

Back to School SNAP + AEB Toolkit for SY 22-23



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CHILD HUNGER PROGRAM

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Welcome back to school!

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) granted a waiver to school districts to be able to serve free meals to all students. This waiver has expired, and school districts must now charge students for meals. However, **free school meals are still available for income eligible students.**

The Second Harvest Heartland Child Hunger Program created the materials in this toolkit to help school staff communicate with households about school meals and SNAP, two programs that ensure families have access to the food they need so students are ready to learn in school this fall.

Note: These materials are only available in English, but we welcome users to translate to other languages. Please contact Hannah Keuler, child hunger specialist at hkeuler@2harvest.org for design files (Canva and Word).

Are you enrolled in any of the following programs: SNAP, MFIP, or FDPIR?

Yes

Unless you've already received a letter that your student is receiving free school meals, you should still complete an Application for Educational Benefits.

If you are not currently currently enrolled in SNAP, contact Second Harvest Heartland to see if you're eligible.

Is your total household income at or below the AEB guidelines?

Yes

Fill out the Application for Educational Benefits AND apply for SNAP and other programs

No

Is your total household income at or below the SNAP guidelines?

Yes

Apply for SNAP. If you qualify and enroll in SNAP, you will receive a confirmation letter from your district that you are enrolled in free school meals. If you haven't received your letter yet, still fill out your AEB so there's no gaps in coverage

No

Fill out the Application for Educational Benefits. Even if you think you don't meet the requirements, it's still important to your school to fill this out every year.

What do I do?

Use this flow chart when working with families to determine which programs they should apply for. Every family should complete an Application for Educational Benefits (AEB) every year unless they've received a letter from the district saying they've been directly certified.

Income guidelines are on the next page.

SNAP and AEB Income Guidelines

Household size	SNAP income guidelines* (200% FPG) *Valid through 9/30/22	AEB income guidelines (185% FPG)
1	\$27,180	\$25,142
2	\$36,620	\$33,874
3	\$46,060	\$42,606
4	\$55,500	\$51,338
5	\$64,940	\$60,070
6	\$74,380	\$68,802
7	\$83,820	\$77,534
8	\$93,260	\$86,266
Add for each additional household member	\$9,440	\$8,732

Want to fill out the SNAP application on your own?

Visit MNBenefits.org to do so.

Still have questions?

Reach out to the Second Harvest Heartland SNAP Outreach team:

- Call 651-209-7963
- Email snaprefer@2harvest.org
- Scan the QR code below



Sample Text and Blurbs

We suggest using any of the blurbs found below to post on social media, include in newsletters, and more. Each is written to function as a standalone post; you don't need to use them all, or all together. We also included some sample text to include with AEB forms, approval and denial letters, and households directly certified through Medicaid.

AEB and SNAP

If not already approved for free meals for the 2022-2023 school year, households must complete an Application for Educational Benefits form (also known as free school meal application)

School funding is significantly impacted by the number of students that qualify for free or reduced meals. To apply, complete an Application for Educational benefits (also known as the free school meals form).

All families are encouraged to complete their Application for Educational Benefits even if you don't think you will qualify. You may also opt-out or decline benefits by contacting your school food/nutrition service department.

Don't get stuck with school meal debt. Apply for free school meals by completing an Application for Educational Benefits.

You may apply or reapply for free school meal benefits at any point during the school year, due to income/employment change or household size change (death, divorce, birth, adoption, student moves out, etc.)

Information collected in free/reduced price meal applications is kept confidential. Other students and staff will not know who is receiving free school meal benefits.

Eligibility is not based on citizenship or immigration status, and participation does not affect any immigration processes or applications for citizenship.

SNAP and AEB are two separate programs with different eligibility criteria. Apply for both programs to get help with food.

SNAP Blurb to share with AEB Forms

If you would like help with groceries, we encourage you to apply for SNAP. SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) helps families with money for groceries. To apply or learn more about eligibility, call Second Harvest Heartland at 651-209-7963 or visit 2harvest.org/SNAP

SNAP Blurb to share in Approval Letters

If approved for free/reduced price school meals, you are likely to be eligible for SNAP. SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) helps families with money for groceries. To apply or learn more about eligibility, call Second Harvest Heartland at 651-209-7963 or visit 2harvest.org/SNAP.

