



# Columbia Public Schools

**Dr. Peter Stiepleman**  
Superintendent of Schools

## Nutrition Services

1818 W. Worley  
Columbia, MO 65203  
Phone: (573) 214-3480

[www.cpsk12.org/nutrition](http://www.cpsk12.org/nutrition)

**Laina Fullum, Director**



## 2020-2021 FREE & REDUCED-PRICE SCHOOL MEAL APPLICATION SCHOOL MEALS FAQ

Children need healthy meals to learn. Columbia Public Schools' Nutrition Services offers healthy meals every school day. **Your children may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals.** Enclosed is 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 the following benefits are eligible for free meals:
  - Food Stamp Program/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
  - Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
  - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
  - Foster children: children who are the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court
  - Children participating in a Head Start program
  - Homeless, runaway, or migrant children
- Your children may qualify for free or reduced-price meals if your household income falls within the limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines. Your children may qualify for free or reduced-price meals if your household income falls at or below the limits on this chart.

MEAL PRICES	
<b>STUDENTS GRADES K-5</b>	
• Breakfast:	\$2.00
• Lunch:	\$2.95
• Add'l milk or juice only:	\$0.50 each
<b>STUDENTS GRADES 6-12</b>	
• Breakfast:	\$2.00
• Lunch:	\$3.15
• Additional milk:	\$0.50 each
<b>REDUCED-PRICE K-12</b>	
• Breakfast:	\$0.30
• Lunch:	\$0.40
Menus are available online: <a href="http://www.cpsk12.org/nutrition">www.cpsk12.org/nutrition</a>	

Household Size	Annually	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$23,606	\$1,968	\$454
2	31,894	2,658	614
3	40,182	3,349	773
4	48,470	4,040	933
5	56,758	4,730	1,092
6	65,046	5,421	1,251
7	73,334	6,112	1,411
8	81,622	6,802	1,570
For each add'l person add	+ 8,288	+ 691	+ 160

**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 your child fits these criteria, and haven't been told your children will get free meals, please contact the district's Student Services at 573-214-3438.

**3. DOES EACH CHILD NEED TO HAVE THEIR OWN APPLICATION?** No. Use one Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Application for all students in your household each year. We cannot approve an incomplete application, so be sure to fill out all required information. Return the completed application to: Columbia Public Schools, Nutrition Services' address above or your child's school cafeteria.

**4. SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LETTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN ARE ALREADY APPROVED FOR FREE MEALS?** No, but please read the letter carefully and follow the instructions. **If any children in your household were missing from your eligibility notification, contact Nutrition Services immediately.** Eligibility must be renewed annually between July 1-June 30.

**5. CAN I APPLY ONLINE?** Yes! The process is quicker and have the same requirements. Visit <http://www.cpsk12.org/nutrition>.

**6. MY CHILD'S APPLICATION WAS APPROVED LAST YEAR. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT A NEW ONE?** Yes. Your child's application is only good for one school year. You must send in a new application unless you have been notified by Nutrition Services that your child is eligible for the new school year

**7. I GET WIC. CAN MY CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS?** Maybe. Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Please send in an application.

**8. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED?** Yes. We may also ask you to send written proof of the household income you report.

**9. IF I 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 may become eligible for free and reduced-price meals if the household income drops below the income limit mid school year.

**10. WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE SCHOOL'S DECISION ABOUT MY APPLICATION?** A hearing may be requested by contacting Randall Gooch, Chief Operations Officer at 573-214-3400, or in writing at 1818 W. Worley Street, Columbia, MO 65203.

**11. 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.

**12. WHAT IF MY INCOME IS NOT ALWAYS THE SAME?** List the amount that you normally 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.

**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. Please write a 0 in the field. 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. WHAT IF THERE ISN'T 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.

**16. WHAT IF MY CHILD'S SCHOOL IS AN ALL FREE MEAL SCHOOL, DO I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION?** Yes. Not all schools offer all free meals. If your child leaves one school, another school may not be under the same provision. Having an approved application on file may prevent households from accumulating unnecessary meal charges.

**17. MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP. ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAMS WE MIGHT APPLY FOR?** To find out how to apply for the Food Stamp Program/SNAP or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call 1-855-373-4636.

