## Frequently Asked Questions About Free and Reduced-Price School Meals

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. The Tallmadge City School District offers healthy meals each school day. Breakfast costs \$2 at all buildings and lunch costs \$3 at Tallmadge Elementary and \$3.50 at Tallmadge Middle and High School. **Your children may qualify for free meals or for reduced-price meals.** Reduced price is \$.30 for breakfast and \$.40 for lunch. This packet includes an application for free or reduced-price meal benefits and detailed instructions. Below are some common questions and answers to help you with the application process.

1. Who can receive free or reduced-price meals? All children in households receiving benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Ohio Works First (OWF); foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court; children participating in their school's Head Start program; and children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway, or migrant are eligible for free meals. Also, your children may receive free or reduced-price meals if your household's income is within the federal income eligibility guidelines limits.

					INCOME E	LIGIBILITY GU	JIDELINES				
			Effect	ive from		July 1, 2023	to	June 30, 20	24		
	FEDERAL POVERTY GUIDELINES		REDUCED	PRICE MEA	S - 195 %			EDS	E MEALS -	120 %	
HOUSEHOLD	GOIDELINES		TED COLD		EVERY TWO	<u> </u>	<b>—</b>	1154		EVERY TWO	
SIZE	ANNUAL	ANNUAL	MONTHLY	MONTH	WEEKS	WEEKLY	ANNUAL	MONTHLY	MONTH	WEEKS	WEEKLY
	48	CONTIGUOUS	STATES, D	STRICT OF	COLUMBIA, O	SUAM, AND T	BRITORIES				
1	14,580	26,973	2,248		1,038		18,954	1,580	790	729	36
2	19,720	36,482	3,041	1,521	1,404	702	25,636	2,137	1,069	986	49
3	24,860	45,991	3,833	1,917	1,769	885	32,318	2,694	1,347	1,243	
4	30,000	55,500	4,625	2,313	2,135	1,068	39,000	3,250	1,625	1,500	75
5	35,140	65,009	5,418	2,709	2,501	1,251	45,682	3,807	1,904	1,757	87
6	40,280	74,518	6,210	3,105	2,867	1,434	52,364	4,364	2,182	2,014	1,00
7	45.420	84.027	7,003	3.502	3.232	1,616	59.046	4,921	2.461	2.271	1,13
8	50,560	93,535	7,795	3,898	3.598	1,799	65,728	5.478	2.739	2.528	1.26
For each add'I family											
member, add	5,140	9,509	793	397	366	183	6,682	557	279	257	12
		-		ALAS							
1	18,210	33,689	2,808		1,296	648	23,673	1,973	987	911	45
2	24,640	45,584	3,799	1,900	1,754	877	32,032	2,670	1,335	1,232	61
3	31,070	57,480	4,790	2,395	2,211	1,106	40,391	3,366	1,683	1,554	77
4	37,500	69,375	5,782	2,891	2,669	1,335	48,750	4,063	2,032	1,875	93
5	43,930	81,271	6,773	3,387	3.126	1,563	57,109	4,760	2,380	2,197	1.09
6	50,360	93,165	7,764	3,882	3,584	1,792	65,468	5,456	2,728	2,518	1,25
7	56,790	105,062	8,756	4,378	4,041	2,021	73,827	6,153	3,077	2,840	1,42
8	63,220	116,957	9,747	4,874	4,499	2,250	82,186	6,849	3,425	3,161	1,58
For each add'I family											-
member, add	6,430	11,896	992	496	458	229	8,359	697	349	322	16
				HAW	All						
1	16,770	31,025	2,586		1,194	597	21,801	1,817	909	839	
2	22,680	41,958	3,497	1,749	1,614	807	29,484	2,457	1,229	1,134	56
3	28,590	52,892	4,408	2,204	2,035		37,167	3,098	1,549	1,430	
4	34,500	63,825	5,319	2,660	2,455	1,228	44,850	3,738	1,869	1,725	86
5	40,410	74,759	6,230	3,115	2,876		52,533	4,378	2,189	2,021	1,01
6	46,320	85,692	7,141	3,571	3,296	1,648	60,216	5,018	2,509	2,316	1,15
7	52,230	96,625	8,053	4,027	3,717	1,859	67,899	5,659	2,830	2,612	1,30
8	58,140	107,559	8,964	4,482	4,137	2,069	75,582	6,299	3,150	2,907	1,45
For each add'l family member, add	5.910	10.934	912	456	421	211	7.683	641	321	296	14

