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FAQ's
About Meal Applications and Benefits

Do I have to fill out an application for each one of my students?
No. All that is required is one application per household. Please list all children on that one application.

Why do I need to fill out an application? My student doesn't eat in the cafeteria.
You are not required to fill out an application, however, the application you fill out and return provides statistics that your child's school uses as a base for funding. Without this data, your child's school could lose much needed funding.

I heard that if you were not a citizen of the United States, you are not eligible for free or reduced-price meals.
Citizenship is not a condition of eligibility for meal benefits. We apply the same criteria for citizens and non-citizens. USDA determined the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs are not subject to Title IV of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 which restricts certain welfare and public benefits for aliens.

What if I don't want my student to receive free meals? Do I still have to fill out an application?
You are not required to fill out an application. If you do not wish to participate, please write "decline" on the application along with your student's name and return to your student's school.

I turned in my application and I got a letter saying my student can receive free meals but I keep getting calls saying my student owes money.
If your student had an application on file the previous school year, there is a 30 day grace period for you to submit a new application. If you do not submit a new application before the grace period is over, or your student did not have an application on file last year, all meals consumed must be paid for until we receive and process a qualifying application.

I need an application in a foreign language.
Your school secretary can provide you with an application in Hmong, Russian or Spanish, or you can download one at www.twinriversusd.org . If you need any other languages, please contact the Nutrition Services Department at 916-566-1600 extension 50511.

I filled out a meal application last year, why can't you use the same application?
The federal government requires that a new and complete application be submitted after July 1st of each new school year with current information.

How long does it take to get my application approved?
It can take up to ten days to process your meal application from the time we receive it. The quickest way to get the application processed is to bring it directly into our second floor office at 3222 Winona Way, North Highlands, 95660, or apply online at www.schoollunchapp.com.

How will I know if my application is approved?
You will receive a letter in the mail stating the results of your application. If you have not received a letter within 30 days of submitting your meal application, please contact your school cafeteria or this office for more information.

The chart on the letter to households looks like my child should get free meals. Why do they have to pay the reduced rate?
The chart on the letter are the guidelines for reduced-price meals. If your income is less than what is shown on the chart, your student qualifies for free meals.

Why do I have to provide my case number, can't you get the number off of the application I gave you last year?
No. We cannot assume that last years information reflects your current financial situation. The federal government requires that you submit a new application after July 1st with current information.

Why do I have to provide a Social Security number? Can I just give you the last four digits?
Yes, changes to federal law in December of 2010 will now allow you to provide only the last four digits of your Social Security number. If you do not have a social security number, you must write "none" in the space provided. If you leave the space blank, you will receive a letter stating that your meal application was denied due to missing information. Please call the phone number on the letter to provide the missing information.

My income changes every month. What amount I supposed to write on the application? If any amount is more or less than usual, enter the usual gross monthly income. You can also enter an average based on your income for the year.

I have to pay child support and alimony. Can I deduct that from my income?
No. You must list your gross monthly income without deducting any expenses.

Not all of my children go to school and some adults in my household don't work, do I need to put them on the application?
Yes. Unless you are on government assistance, your eligibility is determined by how many people live in your household and your income. If you don't list all of the people in your household it may make you ineligible for benefits.

I received a letter in the mail stating that my application is being verified. What does that mean?
We are required by law to verify 3% of our applications every year. If you received a letter, you were randomly selected by our computer to show proof that the information you submitted on your application was accurate. If you do not respond within 45 days with the required information, your students will be placed on full-pay status.

I have to enroll my pre-school child in March for the next school year. Can I fill out the application now?
Yes, but you will have to fill out another one after the new school year begins. Every household must fill out a new meal application every new school year.

If you submit a meal application when you enroll your pre-school student it will be processed that school year. If your child is eligible for benefits, the benefits will carry over for the first 30 days of the new school year to give you time to submit a new application.

If you do not submit a qualifying application with your enrollment package, you will not be able to take advantage of the 30 day grace period and all meals starting the first day of school must be paid for. Your benefits will not start until the new application is processed and benefits cannot be retroactively applied.

I adopted my foster child. Why do I have to pay for their meals now?
Once a child has been adopted and is no longer a ward of the court, they no longer become automatically eligible for benefits.

Who do I give my Free and Reduced-Price application to?
Please return meal applications to any Twin Rivers cafeteria, or the Nutrition Services office located at 3222 Winona Way, North Highlands, Ca 95660.

Only one of my children is on government assistance, do all of my children qualify for free meals?
Yes. Due to a USDA policy change in October of 2009, if one child in the household is certified as eligible for food stamps, FDPIR, CalWORKs, CalFresh or Kin-GAP… all children in the household are categorically eligible for free meals as soon as the application is received and processed. You must provide case numbers and the names of all children living in your household.

What happens to my meal application after I leave it at the school? The applications are sent thru the district mail on a daily basis to the Nutrition Services office where a Verification Official reviews the application and determines the child's eligibility. After eligibility is determined, a letter is mailed to the home stating the results.

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