**18. HOW DO I PAY FOR MY CHILD'S SCHOOL MEALS?** All schools use a computerized cashier system. Each student is automatically assigned a meal account. To access this account, all students enter their student ID on a keypad at the cash register for food purchases. This account rolls information from year to year and follows your child in the Columbia Public School district. There are 3 ways to pay on this account:

- In the school cafeteria to school lunch personnel only
- Online via [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com) (can also track student purchases with this system)
- In the Nutrition Services office at 1818 W. Worley St., Columbia, MO 65203

**19. WHAT IF MY CHILD DOES NOT HAVE MONEY IN THEIR MEAL ACCOUNT?** Students will still be able to select a complete USDA certified meal but will not be able to purchase any additional items such as milk only or a snack. The account will be charged in deficit. Households with account deficits will be contacted and asked to bring the deficit back to a zero or a positive balance. Please review the district's 2020-2021 Breakfast/Lunch Program Information and Meal Purchasing Procedures concerning accounts in negative standing on the Nutrition Services website or call to inquire.

**For more information visit our website at [www.cpsk12.org/nutrition](http://www.cpsk12.org/nutrition) and have a great school year!**

USDA 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 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: mail: (1) 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).

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## HOW TO APPLY FOR FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS

Please use these instructions to help you fill out the application for free or reduced-price school meals. You only need to submit one application per household, even if your children attend more than one school in Columbia Public Schools. The application must be filled out completely to certify your children 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 the Nutrition Services office at 573-214-3480 and leave a message if there is no answer during pandemic or e-mail [lunch@cpsk12.org](mailto:lunch@cpsk12.org).

**PLEASE USE A PEN (NOT A PENCIL) WHEN FILLING OUT THE APPLICATION AND DO YOUR BEST TO PRINT CLEARLY.**

### **STEP 1: LIST ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS WHO ARE INFANTS, CHILDREN, AND STUDENTS UP TO AND INCLUDING GRADE 12**

Tell us how many infants, children, and 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 foster arrangement, or qualify as homeless, migrant, or runaway youth
- Students attending Columbia Public Schools regardless of age

**List each child's name.** Print each child's name. Use one line of the application for each child. When printing names, write one letter in each box. Stop if you run out of space. If there are more children present than lines on the application, attach a second piece of paper with all required information for the additional children.

**Building name/Grade.** If child is a student, list building name and grade.

**Do you have any foster children?** If any children listed are foster children, mark the "Foster Child" box next to the child's name. If you are ONLY applying for foster children, after finishing **STEP 1**, go to **STEP 4**. Foster children who live with you may count as members of your household and should be listed on your application. If you are applying for both foster and non-foster children, go to step 3.

**Are any children homeless, migrant, or runaway?** If you believe any child listed in this section meets this description, mark the "Homeless, Migrant, Runaway" box next to the child's name and complete all steps of the application.

### **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)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- The Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

**If no one in your household participates in any of the above listed programs:**

- Leave **STEP 2** blank and go to **STEP 3**.

**If anyone in your household participates in any of the above listed programs:**

- 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: State number 1-855-373-4636.
- Go to **STEP 4**.

### **STEP 3: REPORT INCOME FOR ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**

**How do I report my income?**

- Use the charts titled "Sources of Income for Adults" and "Sources of Income for Children," printed 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.
  - Gross income is the total income received before taxes.
  - 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.

(Information follows on the reverse side.)

- 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 CHILDREN

**A) Report all income earned or received by children.** Report the combined gross income for ALL 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.

### 3.B 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:**
  - People who live with you but are not supported by your household’s income AND do not contribute income to your household.
  - Infants, Children and students already listed in **STEP 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).” Do not list any household members you listed in STEP 1. If a child listed in **STEP 1** has income, follow the instructions in **STEP 3, part A.**

**Report earnings from work.** Report all total gross 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 self-employed business or farm owner, you will report your net income.

**What if I am self-employed?** Report income from that work as a net amount. This is calculated by subtracting the total operating expenses of your business from its gross receipts or revenue.

#### Report income from public assistance/child support/alimony.

Report 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.

