines**

Household Size	Year	Month	Week
1	\$23,107	\$1,926	\$445
2	31,284	2,607	602
3	39,461	3,289	759
4	47,638	3,970	917
5	55,815	4,652	1,074
6	63,992	5,333	1,231
7	72,169	6,015	1,388
8	80,346	6,696	1,546
For each additional family member add:	\$8,177	\$682	\$158

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires the information on this application. You do not have to give the information, but if you do not, we cannot approve your child for free or reduced-price meals. You must include the last four digits of the social security number of the adult household member who signs the application. The last four digits of the social security number are not required when you are only applying for foster children, or you list a Food Supplement Program or Temporary Cash Assistance case number, or when you indicate that the adult household member signing the application does not have a social security number. We will use your information to determine if your child is eligible for free or reduced-price meals, and for administration and enforcement of the lunch and breakfast programs. We MAY share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them evaluate, fund, or determine benefits for their programs, auditors for program reviews, and law enforcement officials to help them look into violations of program rules.

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, (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](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:

mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

fax: (202) 690-7442; or

email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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