



FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE MEAL APPLICATION FAQ

What measures can I take to expedite my application approval?

- Use **BLACK** or **BLUE** ink only. **DO NOT USE RED INK.**
- Print clearly.
- Use your student's name as it appears on their Birth Certificate.
- Fill in the last four (4) digits or check the box labeled NONE of the SSN of the person signing the application.
- **Sign the application.** Unsigned applications will be mailed back to the address on the application or to the address on file if no address is written on the application.
- Write your student's ID number in the box provided on the application, if known.
- Return the meal application to the Cafeteria Manager, bring the application in person to the district office or mail the application to NUTRITION SERVICES, 2310 Aldergrove Avenue, Escondido, CA 92029.

Do I need to complete a new application each year?

Yes. Applications need to be renewed annually. There is a 30-day grace period from the previous year to allow for seamless application processing. After the grace period, students will be responsible for the full price of their meals until a new application is processed.

Do I need to fill out an application for each child?

No. Complete one application for all students in your household grades K-8. High school students should be listed as "ALL OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS" since they are not a part of our district.

What if I have students in elementary, middle, high school or at private school?

Only students in the K-8 EUSD district should be included in the **Student Information** section of the meal application. High school students should be listed as "ALL OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS" since they are not a part of our district. A separate application for the high school district and private school district will need to be completed.

Who can receive free meals?

There are three ways a student may be eligible for meals free of charge. The first is if a household income is within the limits of the Federal Income Guidelines (see Eligibility Guidelines link on Meal Applications tab). The second is through "categorical eligibility." If one member of a household is currently receiving public assistance benefits from one of the following programs: CalFresh, CalWORKS or FDPIR, then all students in the household are eligible for meals at no charge. Thirdly, students in foster care, migrant students and students eligible for Project Success are eligible for meals at no charge. Please note that a foster student's eligibility requires that the student **MUST** be placed in the residence by court order.

Who can receive reduced-price meals?

If a household income is within the limits of the Federal Income Guidelines (see Eligibility Guidelines link on Meal Applications tab) the student will receive reduced-price meals. Eligibility for reduced-price meals is determined by household size in relation to income.

We are two families living together in one household. How do we apply for benefits?

Enter the last and first name of ALL people living in your household. DO NOT include the names of the students listed in **Part 2. "Household"** means a group of related, or non-related, individuals who are living as one economic unit and sharing living expenses. **"Living Expenses"** include rent, clothes, food, doctor bills, utility bills, etc. If the individual has no income, you must put an X in the box next to the individual's name. Enter the CURRENT MONTHLY income each household member received last month, before taxes or anything else is taken out, and where it came from, such as earnings, welfare, pensions, and other income. If any amount last month was more-or-less than usual, enter the usual monthly income. Also enter any income received by a child or for a child from full-time or regular part-time employment, Social Security or Adoption Assistance.

I am new to EUSD, does my application at another district transfer?

Yes. Transfer students and newly enrolled students need to bring a lunch from home or money to purchase a lunch at the regular price until an application is approved and processed. A parent or guardian may furnish an eligibility letter from a former district within the same school year or request that the former district forward an eligibility letter to EUSD. Applications are processed within 10 working days of receipt at the district office.

What if I am not sure my child qualifies for free or reduced-price meals?

All families are encouraged to turn in an application if they meet the eligibility requirements, even if the student does not plan to eat in the cafeteria. Some school funding is based on the number of students eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

Will my income be verified?

Income verification is not required when an application is submitted. A random sampling is verified each year and at that time income verification will be requested by mail. Proof of income can be faxed to the attention of Donna Duggan at 760-735-2876, brought in person to the district office at 2310 Aldergrove Avenue, Escondido, CA 92029 between the hours of 8:30-5:00 or by appointment. Donna can also be reached by phone at 760-432-2142 or by e-mail at dduggan@eusd.org.

What if my child runs out of money in his/her account?

Students may carry a negative balance until the account is brought current. Kitchen Managers can be contacted by visiting www.eusd.org, selecting Departments, then Nutrition. On the Contact Us tab there is a Cafeteria Contact List link for e-mail addresses, names and phone numbers.

Why are non-student prices more?

For non-student (sibling) and adult meals, the prices include sales tax. Prices are also significantly higher as the district is not allowed to pass commodity savings to non-students (siblings) and adults. A current price list link is on the Nutrition Home tab.

I received a letter stating that my student is approved for free meals for this school year. Do I need to fill out an application?

No. If you have questions about the letter or if you think you received a letter in error, please call Nutrition Services at 760-432-2142 (English) or 760-432-2143 (Spanish).

I receive WIC or Medi-Cal benefits. Does my student qualify for free or reduced-price meals?

Your student *may* be eligible to receive meals free of charge or at a reduced-price if your household income is within the limits of the Federal Income Guidelines (see Eligibility Guidelines link on Meal Applications tab).

Our household receives CalFresh, CalWORKs, or FDPIR. Do we qualify for free or reduced-price meals?

This district participates in Direct Certification. If your household receives CalFresh, CalWORKs, or FDPIR benefits, then 1) your child may be automatically certified to receive free meals. 2) If you did not receive a direct certification letter for your child who is in any of these programs, you must complete an application.

What if I don't qualify now, but I lose my job?

You may apply for meal benefits at any time during the school year.

What if I disagree with the decision about my application?

If you disagree with the decision about your application, you can petition for a hearing to the Director of Nutrition Services, Gail A. Gousha at 2310 Aldergrove Avenue, Escondido, CA 92029.

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

Yes. You or your student does not have to be a U.S. citizen to receive meal benefits. If you do not have a social security number, check the box *I DO NOT HAVE A SSN*.

What if my income varies from month to month?

You may take an average of the last three months received. Please include any overtime or bonuses.

We live in military housing. Do we count the housing allowance as income?

If you are in the *Military Housing Privatization Initiative*, or get combat pay, DO NOT include these allowances as income. You **do** report any military benefits received in cash, such as housing allowances (off-base or general commercial/private real estate market), food, clothing, and deployed service member's income made available by them or on their behalf to the household.