

Guiding students. Empowering futures.



### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE SCHOOL MEALS FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2023-2024

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. **The Beaver Dam Unified School District** offers healthy meals every school day. **Breakfast costs \$1.45 for grades4K-5 and \$1.70 for grades 6-12. Lunch costs \$2.80 for grades 4K-5, \$3.05 for grades 6-8, and \$3.20/\$3.40 for grades9-12.** Your children may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals. **Reduced-price is\$0.30 for breakfast and \$0.40 for lunch.** This packet includes an application for free or reduced-price meal benefits, and a set of detailed instructions. 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 FoodShare, the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), or W-2 cash benefits are eligible for free meals, when listed on the application.
  - 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 qualify to receive free or reduced-price meals if your household's income is at or below the limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines.

FEDERAL ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART For School Year 2023-2024							
Household size	Yearly(\$}	Monthly(\$)	Weekly(\$}				
1	26,973	2,248	519				
2	36,482	3,041	702				
3	45,991	3,833	885				
4	55,500	4,625	1,068				
5	65,009	5,418	1,251				
6	74,518	6,210	1,434				
7	84,027	7,003	1,616				
8	93,536	7,795	1,799				
Each additional person:	9,509	793	183				

- 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 have not been told your children will get free meals, please call ore- mail Tiffany Sponholz at 920-88S-7300 ext. 1121or email sponholzt@bdusd.org.
- 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: **Taher Food Service Department, S00 Gould Street, Beaver Dam, WI 53916.**
- 4. SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LITTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN ARE ALREADY APPROVED FOR FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEALS? Please read the letter you received carefully and follow the instructions. If your letter indicated you qualify for free meals, then no application is needed. If any children in your household were missing from your eligibility notification, contact **Taher Food Service Department**, **920-885-7300**, ext. 2137 or email krausej@bdusd.org immediately. If your household was notified it qualified for reduced price meals, we encourage you to complete an application to potentially qualify for free meals based on household size and income.
- 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 Skyward Family Access to begin or to learn more about the online application process. Contact Taher Food Service Department at 920-885• 7300, ext. 2137 if you have any questions about the application process.

- 6. MY CHILD'S APPLICATION WAS APPROVED LAST YEAR. DO I NEED TO FILLOUT A NEW ONE? Yes. Your child's application is only good for that school year and for the first few days of this school year, through <u>Tuesday</u>. <u>October 17, 2023</u>, or when a new eligibility is determined. You must submit a new application unless the school told you that your child is eligible for the new school year. If you do not submit a new application that is approved by the school or you have not been notified that your child is eligible for free meals, your child will be charged the full price for meals.
- 7. I GET WIC. CAN MY CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS? Children in households participating in WIC <u>may</u> be eligible for free or reduced-price meals, but it is based on income. Please submit an application.
- 8. MY CHILD(REN) QUALIFIES FOR BADGERCARE PLUS OR MEDICAID. CAN MY CHILD GET FREE MEALS? Children with BadgerCare Plus, Medicaid, or subsidized insurance <u>may</u> be eligible for free or reduced-price meals, but it is based on household income and household size. Please submit an application to determine if your household qualifies.
- 9. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED? Yes. We may also ask you to send written proof of the household income you report.
- 10. IFI 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 or experience a financial hardship may become eligible for free and reduced-price meals if the household income drops below the income limit.
- 11. WHAT IFI DISAGREE WITH THE SCHOOL'S DECISION ABOUT MY APPLICATION? You should talk to school officials. You also may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to: Mark Distefano. Superintendent, 920-885-7300. ext. 1111 or email at distefanom@bdusd.org
- 12. 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.
- 13. WHAT IF MY INCOME IS NOT ALWAYS THE SAME? List the amount that you <u>normally</u> 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.
- 14. 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 O 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.
- 15. 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. Do not include any combat pay resulting from deployment as income.
- 16. WHAT IF THERE IS NOT ENOUGH SPACE ON THE APPLICATION FOR MY FAMILY? List any additional household members on a separate piece of paper and attach it to your application.
- 17. MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP. ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAMS WE MIGHT APPLY FOR? To find out how to apply for FoodShare or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call 1-800-362-3002.

