

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. Jefferson County Public Schools offers healthy meals every school day. Breakfast costs \$1.75 (elementary) and \$2.00 (secondary), and lunch costs \$2.75 (elementary) and \$3.25 (secondary). Your children may qualify for free or reduced price meals. The reduced price is \$.40 for lunch. This packet includes information on free or reduced price meal benefits, and a set of detailed instructions

**\*Students in all grades who qualify for reduced price meals receive breakfast at no charge. Students in preschool through 5<sup>th</sup> grade who qualify for reduced meals also receive lunch at no charge.\***

*Here are answers to questions you may have about applying:*


**1. Who can get free meals?** All children in households receiving benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), or Temporary Assistance for Needy Family (TANF (also known as Colorado Works) – Basic Cash Assistance or State Diversion), 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 as well as children participating in their school’s Head Start program. Children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway, or migrant are eligible for free meals. Children can also receive free or reduced price meals if your household’s income is within the limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines listed on the this chart.

FEDERAL ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART For School Year 2016 – 2017			
Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$21,978	\$1,832	\$423
2	\$29,637	\$2,470	\$570
3	\$37,296	\$3,108	\$718
4	\$44,955	\$3,747	\$865
5	\$52,614	\$4,385	\$1,012
6	\$60,273	\$5,023	\$1,160
7	\$67,951	\$5,663	\$1,307
8	\$75,647	\$6,304	\$1,455
Each additional person:	\$7,696	\$642	\$148

**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 arrangement? 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 receive free meals, please call Community and Family Connections, 303-982-7276 or Metro Migrant Education Program, 303-365-5817 to see if your child(ren) qualify.


**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. Return the completed application to your child’s school office/cafeteria or mail/bring to the Food and Nutrition Service office at 1829 Denver West Dr., Bldg. 27, Golden, CO 80401-0001.

**4. Should I fill out an application if I received a letter this school year saying my children are approved for free meals?** No, but please carefully read the letter you received, and follow the instructions.

 If any children in your household were missing from your eligibility notification, contact Rebecca Walters at (303)982-6916 or [rdwalter@jeffco.k12.co.us](mailto:rdwalter@jeffco.k12.co.us) 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. Visit <https://lunchapps.jeffco.k12.co.us> to begin or to learn more about the online application process. Contact Rebecca Walters, (303)982-6916. [rdwalter@jeffco.k12.co.us](mailto:rdwalter@jeffco.k12.co.us) if you have any questions.

**6. My child’s application was approved last year. Do I need to fill out another one?** Yes. Your child’s application is only valid for that school year and for the first 30 days of this school year. You must complete a new application unless the school notified you that your child is eligible for the new school year.

 **When this carry-over period ends, unless the household is notified that their children are directly certified or the household submits an application that is approved, the children must pay full price for school meals and the school will not send a reminder notice or a notice of expired eligibility.**

**7. I receive benefits from the WIC Program. Can my child(ren) receive free meals?** Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please complete an application.

**8. Will the information I give be checked?** Yes, and we may ask you to send written proof of the information you provide.

**9. If I don't qualify now, may I apply again later?** Yes. You may apply at any time during the school year if your household size increases, income decreases, or if you start receiving SNAP or FDPIR. If you lose your job, your children may be able to receive free or 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 Food and Nutrition Service officials. You also may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to: Lynn Warner, Systems Administrator, Food and Nutrition Services, 1829 Denver West Drive, P.O. Box 4001, Golden, CO 80401-0001, (303) 982-6748.

**11. 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 a U.S. citizen to qualify 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 receive \$1000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only received \$900, put down that you receive \$1000 per month. If you normally receive overtime pay, include it, but do not include it if you work overtime only 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, or receive Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance payments, 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. My family needs more help. Are there other programs we might apply for?** To find out how to apply for other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office. Colorado PEAK is an online service to screen and apply for medical, food and cash assistance programs. It can be accessed at <http://coloradopeak.force.com/>.

If you have any other questions or need help, call 303 982-6916. We will send you a letter when your application is approved or denied. Please retain letter for your records.

Sincerely,

Lynn Warner, Systems Administrator, Food and Nutrition Services

**Non-discrimination Statement:** 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:

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). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.