- 2. How do I know if my children qualify as homeless, migrant or runaway? If members of your household lack a permanent address; are staying together in a shelter, hotel or other temporary housing arrangement; relocate on a seasonal basis or; children live with you who have chosen to leave their prior family or household then the children may qualify as homeless, migrant or runaway. If you have not been told your children will receive free meals, please call or email Amanda Cardoni, 486 East Ave, Tallmadge OH 44278, 330-633-3291 to see if they qualify.
- Do I need to fill out an application for each child? No. Use <u>one</u> free and reduced-price school meal application for <u>all</u> students in your household. We cannot approve an application that is not complete. Please submit all required information. Return the completed application to Kurt Gwin, 486 East Ave, Tallmadge OH 44278, 330-633-3291.
- 4. Should I complete an application if I received a letter this school year saying my children are approved already for free meals? No, but please read the letter carefully and follow the instructions. If any children in your household were missing from the eligibility notification, contact Kurt Gwin, 486 East Ave, Tallmadge OH 44278, 330-633-3291 immediately.
- 5. Can I apply online? Yes. If possible, you are encouraged to complete an online application instead of a paper application. The online application requirements are the same and will request the same information as the paper application. Visit https://www.tallmadgeschools.org/FreeandReducedMealsApplication.aspx to begin or to learn more about the online application process. Contact Kurt Gwin, 486 East Ave, Tallmadge OH 44278, 330-633-3291 with any questions about the online application.
- 6. My child's application was approved last year. Do I need to complete another application? Yes. Your child's application is valid for that school year and for the start of this school year. You are required to submit a new application unless the school notified you that your child is eligible for the new school year.
- I receive Women, Infants and Children (WIC) benefits. Can my child(ren) get free meals? Children in households participating in WIC <u>may</u> be eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Please submit a completed application.

- 8. Will the information I give be checked? Yes, we also may ask you to send written proof.
- 9. If I do not 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 writing to the following contact person: Kurt Gwin, 486 East Ave, Tallmadge OH 44278, 330-633-3291.
- 11. May I apply if someone else in my household is not a U.S. citizen? Yes. You or your child(ren) do not have to be a U.S. citizen to qualify 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 \$1,000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only made \$900, submit the report with the routine amount of \$1,000 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. What if some household members have no income to report? Household members may not receive some types of income that are asked for you to report on the application or may not receive income at all. When this happens, please write a 0 in the corresponding field. However, if any income fields are left empty or blank, those also will be counted as zeroes. Please be careful when leaving income fields blank.
- 14. 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 also must 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 also is excluded from income.
- What if there is not enough space on the application for my family? List any additional household members on a separate piece of paper and attach it to your application. Contact Kurt Gwin, 486 East Ave, Tallmadge OH 44278, 330-633-3291 to receive a second application.
- 16. Why am I being asked to give my consent for an instructional fee waiver? Ohio public schools are required to waive the school instructional fees for children that quality for free meal benefits. School food service personnel must have parent consent to share the student meal application if your child(ren) quality for a fee waiver. If you agree to allow your child(ren)'s meal application to be shared with school officials to see if they qualify for a fee waiver then select yes in part 5. If you do not wish for that information to be shared, then select no in part 5. Answering no to this question will mean your child will not be considered for a fee waiver. Answering this question either way will not change your child(ren)'s free or reduced-price meal eligibility.
- 17. My family needs more help. Are there other programs we might apply for? To find out how to apply for Ohio Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call 877-852-0010.

If you have other questions or need help, call **330-633-3291**. *Si necesita ayuda, por favor llame al teléfono:* **330-633-3291**. *Si vous voudriez d'aide, contactez nous au numero:* **330-633-3291**.

Sincerely, Kurt Gwin

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLYING

### A household member is any child or adult living with you.

# IF YOUR HOUSEHOLD RECEIVES BENEFITS FROM THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP) OR OHIO WORKS FIRST (OWF), FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS:

Part 1: List all household members and the school name and grade level for each child.

Part 2: List the 7-digit case number for any household member (including adults) receiving SNAP or OWF benefits.

Part 3: Skip this part.

