

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Federal Free and Reduced Price School Meals & North Dakota's Expanded Income Eligibility Guidance

This document provides information for families with students attending a school in North Dakota offering Federal Child Nutrition Programs such as National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program, as well as information about North Dakota's Expanded Income Eligibility Guidelines for schools. It is effective July 1, 2024

Dear Family:

1. Children need healthy meals to learn. Bismarck Public Schools offers healthy meals every school day. **Breakfast is \$1.60 grades K-5 and \$1.70 for grades 6-12. Lunch is \$2.50 grades K-5 and \$3.00 for grades 6-12. Your child may qualify for free or reduced meals. Reduced meals Breakfast is \$0 and lunch is \$.40.** Other programs, such as Title I, rely on area income eligibility. If your household income is below the numbers in the chart below, please complete the enclosed income application and return it to the school. **To be considered for any other income-based programs the district may offer, please fill out the "Release of Information Form" as well.**
  
1. **DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD?** No. Complete the application to apply for free or reduced-price meals. *Use one Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application for all students in your household. We can only approve a complete application, so be sure to fill out all required information and sign it. Return the completed application to: BPS Child Nutrition Dept. 705 S. 9th St., Bismarck, ND 58504 or your child's school office.*
  
2. **WHO CAN GET FREE MEALS?**
  - All children in households receiving benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) or the Temporary Assistance Program for Needy Families (TANF) can get free meals regardless of your income. Also, your children can get free or reduced-price meals if your household income is within the limits on the Federal Income Chart.
  - Foster children 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. To determine if your child is eligible, please call the **Child Nutrition Dept 701-323-4090** or email **darla\_wixcey@bismarckschools.org**.
  - Children may receive free or reduced-price meals if your household's income is within the limits of the 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 the chart below.

**Federal Income Chart**  
For School Year 2024 -25

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Each Additional Person:
<b>Yearly</b>	\$27,861	\$37,814	\$47,767	\$57,720	\$67,673	\$77,626	\$87,579	\$97,532	\$9,953
<b>Monthly</b>	\$2,322	\$3,152	\$3,981	\$4,810	\$5,640	\$6,469	\$7,299	\$8,128	\$830
<b>2x per Month</b>	\$1,161	\$1,576	\$1,991	\$2,405	\$2,820	\$3,235	\$3,650	\$4,064	\$415
<b>Every 2 Weeks</b>	\$1,072	\$1,455	\$1,838	\$2,220	\$2,603	\$2,986	\$3,369	\$3,752	\$383
<b>Weekly</b>	\$536	\$728	\$919	\$1,110	\$1,302	\$1,493	\$1,685	\$1,876	\$192

- Children attending schools in North Dakota may receive free meals if your household income is within the limits of the State 200 Expanded Income Guidelines (State 200). Your children may qualify for no-cost meals if your household income falls at or below the limits on the chart below:

**State of North Dakota Income Chart**  
For School Year 2024 -25

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Each Additional Person:
<b>Yearly</b>	\$30,120	\$40,880	\$51,640	\$62,400	\$73,160	\$83,920	\$94,680	\$105,440	\$10,760
<b>Monthly</b>	\$2,510	\$3,407	\$4,304	\$5,200	\$6,097	\$6,994	\$7,890	\$8,787	\$897
<b>2x per Month</b>	\$1,255	\$1,704	\$2,152	\$2,600	\$3,049	\$3,497	\$3,945	\$4,394	\$449
<b>Every 2 Weeks</b>	\$1,159	\$1,573	\$1,987	\$2,400	\$2,814	\$3,228	\$3,642	\$4,056	\$414
<b>Weekly</b>	\$580	\$787	\$994	\$1,200	\$1,407	\$1,614	\$1,821	\$2,028	\$ 207

3. **SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LETTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN ARE APPROVED FOR FREE MEALS?** Please read the letter you got carefully and follow the instructions.

4. **MY CHILD'S APPLICATION WAS APPROVED LAST YEAR. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT ANOTHER ONE?** Yes. Your child's application is only good for that school year and for the first few days of this school year. You must send in a new application unless the school told you that your child is eligible for the new school year.
5. **I GET WIC. CAN MY CHILD(REN) GET FREE MEALS?** Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Please fill out an application.
6. **WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED?** Yes, we may also ask you to send written proof of income.
7. **IF I DON'T QUALIFY NOW, MAY I APPLY LATER?** Yes, you may apply anytime during the school year if your household size goes up, income goes down, or if you start receiving SNAP TANF or FDPIR. If you lose your job, your children may be able to get free or reduced-price meals during the time you are unemployed.
8. **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 **701-323-4089** or writing to: **Michelle Wagner. 705 S. 9th St., Bismarck, ND 58504.**
9. **MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOLD IS NOT A U.S. CITIZEN?** Yes, you or your child(ren) do not have to be U.S. citizens to qualify for free or reduced-price meals.
10. **WHOM SHOULD I INCLUDE AS MEMBERS OF MY HOUSEHOLD?** You must include all people living in your household, related or not (such as grandparents, other relatives, or friends). You must include yourself and all children living with you.
11. **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.
12. **WE ARE IN THE MILITARY. DO WE INCLUDE OUR HOUSING ALLOWANCE AS INCOME?** If you receive an off-base housing allowance, it must be included as income.
13. **MY SPOUSE IS DEPLOYED TO A COMBAT ZONE. IS HIS/HER COMBAT PAY COUNTED AS INCOME?** No, if the combat pay is received in addition to her basic pay because of her deployment and it wasn't received before she was deployed, combat pay is not counted as income. Contact your school for more information.

If you have other questions or need help, call 701-323-4090.

Sincerely,

Michelle Wagner

Child Nutrition Director  
Bismarck Public Schools

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To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete Form AD-3027, which can be obtained on-line at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-o-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, or at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (833) 256-1665 or

(3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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