NEWS RELEASE

For additional infomration, please contact David Jespersen by phone (402-471-4537) or email (david.jespersen@nebraska.gov)

JULY 23, 2026

Income Eligibility Guidelines and Meal Application Availability Announced for School Lunch, Other Nutrition Programs

The Nebraska Department of Education's Nutrition Services office has announced the Income Eligibility Guidelines for free and reduced price meals for persons unable to pay the full price of meals served under the National School Lunch, Breakfast, Special Milk and Child and Adult Care Food Programs. Application forms must be available to all households of participants attending a participating school, agency, or day care center. The application includes a letter containing instructions and helpful information for parents, guardians, or adult participants.

To apply for free or reduced price meals, households should complete the application and return it to the school, agency, or day care center. The information provided on the application will be used to determine eligibility and may be verified at any time during the year by school or other program officials.

For the school, agency, or day care officials to determine eligibility, the household must provide the following information on the application: names of all household members; the last four digits of the social security number, if available, for an adult in the household; total monthly household income by source; and the signature of an adult household member certifying that the information provided is correct. Children who are members of households receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) are automatically eligible to receive free meals and they must provide their qualifying program master case number. Participants at adult care centers receiving Food Stamps, FDPIR, SSI or Medicaid are automatically eligible to receive free meals.

Applications may be submitted at any time during the year.

The same meals will be made available to all enrolled participants regardless of race, color, sex, age, national origin or disability, and there is no discrimination in the course of the meal service. Non-pricing programs provide meals at no charge. Pricing programs provide free and reduced price meals to those meeting the approved eligibility criteria. Persons who believe they have been treated unfairly in receiving access to the USDA Child Nutrition Programs for any of these reasons should write immediately to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. The following household size and income criteria will be used for determining eligibility. Participants from families whose income is at or below the levels shown are eligible for free or reduced price meals.

NOTE TO MEDIA: A list of the participating schools, agencies, and day care centers by county is available on the Nutrition Services web site.

A graphic file of the Income Guidelines is available online: 2026-2027 Income Eligibility Guidelines.

NUTRITION SERVICES INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

JULY 1, 2026 – JUNE 30, 2027

Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Twice per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	29,526	2,461	1,231	1,136	568
2	40,034	3,337	1,669	1,540	770
3	50,542	4,212	2,106	1,944	972
4	61,050	5,088	2,544	2,349	1,175
5	71,558	5,964	2,982	2,753	1,377
6	82,066	6,839	3,420	3,157	1,579
7	92,574	7,715	3,858	3,561	1,781
8	103,082	8,591	4,296	3,965	1,983
Each additional person:	10,508	876	438	405	203

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David Jespersen
Public Information Officer, Nebraska Department of Education
402-471-4537
david.jespersen@nebraska.gov
@NDE_News