



Ohio's School Lunch Program Fact Sheet

The Ohio Department of Education, Office for Safety, Health and Nutrition, in partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture, administers the National School Lunch, School Breakfast, Special Milk, After School Care Snack, and Government Donated Food (Commodity) Programs among others.

Nationally, over 25 million students in over 90 thousand schools and agencies participate in Child Nutrition Programs, making them one of the country's largest food service operations. Ohio's food service programs serve over 1 million meals daily at over 4,000 sites.

The goals of the Child Nutrition Programs are to:

- Safeguard the health and well being of the nation's children
- Encourage domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural foods
- Give children an understanding of the relationship between proper eating habits and good health

Who can apply to participate in the lunch program?

- ◆ Any school of high school grade or under recognized by the State of Ohio as operating under public or nonprofit private ownership
- ◆ Any public or nonprofit classes of pre-primary grades when conducted in the aforementioned schools
- ◆ Any public or nonprofit, private licensed Residential Child Care Institution (RCCI).

What qualifies a student to participate?

Any student under age 21 who is enrolled in an eligible school or RCCI may participate. Additional benefits may be available to a student when his or her guardian submits a Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application. Based on the household size and income, the student may be eligible for meals free or at a reduced price. Schools may charge no more than \$0.40 for a reduced-price lunch. Schools set their own prices for meals served to students who pay the full meal price (paid full-price), though they must operate their meal services as non-profit programs.

What are the meal service requirements for lunch?

To be eligible for reimbursement and government donated foods, participating schools and agencies must prepare and serve meals that meet federal nutrition requirements. The reimbursable meal must be priced as a unit and available to all students regardless of their ability to pay. Meal service for lunch must be between 10:00am – 2:00pm.

Schools may choose one of four menu planning options: Nutrient Standard Menu Planning (NSMP), Assisted NSMP, Traditional or Enhanced. A computerized nutritional analysis using USDA approved software is required to use NSMP. Traditional and Enhanced patterns are planned using minimum quantities of milk, meat or meat alternate, vegetables and/or fruits, grains and breads.

Traditional/Enhanced Menu Patterns for lunch in elementary grades must include daily:

8 ounces of fluid milk
¾ cup total of two different fruits and/or vegetables**
2 ounces of meat or meat alternate
1 serving of grain/bread (8 per week for Traditional)**

**In the Enhanced Menu Pattern, additional fruits and/or vegetables and grain/breads are required per week based on grade/age groups. The Enhanced Menu Pattern allows one grain-based dessert item to be credited as a grain/bread per day.

What reimbursement will the school or agency receive?

The school or agency is reimbursed for each complete meal served to an eligible student. Reimbursement rates are applied based on the student's eligibility category paid full-price, reduced-price, or free. The school is responsible for accurately counting the meals served to students daily by eligibility category. In addition, a government donated food entitlement is earned for each lunch served.

What records must be kept?

The following are required records that must be kept for three school years plus the current year:

- ◆ Daily menus and production records
- ◆ Daily meal count and cash receipt worksheets (CN-7)
- ◆ Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Applications
- ◆ Monthly inventories of food, labor and supplies
- ◆ Monthly records of program costs
- ◆ Verification records
- ◆ Records of On-site Accountability Reviews (if more than one site)

To apply for one of the Child Nutrition Programs or to obtain additional information, please contact the Office for Safety, Health and Nutrition.

**The Ohio Department of Education
Office for Safety, Health and Nutrition
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Columbus, OH 43215-4183
(614) 466-2945
(614) 752-7613 (fax)**

Additional information, including current reimbursement rates and student income eligibility guidelines, is available at:

www.ode.state.oh.us -or- www.fns.usda.gov

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