

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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

NO. Complete the application to apply for free or reduced-price meals. 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.

Where do I return the application?

Return the completed application to your child's school.

Who can get free meals?

Children in households getting Food Stamps or TANF and most foster children can get free meals regardless of your income. Also, your children can get free meals if your household income meets on the Federal Income Chart.

Can homeless, runaway and migrant children get free meals?

Yes. If you have not been notified of free status under these categories, please call Estella Garza, homeless (McKinney-Vento) liaison, at (210) 227-1206 extension 126 or Mary Lou La Fuente, migrant liaison, at (210) 434-6333 to see if your child(ren) qualify.

Who can get reduced price meals?

Your children can get low cost meals if your household income is within the reduced-price limits on the Federal Income Chart, included in this application packet.

What do Reduced-priced meals cost?

Reduced-price meals will be provided at no cost.

Should I fill out an application if I got a notice this school year saying my children are approved for free meals due to Direct Certification?

No. Bring the notice to your child's school. Do NOT fill out an application. Call the Food and Child Nutrition Services department at (210) 223-2201 if you have questions.

If I receive food stamps or TANF, can my child(ren) get free meals?

Yes. Please fill out an application. Include the nine (9) digit number for Food Stamp/TANF eligibility. The number starts with a one (1) or zero (0).

Will the information I give be checked?

Only if your application is randomly selected for verification.

If I don't qualify now, may I apply later?

Yes. You may apply at any time during the school year if your household size goes up, income goes down, or if you start getting Food Stamps, TANF or other benefits.

What if I disagree with the school's decision about my application?

Call the Food Service application office at 210-223-2201 to discuss the details of your application. If you are not satisfied, you may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to: Food and Child Nutrition Comptroller, 806 N. Salado, San Antonio, Texas, 78207, (210) 223-2201.

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.

Who should I include as members of my household?

You must include yourself and all people living in your household, related or not (such as children, grandparents, other relatives or friends).

What if my income is not always the same?

List the amount that you normally receive.

We are in the military, do we include our housing allowance as income?

If your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income. All other allowances must be included in your gross income.

How do I purchase meals for my child?

Each school's cafeteria manager accepts payments of cash or checks. If paying by check, please write your student's name and student id number in the memo section of the check. Payments can be made before school, during breakfast or during lunch.

How can I check the balance of my child's account?

- Contact your school cafeteria manager

Does my child have to purchase an entire meal?

Students who receive free/reduced meal benefits, or who pay for a reimbursable meal, must take at least three (3) of five (5) items (called components) served. A reimbursable meal will be charged the tray price.

What is the cost of the meal?

	Elementary Grades Pre-K - 5	Middle Grades 6-8	High Grades 9-12
Breakfast	\$0.90	\$0.90	\$0.90
Lunch	\$1.75	\$2.00	\$2.00

What happens to my child's money at the end of the school year?

If you have pre-paid funds and have money left in an account at the end of the school year, the money will be available for that student's use in the next school year.

What happens to my child's money if my child transfers to another SAISD school?

Transferring students can access their account at any school within the district.

Do I have to fill out an application if I have a foster child?

Yes. One application per foster child is required which must include the child's name, the amount of personal use income the child received last month, and an adult household member must sign the form.

Does a child who is a migrant, homeless, or runaway need to fill out an application?

No, however they must call Estella Garza, homeless liaison at 210-227-1206 ext 126 to see if your child(ren) qualify.

Do I have to report changes during the year?

NO, but any changes in income may change your status and you may qualify for free or reduced meals. Please fill out a new application to qualify for free or reduced.

Will the information on my application be kept confidential?

Yes.

How will I know if I am approved or denied?

You will receive a notice in the mail to the address listed on the application stating your approval status.

Am I responsible for any charges before I am approved for free or reduced priced meals?

Yes. Your child will need to pay for meals if you are not in the free or reduced category.

Will my child's free or reduced priced meal status carry over from last year?

Students may receive benefits according to their eligibility from the last school year for the first thirty (30) days of the new school year only (if they were enrolled in SAISD schools last year.) You must fill out a new application and be approved before the thirty (30) day deadline in order to avoid meal charges.

If my child is a paid student and does not have money to pay for the meal, will he still be able to eat?

Yes, we will allow up to 3 charges. We will send notification home with your child with the amount and date due. If you have not paid after the 3 charges, your child may receive an alternative meal.

What is an alternative meal?

Sandwich of the day and milk.