

Who is eligible?

Families that receive Food Assistance, FIP benefits, or qualify because their income falls below the guidelines.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. I received a letter from the Department of Food and Nutrition stating we are eligible for free meals but not all of my children are listed in the letter, what should I do?

Some eligible children may not be identified in this process. Households with children who were not identified should receive a letter of direct certification from DHS. Children on these letters will receive free meal benefits only if parents provide the letter to the school. Instructions to parents are included on the letter. If you receive notice that only SOME of your children are eligible because of direct certification, contact the school. You may need to complete an application for the children who were not identified.

2. I currently receive Food Assistance or Family Investment Program (FIP) benefits; do I need to fill out an application?

Perhaps. School enrollment records have been compared to records from the Department of Human Services to identify children who are members of households receiving Food Assistance or FIP benefits. If ANY of your child(ren) are identified during this process all your children will be directly certified as eligible to receive free meal benefits and you will be notified of their eligibility by the school. Parents need to do nothing more for their children to receive free meal benefits. Some eligible children may not be identified in this process. Households with children who were not identified should receive a letter of direct certification from DHS. Children on these letters will receive free meal benefits only if parents provide the letter to the school. Instructions to parents are included on the letter. If you receive a notice from EITHER THE SCHOOL OR DHS that only SOME of your children are eligible because of direct certification, CONTACT THE SCHOOL. You may need to complete an application for the children who were not identified or provide additional information to the school.

3. I did not receive a letter but think I might qualify, what should I do?

Check to see if your total household income falls within the limits on the chart. If it does, fill out the free and reduced application form. Only one application per household is necessary. Complete parts 1, 2, and 3 on application. Be sure to list everyone living in the household, including younger children and every adult. Return the application to any School or the Food and Nutrition Office.

4. We are in the military, do we include our housing allowance as income?

If your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income. All other allowances must be included in your gross income. There are currently no active Military Housing Projects in Iowa. For a listing of the Military Housing Projects by state visit the following Web site: <http://www.acq.osd.mil/housing/mhpi.htm>.

5. Do you receive WIC benefits?

Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible. You must complete the free and reduced application form and qualify.

6. Can homeless, runaway and migrant children get free meals?

Yes. Please contact your school office to see if your child(ren) qualifies, if you have not already received notification they are eligible for free meals.

7. May I apply if someone in my household is not a U.S. citizen?

Yes. You or your child(ren) do not have to be U.S. citizens to qualify for free or reduced price meals.

8. Who can get free meals?

Children in households getting Food Assistance or FIP and most foster children can get free meals regardless of household income. Children enrolled in Head Start can get free meals regardless of income. Also, your children can get free meals if your household income is within the free limits on the Federal Income Guidelines.

9. Who can get free milk?

If your school participates in the Special Milk Program for half day kindergarteners, your kindergarten child may be eligible for free milk.

The Cedar Rapids Community School District currently does not participate in this program.

10. Who can get reduced price meals?

Your child(ren) can get low cost meals if your household income is within the reduced price limits on the Federal Income Chart on the back of this page.

Can children with disabilities get food substitutions?

If a child has a disability as determined by a licensed physician, and the disability prevents the child from eating the regular school meal, the school will make substitutions prescribed by the licensed physician. There will be no extra charge for the meal. However, the school is not required to make substitutions for a food allergy, unless it meets the definition of disability. Please call your school for more information.

Non-discrimination Statement:

This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly. "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). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

Iowa Non-Discrimination Notice: "It is the policy of this CNP provider not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or religion in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code section 216.7 and 216.9. If you have questions or grievances related to compliance with this policy by this CNP Provider, please contact the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Grimes State Office Building, 400 E. 14th St., Des Moines, IA 50319-1004; phone number 515-281-4121, 800-457-4416; web site: <http://www.state.ia.us/government/crc/index.html>."

Fair Hearing:

If you do not agree with the decision on your application or the result of an income check, you can discuss it with the Food and Nutrition Office at 558-2305.

You also have a right to a fair hearing. This can be done by calling or writing the following person:

Dr. David Benson, Superintendent
907 15th St SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404
319-558-2223

Penalties for Misrepresentation:

By signing the free and reduced application, you certify that all of the information is true and correct and that all income is reported. You understand that this information is being given for the receipt of Federal funds; that the school officials may verify the information on the application; and that deliberate misrepresentation of the information may subject you to prosecution under applicable State and Federal Law.

Privacy Act Statement: This explains how we will use the information you give us.

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 social security number of the adult household member who signs the application. The social security number is not required when you apply on behalf of a foster child or you list a Food Assistance Number, or Family Investment Program (FIP) 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.