If you have other questions or need help, call 920-885-7300 ext. 2137.

Sincerely, Janelle Krause

Janelle Krause Assistant Food Service Director Beaver Dam Unified School District Taher, Inc.

# How To Apply for Free and Reduced Price School Meals

Please use these instructions to help you fill out the application for free and reduced price school meals. You only need to submit one application per household, even if your children attend more than one school in the

The application must be filled out completely to determine the eligibility of your child(ren) for free or reduced price school meals. Please follow these instructions in order! Each step of the instructions is the same as the steps on your application. If at any time you are not sure what to do next, please contact

Please use a pen (not a pencil) when filling out the application and do your best to print clearly.

## Step 1: List <u>ALL</u> children, infants, and students up to and including grade 12

Tell us how many infants/toddlers, children not in school, and elementary/middle/high school students live in your household. They do NOT have to be related to you to be a part of your household.

Who should I list here? When filling out this section, please include ALL members in your household who are:

- Children age 18 or under AND are supported with the household's income;
- In your care under a formal foster arrangement through a court or state/local agency, or qualify as homeless, migrant, or runaway youth;
- Students attending (regardless of age)

## Step 2: Do any household members currently participate in SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR?

## If anyone in your household (including you) currently participates in one or more of the assistance programs listed below, your children are eligible for free school meals:

- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or
- The Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR).

<ul> <li>A) If no one in your household participates in any of the above listed programs:</li> <li>Check "No" in Step 2 and go to Step 3.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>B) If anyone in your household participates in any of the above listed programs:</li> <li>Write a case number for SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR. You only need to provide one case number. If you participate in one of these programs and do not know your case number, contact:</li> </ul>
	Go to Step 4.

## Step 3: List ALL household members and income for each member

#### How do I report my income?

- Use the lists titled "Sources of Income" & "Examples of Income for Children," on the back side of the application form to determine if your household has income to report.
- Report all amounts in GROSS INCOME ONLY. Report all income in whole dollars. Do not include cents.
  - $\circ~$  Gross income is the total income received  $\ensuremath{\text{before}}$  taxes and deductions.
  - Many people think of income as the amount they "take home" and not the total, "gross" amount. Make sure that the income you report on this application has NOT been reduced to pay for taxes, insurance premiums, or any other amounts taken from your pay.
- Write a "0" in any fields where there is no income to report. Any income fields left empty or blank will also be counted as a zero. If you write "0" or leave any fields blank, you are certifying (promising) that there is no income to report. If local officials suspect that your household income was reported incorrectly, your application will be investigated.
- Mark how often each type of income is received using the check boxes to the right of each field.

#### 3.A. Report income earned by adults

#### Who should I list here?

- When filling out this section, please include ALL adult members in your household who are living with you and share income and expenses, even if they are not related and even if they do not receive income of their own.
- Do NOT include:
  - o People who live with you but are not supported by your household's income AND do not contribute income to your household.
  - $\circ\,$  Infants, children and students already listed in Step 1.

## Step 3: List ALL household members and income for each member

#### 1) List adult household members' names.

Print the name of each household member in the boxes marked "Names of Adult Household Members (First and Last)." Include college students, unless they are declared independently on taxes (all college students are considered adults). Do not list any household members you listed in **Step 1**.

#### 2) List earnings from work.

List all income from work in the "Earnings from Work" field on the application. This is usually the money received from working at jobs. If you are a selfemployed business or farm owner, you will report your net income. Net income is your income after taxes and deductions have been subtracted.