#### Report income from pensions/retirement/all other income.

Report all income that applies in the “Pensions/Retirement/ All Other Income” field on the application.

**Report 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 reduce-price meals.

**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 SSN.”

## 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 privacy and civil rights statements on the back of the application.**

**Provide your contact information.** Write your current address in the fields provided if this information is available. If you have no permanent address, this does not make your children ineligible for free or reduced-price school meals. Sharing a phone number, email address, or both is optional, but helps us reach you quickly if we need to contact you.

**Print and sign your name.** Print the name of the adult signing the application and that person signs in the box “Signature of adult.”

**Write today’s date.** In the space provided, write today’s date in the box.

**Mail Completed Form to:**  
**Columbia Public Schools**  
**Nutrition Services Department**  
**1818 W. Worley St.**  
**Columbia MO, 65203**

**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.



**INSTRUCTIONS**

<b>Sources of Income for Children</b>	
<b>Sources of Child Income</b>	<b>Example(s)</b>
- Earnings from work	- A child has a regular full or part-time job where they earn a salary or wages
- Social Security <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Disability Payments</li> <li>- Survivor's Benefits</li> </ul>	- A child is blind or disabled and receives Social Security benefits - A Parent is disabled, retired, or deceased, and their child receives Social Security benefits
- Income from person outside the household	- A friend or extended family member regularly gives a child spending money
- Income from any other source	- A child receives regular income from a private pension fund, annuity, or trust

<b>Sources of Income for Adults</b>		
<b>Earnings from Work</b>	<b>Public Assistance/ Alimony/Child Support</b>	<b>Pensions / Retirement / All Other Income</b>
- Salary, wages, cash bonuses - Net income from self-employment (farm or business)  If you are in the U.S. Military:  - Basic pay and cash bonuses (do NOT include combat pay, FSSA or privatized housing allowances) - Allowances for off-base housing, food and clothing	- Unemployment benefits - Worker's compensation - Supplemental Security Income (SSI) - Cash assistance from State or local government - Alimony payments - Child support payments - Veteran's benefits - Strike benefits	- Social Security (including railroad retirement and black lung benefits) - Private pensions or disability benefits - Regular income from trusts or estates - Annuities - Investment income - Earned interest - Rental income - Regular cash payments from outside household

**OPTIONAL Children's Racial and Ethnic Identities**

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  Not Hispanic or Latino

Race (check one or more):  American Indian or Alaskan Native  Asian  Black or African American  Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  White

The **Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act** requires the information on this application. You do not have to give the information, but if you do not, we cannot approve your child for free or reduced-price meals. You must include the last four digits of the social security number of the adult household member who signs the application. The last four digits of the social security number is not required when you apply on behalf of a foster child or you list a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) case number or other FDPIR identifier for your child or when you indicate that the adult household member signing the application does not have a social security number. We will use your information to determine if your child is eligible for free or reduced-price meals, and for administration and enforcement of the lunch and breakfast programs. We MAY share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them evaluate, fund, or determine benefits for their programs, auditors for program reviews, and law enforcement officials to help them investigate violations of program rules.

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, audiotope, 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).

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## REQUEST FOR INFORMATION 2020-2021

**(Complete one form per family)**

Please answer the question below by checking the appropriate box. The following information is a request adopted by the General Assembly in 2010 requiring school districts to determine if all children in a family have health insurance.

Does each child in your family have healthcare insurance?

YES

NO

**MO HealthNet (Medicaid) is considered healthcare insurance.**

If NO is checked the school district will provide the Does Your Child Need Healthcare Coverage form for the family.

Completion of this form is not a condition of determining meal eligibility. The Free and Reduced-Price Meals Family Application will be reviewed regardless of your response to this Request for Information.

Submit this request with your Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Family Application or return to your school/school district.

Printed name of parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability in its programs and activities. Inquiries related to Department programs and to the location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities may be directed to the Jefferson State Office Building, Office of the General Counsel, Coordinator – Civil Rights Compliance (Title VI/Title IX/504/ADA/Age Act), 6th Floor, 205 Jefferson Street, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480; telephone number 573-526-4757 or TTY 800-735-2966; email [civilrights@dese.mo.gov](mailto:civilrights@dese.mo.gov).