Part 4: Skip this part.

Part 5: Answer yes or no and sign your name if you would like the application to be checked by school officials to determine if the child(ren) qualifies for a school instructional fee waiver.

Part 6: Sign the form. The last four digits of a Social Security Number are not necessary.

**Part 7:** We are required to ask for information about your children's race and ethnicity. This information is important and helps to make sure we are fully serving our community. Responding to this section is optional and does not affect your children's eligibility for free or reduced-price meals.

# IF NO ONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD RECEIVES SNAP OR OWF BENEFITS AND IF ANY CHILD IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD IS HOMELESS, MIGRANT OR RUNAWAY, FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS:

Part 1: List all household members and the school name and school grade level for each child.

Part 2: Skip this part.

Part 3: If any child you are applying for is homeless, migrant, or a runaway, check the appropriate box and call Amanda Cardoni, 486 East Ave, Tallmadge OH 44278, 330-633-3291 or Cardoni.Amanda@tallmadgeschools.org. If not, skip this part.

**Part 4:** Complete only if a child in your household is not eligible under Part 3. See Instruction for all other households.

Part 5: Answer yes or no and sign your name if you would like the application to be checked by school officials to determine if the child(ren) gualifies for a school instructional fee waiver.

Part 6: Sign the form. The last four digits of a Social Security Number are **not** necessary if you did not need to complete in part 4. Part 7: We are required to ask for information about your children's race and ethnicity. This information is important and helps to make sure we are fully serving our community. Responding to this section is optional and does not affect your children's eligibility for free or reduced-price meals.

### IF YOU APPLY FOR A FOSTER CHILD, FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS:

#### If <u>all</u> children in the household are foster children:

Part 1: List all foster children and the school name and grade level for each child. Check the box that indicates the child is a foster child. Part 2: Skip this part.

Part 3: Skip this part.

Part 4: Skip this part.

Part 5: Answer yes or no and sign your name if you would like the application to be checked by school officials to determine if the child(ren) qualifies for a school instructional fee waiver.

Part 6: Sign the form. The last four digits of a Social Security Number are not necessary.

**Part 7:** We are required to ask for information about your children's race and ethnicity. This information is important and helps to make sure we are fully serving our community. Responding to this section is optional and does not affect your children's eligibility for free or reduced-price meals.

#### If some children in the household are foster children:

Part 1: List all household members and the school name and school grade level for each child. For any person, including children, with no income, you must check the "No Income" box. Check the box if the child is a foster child.

Part 2: If the household does not have a 7-digit SNAP or OWF case number, skip this part.

Part 3: If any child you are applying for is homeless, migrant, or a runaway check the appropriate box and call Amanda Cardoni, 486 East Ave, Tallmadge OH 44278, 330-633-3291 or Cardoni.Amanda@tallmadgeschools.org. If not, skip this part.

Part 4: Follow these instructions to report total household income from this month or last month.

• Box 1-Name: List all household members with income.

• Box 2 –Gross Income and how often it was received: For each household member, list each type of income received for the month. Check the appropriate box to note how often the person receives the income - weekly, every other week, twice a month, or monthly. For earnings, list the gross income - not the take-home pay. Gross income is the amount earned *before* taxes and other deductions and can be found on pay stubs. For other income, list the amount and check the box to note how often each person received assistance from welfare, child support, alimony, pensions, retirement, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Veteran's benefits (VA benefits), and disability benefits. Under *All Other Income*, list Worker's Compensation, unemployment or strike benefits, regular contributions from people who do not live in your household and any other income. Do not include income from SNAP, FDPIR, WIC, federal education benefits and foster payments received by the family from the placing agency. For ONLY the self-employed, report income after expenses under *Earnings from Work*. This is for your

business, farm, or rental property. If you are in the Military Privatized Housing Initiative or receive combat pay, do not include these allowances as income.

**Part 5:** Answer yes or no and sign your name if you would like the application to be checked by school officials to determine if the child(ren) qualifies for a school instructional fee waiver.

Part 6: Adult household member must sign the form and list the last four digits of their Social Security Number (or mark the box if he or she does not have one).

**Part 7:** We are required to ask for information about your children's race and ethnicity. This information is important and helps to make sure we are fully serving our community. Responding to this section is optional and does not affect your children's eligibility for free or reduced-price meals.