How to Apply for Free & Reduced Benefits



Cedar Rapids
Community School District

Excellence for All

Cedar Rapids Community School District
Department of Food and Nutrition

Office located at:
907 15th ST SW #101
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

558-2305

Nutritious meals are important to the success of your child.

The Cedar Rapids Community School District participates in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Nutritious meals are served every school day.

Meal prices are as follows:

	Lunch	Breakfast
Elementary	\$2.00	\$ 1.25
Middle	\$2.10	\$ 1.25
High	\$2.10	\$ 1.25
Reduced	\$.40	\$.30
Adult	\$2.95	\$1.50
Milk	\$.45	\$.45

Important things to know.

- A new application is required every year.**
To apply for free or reduced price meals, please fill out the application as soon as possible.
- Fill out one application per household.**
Foster children can be included as a household member or as a separate application.
- Please answer all questions on the form.**
The school cannot process an application which does not contain complete information on household members and income.
- Sign the form and return it to your child's school.**
- Notification.**
Within approximately 10 working days after your application is received you will be sent a letter telling you whether or not your student will receive free or reduced price meals.
- You are responsible for the full price of the meal(s) until your application is approved.**
- If I don't qualify now, may I apply later?**
Yes. You may apply at any time during the school year if your household size goes up, income goes down, or if you start getting Food Assistance, FIP, or other benefits. If you lose your job, your children may be able to get free or reduced price meals.

Like help with your application?

If you have questions or need help filling out the form, call your school or the Food and Nutrition Office at 558-2305. We provide confidential help.

Income Eligibility Guidelines

Parents: If your total household income is within the limits listed below, your children may be eligible for either free or reduced meals. Complete parts 1, 2, and 3 on the application. Return to your child's school or the Food and Nutrition Office.

Effective 7-1-2011 to 6-30-2012

Household Size	Reduced Price Meals				
	Yearly	Monthly	Twice a Month	Every two weeks	Weekly
1	20,147	1,679	840	775	388
2	27,214	2,268	1,134	1,047	524
3	34,281	2,857	1,429	1,319	660
4	41,348	3,446	1,723	1,591	796
5	48,415	4,035	2,018	1,863	932
6	55,482	4,624	2,312	2,134	1,067
7	62,549	5,213	2,607	2,406	1,203
8	69,616	5,802	2,901	2,678	1,339
For each additional family member add:	7,067	589	295	272	136

Who should report income?

Any Household Member:

You must list the names of **every person** who lives in your household. Include parents, grandparents, all children, other relatives and unrelated people who live in your household and their incomes. (Part 2).

What should be reported as income?

Monthly Income:

List the income (**BEFORE** deductions) each person received **last month** and where it is from, such as wages, retirement, or welfare. (Part 2) If you have a household member for whom last month's income was higher or lower than usual, list an average monthly income by taking the income of the last several months and dividing it by the number of months. School officials have the right to request verification of the information you supply at any time during the school year. Purposeful misrepresentation is subject to prosecution.

Types of income to report:

Wages	Interest
Pensions	Tips
Public assistance	Workmen's compensation
Alimony	Disability income
Annuities	Welfare payments
Child support payments	Commissions
Strike benefits	Veteran's subsistence benefits
Supplemental security income	Retirement income
Salaries	Cash withdrawals from savings, investments or trust
Unemployment compensation	
Social security benefits	

DO NOT report income from:

Scholarships	Shoveling
Educational benefits	Grass cutting
Babysitting	Food stamps

What if my income is not always the same?

List the amount you typically earn. For example, if you generally earn \$1000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only earned \$900, write down that you earn \$1000 per month. If you routinely work overtime, include it, but do not include overtime if you work it occasionally.

Will the information I give on my application be checked?

Yes, we may ask you to send written proof. You are not required to provide proof with your application.

How should foster children be reported?

A foster child is a child who is living with a household but who remains the **legal responsibility** of the welfare agency or court, and is considered part of the household. If you have foster children living with you and wish to apply for free or reduced price benefits for them, please complete an application. In determining income for the foster child, only the following should be considered:

- Funds provided by the welfare agency, which is specifically identified by category for personal use of the child, such as for clothing, school fees and allowances. Welfare funds identified by category for shelter and care, and those identified as special needs funds, such as those for medical and therapeutic needs are not considered income. Where welfare funds cannot be identified by category, no portion is considered income.
- Other funds received by the child. This includes, but is not limited to money provided by the child's family for personal use and earnings from employment other than occasional or part-time jobs.
- Foster children may be eligible for free or reduced price meals regardless of income of the household within which they reside.