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# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE SCHOOL MEALS

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. LISA Academy offers breakfast and lunch meals every school day. There is no charge for breakfast or lunch **for students** for the **2021-2022 school year**. Your children may qualify for free meals or reduced-price meals. Below are some common questions and answers to help you with the application process.

## 1. WHO CAN GET FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE MEALS?

- All children in households receiving benefits from Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are eligible for free meals.
- Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals.
- Children participating in their school's Head Start program are eligible for free meals.
- Children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway, or migrant are eligible for free meals.
- Children may receive free or reduced-price meals if their household's income is within the limits of the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines. Your children may qualify for free or reduced-price meals if your household income falls at or below the limits on this chart.

| FEDERAL ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART For School Year 2021-2022 |        |         |        |
|--|--------|---------|--------|
| Household size   | Yearly | Monthly | Weekly |
| 1  | 23,828 | 1,986   | 459    |
| 2  | 32,227 | 2,686   | 620    |
| 3  | 40,626 | 3,386   | 782    |
| 4  | 49,025 | 4,086   | 943    |
| 5  | 57,424 | 4,786   | 1,105  |
| 6  | 65,823 | 5,486   | 1,266  |
| 7  | 74,222 | 6,186   | 1,428  |
| 8  | 82,621 | 6,886   | 1,589  |
| Each additional person:                                    | 8,399  | 700     | 162    |

- 2. HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILDREN QUALIFY AS HOMELESS, MIGRANT, OR RUNAWAY?** Do the members of your household lack a permanent address? Are you staying together in a shelter, hotel, or other temporary housing arrangements? Does your family relocate on a seasonal basis? Are any children living with you who have chosen to leave their prior family or household? If you believe children in your household meet these descriptions and haven't been told your children will get freemeals, please contact your student's counselor.
- 3. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD?** No. *Use one Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application for all students in your household.* We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information.
- 4. SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LETTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN ARE ALREADY APPROVED FOR FREE MEALS?** No, but please read the letter you got carefully and follow the instructions. If any children in your household were missing from your eligibility notification, contact Meleah Critton at 501-916-9450 EXT: 211 or [critton@lisaacademy.org](mailto:critton@lisaacademy.org) immediately.

5. **CAN I APPLY ONLINE?** Yes! You are encouraged to complete an online application instead of a paper application if you are able. The online application has the same requirements and will ask you for the same information as the paper application. Click [HERE](#) to begin your application. Contact the Child Nutrition office at 501-916-9450 EXTs: 211 or 241 if you have any questions about the online application.
6. **MY CHILD'S APPLICATION WAS APPROVED LAST YEAR. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT A NEW ONE?** No. It is not necessary to complete a meal application for free or reduced-price meals
7. **I GET WIC. CAN MY CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS?** Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Please apply online by clicking [HERE](#) or by going to any school office or district office to get a paper application.
8. **WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED?** Yes. We may also ask you to send written proof of the household income you report. If chosen for verification during October of the school year.
9. **IF I DON'T QUALIFY NOW, MAY I APPLY LATER?** Yes, you may apply at any time during the school year. For example, children with a parent or guardian who becomes unemployed may become eligible for free and reduced-price meals if the household income drops below the income limit.
10. **WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE SCHOOL'S DECISION ABOUT MY APPLICATION?** You should talk to school officials. You also may ask for a hearing by calling Seth Buckman (501) 916-9450 Ext: 241, writing 10825 Financial Centre Parkway Suite 360, Little Rock, AR 72211, or email [sbuckman@lisaacademy.org](mailto:sbuckman@lisaacademy.org)
11. **MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOLD IS NOT A U.S. CITIZEN?** Yes. You, your children, or other household members do not have to be U.S. citizens to apply for free or reduced-price meals.
12. **WHAT IF MY INCOME IS NOT ALWAYS THE SAME?** List the amount that you normally receive. For example, if you normally make \$1000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only made \$900, put down that you made \$1000 per month. If you normally get overtime, include it, but do not include it if you only work overtime sometimes. If you have lost a job or had your hours or wages reduced, use your current income.
13. **WHAT IF SOME HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS HAVE NO INCOME TO REPORT?** Household members may not receive some types of income we ask you to report on the application, or may not receive income at all. Whenever this happens, please write a 0 in the field. However, if any income fields are left empty or blank, those will also be counted as zeroes. Please be careful when leaving income fields blank, as we will assume you meant to do so.
14. **WE ARE IN THE MILITARY. DO WE REPORT OUR INCOME DIFFERENTLY?** Your basic pay and cash bonuses must be reported as income. If you get any cash value allowances for off-base housing, food, or clothing, it must also be included as income. However, if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income. Any additional combat pay resulting from deployment is also excluded from income.
15. **WHAT IF THERE ISN'T ENOUGH SPACE ON THE APPLICATION FOR MY FAMILY?** List any additional household member on a separate piece of paper, and attach it to your application. Contact the Child Nutrition Office at 501-916-9450 EXT: 241 or 211 to receive a second application.
16. **MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP. ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAMS WE MIGHT APPLY FOR?** To find out how to apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), contact your local assistance office or call **501-682-8276**.

If you have other questions or need help, call **501-916-9450 Exts: 211 or 241**

Sincerely,

*Seth Buckman, MS, RDN, LDN*

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**District Child Nutrition Coordinator**

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 submit all the needed information, 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 primary wage earner or other adult household members who sign the application. The social security number is not required when you apply on behalf of a foster child or you list a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) case number or other SNAP identifiers for your child 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.

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To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), 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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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