- What if I have multiple jobs? List each job separately by entering your name and income from each job on a new line. Add an additional sheet of paper if necessary.
- What if I am self-employed? List income from your business as a net amount. This net amount is calculated by subtracting the total operating expenses of your business from its gross receipts (revenue). Gross receipts or revenue are all the income earned from the sale of any products or services offered.

If a child listed in Step 1 has income, follow the instructions in Step 3, Part B.

#### 3) List income from public assistance/child support/alimony.

List all income that applies in the "Public Assistance/Child Support/Alimony" field on the application. Do not report the cash value of any public assistance benefits NOT listed on the chart. If income is received from child support or alimony, only report court-ordered payments. Informal but regular payments should be reported as "other" income in the next part.

#### 4) List income from pensions/retirement/all other income.

List all income that applies in the "Pensions/Retirement/All Other Income" field on the application.

• What if I receive income from multiple sources in this category? List each source separately by entering your name and income from each source on a new line. Add an additional sheet of paper if necessary.

#### 5) List total household size.

Enter the total number of household members in the field "Total Household Members (Children and Adults)." This number MUST be equal to the number of household members listed in **Step 1** and **Step 3**. If there are any members of your household that you have not listed on the application, go back and add them. It is very important to list all household members, as the size of your household affects your eligibility for free and reduced price meals.

#### 6) Provide the last four digits of your Social Security Number.

An adult household member must enter the last four digits of their Social Security Number in the space provided. You are eligible to apply for benefits even if you do not have a Social Security Number. If no adult household members have a Social Security Number, leave this space blank and mark the box to the right labeled "Check if no Social Security Number."

#### 3.B List income earned by children

#### List all income earned or received by children.

List the combined gross income for <u>ALL</u> children listed in **Step 1** in your household in the box marked "Child Income." Only count foster children's income if you are applying for them together with the rest of your household.

• What is Child Income? Child income is money received from outside your household that is paid DIRECTLY to your children. Many households do not have any child income.

## Step 4: Contact information and adult signature

All applications must be signed by an adult member of the household. By signing the application, that household member is promising that all information has been truthfully and completely reported. Before completing this section, please also make sure you have read the statements on the back of the application.

mailing address in the fields provided, if this information is available. If you have no permanent address, that is okay. Sharing a phone number, email address, or both is optional,	<b>B) Print and sign your name and write today's date.</b> Print the name of the adult signing the application and that person signs in the box "Signature of adult."	C) Mail completed application to:
Optional		

Share children's racial and ethnic identities (optional). On the back of the application, we ask you to share information about your children's race and ethnicity. This field is optional and does not affect your children's eligibility for free or reduced price school meals. This information is requested solely for the purpose of determining the State's compliance with Federal civil rights laws, and your response will not affect consideration of your application, and may be protected by the Privacy Act. By providing this information, you will assist us in assuring that this program is administered in a nondiscriminatory manner.

Please return the application directly to your child's SCHOOL. DO <u>NOT</u> mail, fax, or email completed applications or questions about applications to the USDA Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights or your child's eligibility for free or reduced-price meals will be delayed.

#### **Prototype Household Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals**

Complete one application per household. Please use a pen (not a pencil).

#### **APPLY ONLINE: RETURN TO (School/District Name): ADDRESS:**

l's First Name		МІ	Child's Last Name				Grade	•	Foster Child	Migrant	Runawav H	lomeless		
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Total Household Members (Children and Adults)

#### B. Child Income

Sometimes children in the household earn or receive income.

Include the TOTAL income (before taxes and deductions) received by ALL children listed in STEP 1 here.

#### STEP 4 **RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL:** Insert school address here Contact information and adult signature.

\$

Member (If Applicable)

"I certify (promise) that all information on this application is true and that all income is reported. I understand that this information is given in connection with the receipt of Federal funds, and that school officials may verify (confirm) the information. I am aware that if I purposely give false information, my children may lose meal benefits, and I may be prosecuted under applicable State and Federal laws."