Keep this approval letter! There are discounts that you may qualify for:

[see More than a Meal messaging on pages 8-10]

SNAP Blurb to share in Denial Letters


If denied for free/reduced price school meals, you might still be eligible for SNAP. SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs) helps families with money for groceries. To apply or learn more about eligibility, call Second Harvest Heartland at 651-209-7963 or visit 2harvest.org/SNAP.

SNAP Blurb to share to households directly certified through Medicaid

If your household receives Medicaid, you might be eligible for SNAP. SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) helps families with money for groceries. To apply or learn more about eligibility, call Second Harvest Heartland at 651-209-7963 or visit 2harvest.org/SNAP.


Social Media Graphics

Use the graphics below on your school district's social media channels like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. They would also look great in any back-to-school newsletters (digital or print) or digital signage throughout the buildings.



Don't get stuck with school meal debt.

Apply for free school meals by completing an Application for Educational Benefits today!



Tip: Post this image to the right with the following text to encourage families to learn more and apply: "Talk to your school for information on how to apply for both programs"



Did you know?

SNAP and free/reduced school meals (AEB) are two separate programs

APPLY FOR BOTH PROGRAMS TO GET HELP WITH FOOD

Information collected in the Application for Educational Benefits is kept confidential.

Other students and staff will not know who is receiving free school meal benefits.

[COMPLETE YOUR FORM NOW](#)

YOU MAY APPLY OR REAPPLY FOR FREE SCHOOL MEAL BENEFITS AT ANY POINT DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

when your income/employment change or household size change (death, divorce, birth adoption, student moves out, etc.)

APPLY TODAY!

EVERY FAMILY, EVERY YEAR

REGARDLESS OF YOUR INCOME, COMPLETE YOUR APPLICATION FOR EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS AS PART OF YOUR BACK-TO-SCHOOL CHECKLIST

ELIGIBILITY FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS IS NOT BASED ON CITIZENSHIP OR IMMIGRATION STATUS.

Participation does not affect any immigration processes or applications for citizenship.

[• COMPLETE YOUR APPLICATION TODAY! •](#)

SCHOOL FUNDING

IS SIGNIFICANTLY IMPACTED BY THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS THAT QUALIFY FOR FREE OR REDUCED MEALS.

COMPLETE YOUR APPLICATION EVEN IF YOU DON'T THINK YOU WILL QUALIFY.

More than a Meal – The Application for Educational Benefits

It's more than a meal! Qualifying for free school meals unlocks additional educational benefits for both schools and students. Be sure to share these with families when encouraging them to complete their forms.

Applying for free school meals also helps school districts receive more funding for student services. Every year, every family should complete this application. Even if you don't think you qualify, the more applications completed, the more funding is available to students and school districts.

Completing the Application for Educational Benefits Form can help your school district with funding for:

- Additional support staff like social workers, counselors, and paraprofessionals
- Early childhood education programs
- Improvements to school meal programs

How completing the Application for Educational Benefits Forms can help your students

- Discounted fees for academic testing
- Waived fees, reduced costs for instruments, athletic equipment rental
- Free or reduced cost registration fees for community education programs
- Waived activity fees for field trips, school clubs and athletic programs
- Reduced costs for instrument rentals, athletic equipment, uniforms

Additional perks

- [Metro Transit Ride for \\$1 Program](#)
- [Comcast Internet Essentials](#)
- [Science Museum \\$3 Tickets and Adventurer Membership](#)
- [Children's Museum \\$3 Tickets and All Play Membership](#)
- [\\$4 adult tickets and free children's admission to MN Historical Society \(26 Locations\)](#)
- [Reduced cost YMCA memberships](#)
- [Three Rivers Parks Recreation Pass Plus \(Hennepin/Scott County Residents\)](#)

More Than a Meal Infographic

Use the infographic on the next page to tell families about the other benefits of completing their Application for Educational Benefits or Free and Reduced Meals form. This would work great on your school district's social media channels like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. They would also look good in any back to school newsletters (digital or print).

