

Dept. of Public Instruction: Income eligibility guidelines updated for school and day care meals

Posted on Tuesday, Jul 18, 2023

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service recently updated income eligibility guidelines for meals served at schools and day care programs based on federal poverty levels.

The income guidelines, updated annually, are effective July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. The guidelines apply to student eligibility for free and reduced price school meals offered through the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs and milk offered through the Special Milk Program, along with reimbursement for meals served in day care centers and family child care homes participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

The guidelines establish that students in a household of four, with income of \$39,000 per year or less, qualify for free school meals. If a family's yearly income is between \$39,000.01 and \$55,500, children can receive reduced-price meals. The state's participating public and private schools and day cares typically provide applications for free and reduced price school meals during registration and in the beginning weeks of the school year. However, applications may be submitted at any time. Only one application is required per household.