



ELIZABETH FORWARD SCHOOL DISTRICT  
**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS or  
 THE SPECIAL MILK PROGRAM (SMP)**

Apply online at <https://www.schoolcafe.com/>

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. ELIZABETH FORWARD SCHOOL DISTRICT offers healthy meals every school day. Breakfast is available at no charge to students. Lunch costs **\$2.35** for elementary students and **\$2.60** for secondary students. **Your child(ren) may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals.**

**During the 2025-2026 School Year, all schools participating in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) are to provide free breakfasts for all enrolled students. Additionally, students identified as eligible for reduced-price lunches through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) will not be charged for their meals.**



If you have received a **NOTICE OF DIRECT CERTIFICATION** for free meals, **do not** complete the application. But **do** let the school know if any children in your household are not listed on the **Notice of Direct Certification** letter you received.

**1. WHO CAN GET FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEALS OR SPECIAL MILK?**

- All children in households receiving benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (formerly the Food Stamp Program) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (cash assistance) are eligible for free meals.
- Foster children under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals.
- Children participating in their school's Head Start program 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 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 following chart.

<b>Income Eligibility Reduced-Price Guidelines—July 1, 2025–June 30, 2026</b>					
<b>Family Size</b>	<b>Annually</b>	<b>Monthly</b>	<b>Twice Per Month</b>	<b>Every Two Weeks</b>	<b>Weekly</b>
<b>1</b>	\$28,953	2,413	1,207	1,114	557
<b>2</b>	39,128	3,261	1,631	1,505	753
<b>3</b>	49,303	4,109	2,055	1,897	949
<b>4</b>	59,478	4,957	2,479	2,288	1,144
<b>5</b>	69,653	5,805	2,903	2,679	1,340
<b>6</b>	79,828	6,653	3,327	3,071	1,536
<b>7</b>	90,003	7,501	3,751	3,462	1,731
<b>8</b>	100,178	8,349	4,175	3,853	1,927
<b>For each additional family member add:</b>					
	10,175	848	424	392	196

**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 **Lori Rogers 412-896-7667 or LRogers@EFSD.Net**.

**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. You may request a paper application from the school at any time. Return the completed application to your child's school building secretary.

**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 **Joshua Kutscher at JKutscher@EFSD.Net or (412) 896-2304** immediately.

**5. Can I apply online?** Yes! You are encouraged to complete an online application instead of a paper application if you are able. The online application has the same requirements and will ask you for the same information as the paper application. Visit <https://www.schoolcafe.com/> or visit the PA Department of Human Services website at [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us). to begin or to learn more about the online application process. Contact **Joshua Kutscher at JKutscher@EFSD.Net or (412) 896-2304** 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 30 days of this school year, through **10/13/2025**. You must complete a new application unless the school told you that your child is eligible for the new school year. If you do not complete 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 complete 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 writing to: **Keith Konyk at 401 Rock Run Road, Elizabeth, PA 15037 or (412) 896-2310**.

**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. What if some household members have no income to report?** Household members may not receive some types of income we ask you to report on the application, or may not receive income at all. Whenever this happens, please write a 0 in the field. However, if any income fields are left empty or blank, those will also be counted as zeroes. Please be careful when leaving income fields blank, as we will assume you meant to do so.

**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 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.

**15. WHAT IF THERE ISN'T 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 your child(ren)'s school secretary to receive a second application.

**16. My family needs more help. Are there other programs we might apply for?** To find out how to apply for **SNAP** or other assistance benefits, visit [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us), contact your local county assistance office, or call The Department of Human Services at **1-800-692-7462**.

If you have other questions or need help, call **(412) 896-2304**.

Sincerely,  
Joshua Kutscher

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the state or local agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and 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, Mail Stop 9410  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

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

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