

Free & Reduced Procedure 2022-2023

All USDA Waivers for free meals have ended! Students must be on FRL to access free meals.
The State of Colorado pays all co-pays for students on reduced-price meals making their meals free.

Online Free and Reduced-Price Meal Application:

MySchoolApps is an easy and convenient way for parents and guardians to submit applications for school meal benefits online and there is no fee for using the MySchoolApps website. Applying for free and reduced-price meals online is quicker, easier, and more accurate than filling out a paper application. It also puts an end to lost applications. The step-by-step process and guided help make applying for school meals simpler and easier to understand. The use of the online application continues to increase every year! Parents can take advantage of improved efficiency, quicker turn-around and increased confidentiality by accessing the online free or reduced meals on the Colorado Springs School District 11 website or specific school website.

Direct Mailers, Stock Postcards and Meal Applications:

A School Meal Informational Brochure will be mailed to District 11 households and incorporates many aspects of the school meal services. It includes the availability of the online free and reduced application process and website address; as well as, where to obtain a paper application. It, also, includes Free or Reduced-Price meal facts and Federal Income Qualification Guidelines. The brochure explains and guides households to apply for free and reduced meals and to pay for meals online in an effort to streamline and simplify processes for parents. All students in the D11 database after roll-over will be included in the mailing or will receive an eligibility status letter Directly Certifying them for free meals for 2022-2023 prior to the start of school.

Postcards with online meal processes and a small supply of paper applications will be sent to each school during the first week of August. We recommend schools use the MySchoolApps.com postcard in place of applications in the Student Registration packets. Please reserve paper applications for families who prefer not to apply online.

Paper Applications:

A limited supply of paper Free and Reduced-Price School Meal applications will be provided for households who will not or cannot apply online. Please encourage the online application when possible. The Free and Reduced-Price School Meal paper application is designed to be read into a scanner; therefore, fax and photocopies cannot be used. There will be one application in English and another that is translated to Spanish. The "Parent Letter", "FNS Message & School Codes", "Instructions for Applying" will complete the application packet. Please be sure that applications are filled out neatly and completely in **BLACK** ink only (no pencil, or off-color ink).

PLEASE THROW AWAY ALL 2021-2022 APPLICATIONS! Last year's postcards will work again this school year. THE 2022-2023 APPLICATION IS THE ONLY APPLICATION THAT CAN BE PROCESSED FOR BENEFITS.

NOTE: It usually takes a couple of days to a week for a paper application to reach Food and Nutrition Services (FNS); however, online applications are routed directly to the Free and Reduced (F&R) office, quite often on the same day, and there is no risk of it being lost or misplaced.

Purpose:

Every D11 and participating Charter school household will be given information regarding the Free and Reduced-Price Meal Program and will have an opportunity to apply for free or reduced-price meal benefits. The purpose of direct mailing, distribution in NEW student registration packets, and walk-in availability is to reach more families. District 11 benefits in several ways from maximizing Free & Reduced eligibility:

- A.) "At-Risk Funding" formulas are based on FRL numbers as are Title funds for each school site.
- B.) FNS breakfast and lunch programs provide nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free meals to students each school day which increases student attention, performance, behavior and attendance,
- C.) A financially solvent Food & Nutrition Services program does not require a subsidy from the General Fund.

Application Process:

The FNS office provides schools with postcards and applications for schools to have on hand for newly enrolled students and their families and household requests.

If you need additional MySchoolApps postcards or F&R Meal applications, you may order from the Free and Reduced office at 520-2934 or SchoolMeals@d11.org.

Households only need to apply once for the entire household even if they have students attending different D11 schools and charters that utilize and participate with the District 11 Free and Reduced Meal Benefits office.

- Households **do not** need to reapply if they are transferring from one D11 school to another D11 school or a D11 sponsored charter school to another D11 sponsored charter school. Benefits automatically transfers between D11 schools, Globe Charter, Academy ACL, CIVA, Tesla, Roy J Wasson Academic sites and Roosevelt-Edison Charter Academy. *Students coming from or going to all other schools will need to resubmit an application with District 11 or their new school district or School Food Authority.*
- Some charter schools that are not D11 charters and students transferring from other districts **will need to apply** for free or reduced-price meals when transferring into D11 regardless of their FRL status at their old school.
- MySchoolApps online meal application is available for the 2022-2023 school year.

Prior-Year Expiration Warning/Reminder letters and applications will be provided to every household that received free or reduced meals at the end of last school year and have not reapplied for 2022-2023 FRL benefits. These households are in danger of going to full pay lunch status after their 30-day rollover.

Completed Paper Applications Received PRIOR TO the First Day of School

Send paper applications via the RAP courier (Pony) to the Food & Nutrition Services office, Attention: Free and Reduced. Please do not hold them until the cafeteria opens.

Completed Paper Applications Received AFTER School Starts:

Please forward all completed Free and Reduced Applications to your Kitchen Manager as soon as you receive them from students and/or parents. Students do not need to fill out a new application each time they **transfer schools** within the District and its sponsored Charter schools. Their benefits will follow them from school to school. However, meal status from a different school district or non-D11 Charter schools participating in FNS meal service will not automatically transfer over. Once a student is eligible for free meals, no other applications are necessary for the remainder of the year. The approval is good for the entire school year.

IMPORTANT! - Homeless Students:

Anytime you enroll a student in a District 11 school with a nighttime residence that indicates they are homeless, please contact Title 1 520-2419 and your cafeteria manager. You may also contact the Free and Reduced office at 520-2934 or SchoolMeals@d11.org. Good communication is the best way to ensure that the student receives free lunches and other essential services at the soonest possible moment.

Response Letters (Approval or Denial) will be mailed or e-mailed directly to all secondary households and distributed via e-mail or through the schools at the elementary level informing families of their eligibility status the morning before their meal status begins.

End of the Year: The online application is similar to the paper application in that it is school year specific. Newly enrolling students and current students applying for the next school year will be able to apply online by the end of July of the NEW school year. You can pony any leftover paper applications to the Free and Reduced office making sure to list the school name that the apps are being returned from. Online Postcards may be reused from year to year.

Questions? Call the Free and Reduced Coordinator at 520-2934.