 $\bigcirc$ 

\$

Last Four Numbers of Social Security Number of

Primary Wage Earner or other Adult Household

 $\bigcirc$ 

Child Income

\$

Weekly

С

How often received?

2x Month

C

Monthly

Every 2 Weeks

 $\bigcirc$ 

\$

Please see application's back

for list of income sources.

Check if no Social

Security Number

Annual

 $\bigcirc$ 

Print Name of Adult Signing the Form	:	Signature of Adult			Today's Date
Mailing Address (if available)	City	State	Zip	Phone (optional)	Email (optional)
Poturn completed form to your child's s	rhaal				

Return completed form to your child's school.

	Sources of Income		Examples of Income for Children			
Earnings from Work	Public Assistance/Alimony/ Child Support	Pensions/Retirement/ All other sources of income	A child has a regular full or part-time job where they earn a salary or wages			
<ul> <li>Salary, wages, cash bonuses, tips, commissions</li> <li>Net income from self-employment (farm or business)</li> </ul>	Unemployment benefits     Workers' compensation     Supplemental Security Income (SSI)     Cash assistance from State or local	<ul> <li>Social Security/Disability (including railroad retirement and black lung benefits)</li> <li>Private Pensions or disability benefits</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>A child is blind or disabled and receives Social Security benefits</li> <li>A parent is disabled, retired, or deceased, and their child receives Social Security benefits</li> </ul>			
<ul> <li>If you are in the U.S. Military:</li> <li>Basic pay and cash bonuses (do NOT include combat pay, FSSA, or privatized housing</li> </ul>	government • Alimony payments • Child support payments	Income from trusts or estates     Annuities     Investment income     Earned interest	A friend or extended family member regularly gives a child spending money			
<ul> <li>allowances)</li> <li>Allowances for off-base housing, food, and clothing</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Veterans benefits</li> <li>Strike benefits</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Rental income</li> <li>Regular cash payments from outside household</li> </ul>	A child receives regular income from a private pension fund, annuity, or trust			
OPTIONAL Children's ethnic and racial identities. This information is kept confidential and may be protected by the Privacy Act of 1974. We are required to ask for information about your children's race and ethnicity. This information is important and helps to make sure we are fully serving our community. Responding to this section is optional and does not affect your children's eligibility for free or reduced price meals.						
Ethnicity (check one): Hispanic or Latino (A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish Culture or origin, regardless of race)						
Race (check one or more): American Indi	an or Alaska Native 📃 Asian 🗌	Black or African American Native Hawaiian or Ot	her Pacific Islander 🛛 White			
Return this completed form to your child's school. *Do not mail, fax, or email completed applications to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights.						
DO NOT FILL OUT For school use only.						
Annual Income Conversion: Weekly × 52, Every 2 Weeks × 26, Twice a Month × 24, Monthly × 12. Do not annualize income to determine eligibility unless more than one income frequency is listed.						
Total Income		Household size Categorical Eligibi	Eligibility Free Reduced Denied O O O			

Determining Official's Signature

Date Confirming Official's Signature

**Use of Information Statement** 

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires that we use information from this application to see who qualifies for free or reduced price meals. We can only approve complete forms. We may share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them deliver program benefits to your household. Inspectors and law enforcement may also use your information to make sure that program rules are met.

Please be sure to provide the last four numbers of the Social Security number of the adult household member who signs the application. If the adult does not have one, 'Check if no Social Security Number.' Applications for a foster child do not need to list a Social Security number. Applications for children in households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) do not need to list a Social Security number. Some children qualify for free meals without an application. Please contact your school to get free meals for a foster child, and children who are homeless, migrant, or runaway.

#### The contact information below is solely to file a complaint of discrimination

Date

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

Verifying Official's Signature

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: **https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf**, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

\*MAIL: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 
 FAX:
 (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

 EMAIL:
 program.intake@usda.gov

\*Do not mail applications to this address, only complaints of discrimination.

Date

#### Return completed form to your child's school.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.