

For immediate release

ANNUAL FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE MEAL POLICY ANNOUNCED

The Delaware Department of Education announces the U.S. Department of Agriculture policy for free and reduced-price meals for children unable to pay the full price for meals served under the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and After School Snack Program. Each participating school and its administrative office have a copy of the policy, which may be reviewed by any interested party.

Meal benefit forms will be sent home with a letter to families. To apply for free or reduced-price meals, households should fill out the form for their household and return it to the school. The information provided on the form will be used for the purpose of determining eligibility and may be verified at any time during the school year by program officials. Information on the form may not be used for any other purpose unless consent is granted by parent/guardian.

For program officials to determine eligibility, households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and/or Delaware Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (DE-TANF) must list: the child's name and their SNAP and/or DE-TANF case number and provide a signature and name of an adult household member. Households not receiving SNAP and/or DE-TANF must list: names of all household members; the amount of the gross income for each household member received last month; the income source and how often received; the signature of an adult household member; and the last four digits of the signing adult's social security number, or the word "none" or "No Social Security Number" box marked if the adult does not have a social security number. A form may be submitted at any time during the school year.

Under the provisions of the free and reduced-price policy, the school nutrition services supervisor will review the forms and determine eligibility. Parents or guardians dissatisfied with the ruling of the official may discuss the decision with the determining official on an informal basis. Parents or guardians wishing to make a formal appeal may make a request either orally or in writing to the administrative office for a hearing on the decision.

Children who are enrolled in Head Start or who are homeless, migrant, runaway or in foster care are eligible for free school meal benefits. In certain instances, children receiving WIC may also be eligible. Parents or guardians wishing to apply should follow the instructions on the form or contact their school for more information.

Households may report changes or reapply for meal benefits any time during the school year. The information provided by the household is confidential and will be used only for purposes of determining eligibility and verifying data.

Please see the [income eligibility scale here](#).

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, 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.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.