

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Albany Unified School District understands that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought hardship for many families in Albany schools. **Your child(ren) may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals.** The Albany School Food Project will continue to offer healthy meals to all children every school day, regardless of how school reopens. Breakfast costs \$2.00; lunch costs \$4.00 at elementary schools and \$4.25 at the middle school and high school. Reduced price is \$.30 for breakfast and \$.40 for lunch. This packet includes information on how to apply for free/reduced price meal benefits, and some common questions and answers to help you with the application process.

1. WHO CAN GET FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEALS?

- All children in households receiving benefits from CalFresh, CalWORKs, FDPIR, WIC, SNAP, or TANF, may be directly certified for free meals.
- Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals.
- Children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway, or migrant are eligible for free meals.
- Children may receive free or reduced price meals if your household's income is within the limits on the 2020-21 Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines. Your children may qualify for free or reduced price meals if your household income falls at or below the limits on these charts.

Free Eligibility Scale Meals, Snacks, and Milk

Household Size	Annual	Monthly	Twice Per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	\$ 16,588	\$ 1,383	\$ 692	\$ 638	\$ 319
2	\$ 22,412	\$ 1,868	\$ 934	\$ 862	\$ 431
3	\$ 28,236	\$ 2,353	\$ 1,177	\$ 1,086	\$ 543
4	\$ 34,060	\$ 2,839	\$ 1,420	\$ 1,310	\$ 655
5	\$ 39,884	\$ 3,324	\$ 1,662	\$ 1,534	\$ 767
6	\$ 45,708	\$ 3,809	\$ 1,905	\$ 1,758	\$ 879
7	\$ 51,532	\$ 4,295	\$ 2,148	\$ 1,982	\$ 991
8	\$ 57,356	\$ 4,780	\$ 2,390	\$ 2,206	\$ 1,103
For each additional family member, add:	\$ 5,824	\$ 486	\$ 243	\$ 224	\$ 112

**Reduced-price Eligibility Scale
Meals and Snacks**

Household Size	Annual	Monthly	Twice Per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	\$ 23,606	\$ 1,968	\$ 984	\$ 908	\$ 454
2	\$ 31,894	\$ 2,658	\$ 1,329	\$ 1,227	\$ 614
3	\$ 40,182	\$ 3,349	\$ 1,675	\$ 1,546	\$ 773
4	\$ 48,470	\$ 4,040	\$ 2,020	\$ 1,865	\$ 933
5	\$ 56,758	\$ 4,730	\$ 2,365	\$ 2,183	\$ 1,092
6	\$ 65,046	\$ 5,421	\$ 2,711	\$ 2,502	\$ 1,251
7	\$ 73,334	\$ 6,112	\$ 3,056	\$ 2,821	\$ 1,411
8	\$ 81,622	\$ 6,802	\$ 3,401	\$ 3,140	\$ 1,570
For each additional family member, add:	\$ 8,288	\$ 691	\$ 346	\$ 319	\$ 160

2. **HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILDREN QUALIFY AS HOMELESS, MIGRANT, OR RUNAWAY?** Do the members of your household lack a permanent address? Are you staying together in a shelter, hotel, or other temporary housing arrangement? Does your family relocate on a seasonal basis? Are any children living with you who have chosen to leave their prior family or household? If you believe children in your household meet these descriptions and haven't been told your children will get free meals, please call or e-mail Alexia Ritchie, Director of Special Education and Student Services, 510-558-3771, aritchie@ausdk12.org
3. **DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD?** No. *Use one Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application for all students in your household.* We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information.
4. **SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LETTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN ARE ALREADY APPROVED FOR FREE MEALS?** No, but please read the letter you got carefully and follow the instructions. If any children in your household were missing from your eligibility notification, contact Sabina Feinberg, Executive Chef, 510-558-2608, sfeinberg@ausdk12.org immediately.
5. **CAN I APPLY ONLINE?** Yes! You are encouraged to complete an online application instead of a paper application if you are able. Visit ezmealapp to begin or to learn more about the online application process. Contact Sabina Feinberg, Executive Chef, 510-558-2608, sfeinberg@ausdk12.org if you have any questions about the online application.
6. **MY CHILD'S APPLICATION WAS APPROVED LAST YEAR. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT A NEW ONE?** Yes. Your child's application is only good for that school year and for the first few days of this school year, through **Friday, September 18, 2020**. You must submit a new application unless the school told you that your child is eligible for the new school year. If you do not submit a new application that is approved by the school or you have not been notified that your child is eligible for free meals, your child will be charged the full price for meals.

7. I GET WIC. CAN MY CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS? Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please submit an application.
8. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED? Yes. We may also ask you to send written proof of the household income you report.
9. IF I DON'T QUALIFY NOW, MAY I APPLY LATER? Yes, you may apply at any time during the school year. For example, children with a parent or guardian who becomes unemployed may become eligible for free and reduced price meals if the household income drops below the income limit.
10. WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE SCHOOL'S DECISION ABOUT MY APPLICATION? You should talk to school officials. You also may ask for a hearing by calling or emailing: Sabina Feinberg, Executive Chef, 510-558-2608, sfeinberg@ausdk12.org.
11. MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOLD IS NOT A U.S. CITIZEN? Yes. You, your children, or other household members do not have to be U.S. citizens to apply for free or reduced price meals.
12. WHAT IF MY INCOME IS NOT ALWAYS THE SAME? List the amount that you normally receive. For example, if you normally make \$1000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only made \$900, put down that you made \$1000 per month. If you normally get overtime, include it, but do not include it if you only work overtime sometimes. If you have lost a job or had your hours or wages reduced, use your current income.
13. WE ARE IN THE MILITARY. DO WE REPORT OUR INCOME DIFFERENTLY? Your basic pay and cash bonuses must be reported as income. If you get any cash value allowances for off-base housing, food, or clothing, it must also be included as income. However, if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income. Any additional combat pay resulting from deployment is also excluded from income.
14. MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP. ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAMS WE MIGHT APPLY FOR? To find out about available assistance programs, visit mybenefitscalwin.org, contact your local assistance office or call USDA National Hunger Hotline at 1-866-3-HUNGRY (1-866-348-6479)
15. If you have other questions or need help, call 510-558-2608

Sincerely,

Sabina Feinberg, AUSD Executive Chef