IT'S MORE THAN A MEAL APPLICATION

Completing the Application for Educational Benefits or Free and Reduced-Price Meals form provides a variety of discounted or free benefits. It also helps provide essential funding to support all students in the district



School Funding

Increased funding for schools ensures that students receive the support they need and deserve through comprehensive, high-quality education.



College Application Fees

You may receive discount on fees associated with applying for college.



Academic Test Fees

Receive discount on fees associated with academic tests such as the ACT, SAT and Advanced Placement (AP).



Activities and Athletics

Receive a discount on fees associated with participating in activities or athletics programs in the district.



Technology

Increased technology funds to improve internet access, wireless and network services.



Community Education

Receive a discount on fees associated with some of your district's Community Education courses.



Questions?

Reach out to your local school district!

Frequently Asked Questions

This frequently asked questions sheet on the following 2 pages can be helpful when talking to families about their eligibility for different programs.

SNAP + AEB FAQ for SY 22-23

See below for the answers to some frequently asked questions

Why aren't school meals free anymore?

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) granted a waiver to school districts to be able to serve free meals to all students. This waiver has expired, and school districts must now charge students for meals. However, free school meals are still available for income eligible students.

Do households need to apply for both free school meals and SNAP?

All households should complete an Application for Educational Benefits for SY22-23 (also known as a free/reduced price meal form) and can also apply for SNAP.

If denied free school meals, should households still apply for SNAP?

Yes, especially if a household's monthly income ranges between \$4,278 and \$4,625 for a family of 4. For other household sizes, reference the table below.

HH size	Lower limit	Upper limit
1	\$2,095	\$2,265
2	\$2,823	\$3,052
3	\$3,551	\$3,838
4	\$4,278	\$4,625
5	\$5,006	\$5,412
6	\$5,734	\$6,198
7	\$6,461	\$6,985
8	\$7,189	\$7,772
Add for each add'l HH member	\$728	\$787

The need to know:

On September 1, 2022, SNAP income guidelines increased to 200% of the federal poverty guidelines, which will allow for more families to be eligible for benefits.

However, to qualify for free school meals, households must fall within 185% of the federal poverty guidelines. This means that there are households that might be denied free school meals, but still could qualify for SNAP.

Students in households enrolled in SNAP will be directly certified for free school meals but should still complete an Application for Educational Benefits to ensure they receive free school meals as soon as possible.

How do families apply for free school meals?

To apply for free school meals, contact your school district's Food and Nutrition Services department or visit their website

If approved for SNAP, should households still apply for free school meals?

Students in households enrolled in SNAP will be directly certified for free school meals but should still complete an Application for Educational Benefits to ensure they receive free school meals as soon as possible. If a household receives a letter from the district stating that they've been directly certified, they do not need to complete an AEB.

Someone in our household receives Medicaid. Why aren't we getting free meals?

There are multiple types of Medicaid. To be directly certified to receive free school meals through Medicaid, you must be enrolled in Medicaid that is income-based. If you are receiving a different type of Medicaid, you must fill out the Application for Educational Benefits to see if you qualify.

What are the benefits that a household will receive if approved for free school meals?

The benefits a household will receive if approved are more than just free meals! Things like discounted sports and activities fees, free or discounted museum entry fees, and more are included. The benefits also increase a district's ability to provide smaller class sizes, student support services, and better technology.

Do I need to fill out the Application for Educational Benefits or Free and Reduced-Price Meals application for each child?

No, only one (1) form per household needs to be completed. Please include the names of all children enrolled in that school district on the form.

Is the information I provide on the Application for Educational Benefits or Free and Reduced-Price Meals application confidential?

Yes, the information you provide on the Application for Educational Benefits or Free and Reduced-Price Meals application is kept strictly confidential.

How will households know if they are approved to receive free meals?

Households will receive a letter from their school district within 10 calendar days of receiving the application.

Who should households contact if they have questions about the Application for Educational Benefits?

For questions about the Application for Educational Benefits, households should contact their local school district.

Who should households contact if they want SNAP assistance?

For SNAP assistance, households should contact Second Harvest Heartland by calling 651-209-7963 or emailing them at snaprefer@2harvest.org. Make sure they leave their name, preferred language and contact method, and mention that they were referred from their school. Families can also visit <https://bit.ly/3A6pKBQ> to complete an online screening tool.