#### ALL OTHER HOUSEHOLDS (INCLUDING WIC HOUSEHOLDS) FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS:

Part 1: List all household members and the school name and grade level for each child. For any person, including children, with no income, you must check the "No Income Box."

Part 2: If the household does not have a 7-digit SNAP or OWF case number, skip this part.

Part 3: If any child you are applying for is homeless, migrant, or a runaway check the appropriate box and call Amanda Cardoni, 486 East Ave, Tallmadge OH 44278, 330-633-3291 or Cardoni.Amanda@tallmadgeschools.org. If not, skip this part.

Part 4: Follow these instructions to report total household income from this month or last month.

- Box 1 Name: List all household members with income.
- Box 2 –Gross Income and how often it was received: For each household member, list each type of income received for the month. Check the box to note how often the person receives the income weekly, every other week, twice a month, or monthly. For earnings, be sure to list the gross income not take-home pay. Gross income is the amount earned *before* taxes and other deductions and can be found on pay stubs. For other income, list the amount and check the box to note how often each person received assistance from welfare, child support, alimony, pensions, retirement, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Veteran's benefits (VA benefits), and disability benefits. Under *All Other Income*, list Worker's Compensation, unemployment or strike benefits, regular contributions from people who do not live in your household and any other income. Do not include income from SNAP, FDPIR, WIC, federal education benefits and foster payments received by the family from the placing agency. For ONLY the self-employed, report income after expenses under *Earnings from Work*. This is for your business, farm, or rental property. If you are in the Military Privatized Housing Initiative or receive combat pay, do not include these allowances as income.
- Part 5: Answer yes or no and sign your name if you would like the application to be checked by school officials to determine if the child(ren) qualifies for a school instructional fee waiver.
- Part 6: An adult household member must sign the form and list the last four digits of their Social Security Number (or mark the box if he or she does not have one).

**Part 7**: We are required to ask for information about your children's race and ethnicity. This information is important and helps to make sure we are fully serving our community. Responding to this section is optional and does not affect your children's eligibility for free or reduced-price meals.

### **Household Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals**

Complete one application per household. Please use a pen (not a pencil).

#### **APPLY ONLINE:** www.payschoolscentral.com RETURN TO (School/District Name): Tallmadge City Schools ADDRESS: 486 East Ave, Tallmadge OH 44278

	ehold. Do	not forg	jet to lis	t infant	s, childre:	n atter	nding other sch	iools, child	ren not in school, and chil	dren no	ot applying for be	nefits. This	includes	children n	ot relate	<b>d to you</b> i	in your ho	ousehold.
hild's First Name						МІ	Child's Last N	lame				Grade	2	Foster Child	Migrant	Runaway	Homeless	
													pply					If you checke any of these
													that ap					boxes, pleas refer to the
													all					Application Instruction's
													Check					Step 1: Part 0 Part D.
STEP 3 List ALL hou	sehold me	mbers	and inc	come fc	or each m	nembe	er (before taxe	s and ded	uctions)									ase number in this s
	Members	not list	ed in S	TEP 1 (i	including	g yours	self) even if th	iey do not	<b>ses, even if not related, i</b> receive income. For eacl y source, write '0'. If you e	n House	ehold Member li or leave any field			,		5		•
									How often received?		Public Assistance, Child Support,	How of	ten receive	d?		Retirement		
deductions) for each sou	nbers (First and	Last)					Earnings from Wo	rk Workh		a	Alimony	Weekly 2Woo			Social See VA Benef	turity, SSI, ts, All Other		w often received?
	nbers (First and	l Last)				\$	Earnings from Wo	weekly	Every	al ) \$		Weekly 2Wee	ks 2x Month					w often received?       Every       Weeks       2x Month       M

Sometimes children in the household earn or receive income. Include the TOTAL income (before taxes and deductions) received by A	LL children listed in STEP 1 ł	nere. \$			0	0 0	0	0								
B. Child Income	Member (If Applicable)		Child Income	e	Weekly	How often receiv Every 2Weeks 2x Month		Annual				for list of inc				
Total Household Members (Children and Adults)	Last Four Numbers of Soci Primary Wage Earner or of Marghan (if Applicable)							eck if no curity Nu			1	Please see aj	oplica	tion's	back	
	\$	0 0	0 0	0	\$		0	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	0	\$		$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	0	$\bigcirc$
	\$	0 0	0 0	0	\$		0	$\bigcirc$	0	0	\$		0	$\bigcirc$	0	$\bigcirc$
	\$	0 0	0 0	0	\$		0	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	0	\$		$\bigcirc$	0	0	0
	\$	00	0 0	0	Ş		0	0	0	0	Ş		0	0	0	0

#### **STEP 4** Contact information and adult signature. **RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL:** Insert school address here

"I certify (promise) that all information on this application is true and that all income is reported. I understand that this information is given in connection with the receipt of Federal funds, and that school officials may verify (confirm) the information. I am aware that if I purposely give false information, my children may lose meal benefits, and I may be prosecuted under applicable State and Federal laws."

Print Name of Adult Signing the Form	Sign	nature of Adult			Today's Date
Mailing Address (if available)	City	State	Zip	Phone (optional)	Email (optional)
Return completed form to your child's se	bool				

Return completed form to your child's school.

	Sources of Income		Examples of Income for Children
Earnings from Work	Public Assistance/Alimony/ Child Support	Pensions/Retirement/ All other sources of income	A child has a regular full or part-time job where they earn a salary or wages
<ul> <li>Salary, wages, cash bonuses, tips, commissions</li> <li>Net income from self-employment (farm or business)</li> </ul>	Unemployment benefits     Workers' compensation     Supplemental Security Income (SSI)     Cash assistance from State or local	<ul> <li>Social Security/Disability (including railroad retirement and black lung benefits)</li> <li>Private Pensions or disability benefits</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>A child is blind or disabled and receives Social Security benefits</li> <li>A parent is disabled, retired, or deceased, and their child receives Social Security benefits</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>If you are in the U.S. Military:</li> <li>Basic pay and cash bonuses (do NOT include combat pay, FSSA, or privatized housing</li> </ul>	government • Alimony payments • Child support payments	Income from trusts or estates     Annuities     Investment income     Earned interest	A friend or extended family member regularly gives a child spending money
<ul> <li>allowances)</li> <li>Allowances for off-base housing, food, and clothing</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Veterans benefits</li> <li>Strike benefits</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Rental income</li> <li>Regular cash payments from outside household</li> </ul>	A child receives regular income from a private pension fund, annuity, or trust
We are required to ask for information abo and does not affect your children's eligibil	out your children's race and ethnicity ity for free or reduced price meals.		sure we are fully serving our community. Responding to this section is optional
Ethnicity (check one): Hispanic or Latino (	A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Sc	outh or Central American, or other Spanish Culture or origin,	regardless of race) Not Hispanic or Latino
Race (check one or more): American Indi	an or Alaska Native 📃 Asian 🗌	Black or African American Native Hawaiian or Ot	her Pacific Islander 🛛 White
Return this completed form to your child's	school. *Do <u>not</u> mail, fax, or email co	ompleted applications to the U.S. Department of <i>I</i>	Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights.
DO NOT FILL OUT For school use of	nly.		
Annual Income Conversion: Weekly × 52, Ev	very 2 Weeks $\times$ 26, Twice a Month $\times$ 24, How often?	Monthly $\times$ 12. Do not annualize income to determin	e eligibility unless more than one income frequency is listed.
Total Income		Household size Categorical Eligibi	Eligibility Free Reduced Denied O O O

Determining Official's Signature

Date Confirming Official's Signature

**Use of Information Statement** 

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires that we use information from this application to see who qualifies for free or reduced price meals. We can only approve complete forms. We may share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them deliver program benefits to your household. Inspectors and law enforcement may also use your information to make sure that program rules are met.

Please be sure to provide the last four numbers of the Social Security number of the adult household member who signs the application. If the adult does not have one, 'Check if no Social Security Number.' Applications for a foster child do not need to list a Social Security number. Applications for children in households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) do not need to list a Social Security number. Some children qualify for free meals without an application. Please contact your school to get free meals for a foster child, and children who are homeless, migrant, or runaway.

#### The contact information below is solely to file a complaint of discrimination

Date

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

Verifying Official's Signature

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: **https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf**, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

\*MAIL: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 
 FAX:
 (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

 EMAIL:
 program.intake@usda.gov

\*Do not mail applications to this address, only complaints of discrimination.

Date

#### Return completed form to your child's school.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.