

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. The Copley-Fairlawn City School District offers healthy meals each school day. Breakfast costs \$2.00 at all schools. Lunch costs \$3.25 for Kdg-4th grade students and \$3.50 for 5th-12th grade students. **Your children may qualify for free meals or for reduced-price meals. For the 2026-2027 school year, those who qualify for reduced-price meals will receive free meals.** 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 OF 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 ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES 2026-2027			
Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$29,526	\$2,461	\$568
2	40,034	3,337	770
3	50,542	4,212	972
4	61,050	5,088	1,175
5	71,558	5,964	1,377
6	82,066	6,839	1,579
7	92,574	7,715	1,781
8	103,082	8,591	1,983
Each additional Person:	10,508	876	203

- 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 Kelly Weitzel at 330-664-4800 or kelly.weitzel@copley-fairlawn.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. **Please apply online if possible.** If an online application is not possible, a paper application can be picked up at the Board of Education office or in any school office. **Please return the completed paper applications to: Steve Robinson, 3797 Ridgewood Road, Copley, Ohio 44321.**

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, please call or email Steve Robinson at 330-664-4800 or steve.robinson@coopley-fairlawn.org immediately.
5. **CAN I APPLY ONLINE?** Yes. You are encouraged to complete an online application instead of a paper application, if possible. The online application requirements are the same and will request the same information as the paper application. Visit coopley-fairlawn.payschools.com to begin or to learn more about the online application process. Contact Steve Robinson, steve.robinson@coopley-fairlawn.org, or 330-664-4800 with 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 last school year and for the first few days of this school year, through **October 1, 2025**. You must send in 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.
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: Steve Robinson, 3797 Ridgewood Road, Copley, Ohio 44321 or 330-664-4800 or steve.robinson@coopley-fairlawn.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 need 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.
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.

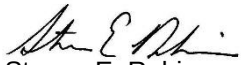
15. **WHAT IF THERE ISN'T ENOUGH SPACE ON THE APPLICATION FOR MY FAMILY?** List any additional household members on a separate piece of paper, and attach it to your application or contact Steve Robinson, 3797 Ridgewood Road, Copley, Ohio 44321 or 330-664-4800 or steve.robinson@copley-fairlawn.org to 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 Ohio SNAP or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call 877-852-0010.

If you have other questions or need help, please call **330-664-4800**.

Si necesita ayuda, por favor llame al teléfono: 330-664-4800.

Si vous voudriez d'aide, contactez nous au numero: 330-664-4800.

Sincerely,



Steven E. Robinson
Business Manager

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

Part 6: 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 contact Kelly Weitzel at 330-664-4800 or kelly.weitzel@copley-fairlawn.org. If not, skip this part.

Part 4: Complete only if a child in your household isn't eligible under Part 3. See instructions for all other households.

Part 5: Sign the form. The last four digits of a Social Security Number are **not** necessary if you didn't need to complete part 4.

Part 6: 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 ARE APPLYING FOR A FOSTER CHILD, FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS:

If all 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 indicating the child is a foster child.

Part 2: Skip this part.

Part 3: Skip this part.

Part 4: Skip this part.

Part 5: Sign the form. The last four digits of a Social Security Number are **not** necessary.

Part 6: 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 of the children in the household are foster children:

Part 1: List all household members and the name of school and 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 SNAP or OWF 7-digit 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 contact Kelly Weitzel at 330-664-4800 or kelly.weitzel@copley-fairlawn.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 your 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: An adult household member must sign the form and list the last four digits of their Social Security Number (or mark the box if they don't have one).

Part 6: 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 SNAP or OWF 7-digit 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 contact Kelly Weitzel at 330-664-4800 or kelly.weitzel@copley-fairlawn.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 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 Workers' 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: An adult household member must sign the form and list the last four digits of their Social Security Number (or mark the box if they don't have one).

Part 6: 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.

2026-2027 FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE SCHOOL MEALS APPLICATION

Part 1. ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

Names of <u>all</u> household members (First, Middle Initial, Last)	Name of school and grade level for each child/or indicate "NA" if child is not in school.	Check if a foster child (legal responsibility of welfare agency or court). *If all children listed below are foster children, skip to Part 5 to sign this form.	Check if No Income
	School	Grade	
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐

Part 2. BENEFITS: If any member of your household receives SNAP or OWF benefits, provide the name and 7-digit case number for the person who receives benefits and **skip to Part 5**. If no one receives these benefits, **skip to Part 3**.

NAME: _____ 7-DIGIT CASE NUMBER: _____

Part 3. If any child you are applying for is homeless, migrant, or a runaway, check the appropriate box and call Kelly Weitzel at 330-664-4800 or kelly.weitzel@copley-fairlawn.org Homeless ☐ Migrant ☐ Runaway ☐

Part 4. TOTAL HOUSEHOLD GROSS INCOME (before deductions). List all income on the same line as the person who receives it. Check the box for how often it is received. Record each income only once.

1. NAME (List all household members with income)	2. GROSS INCOME AND HOW OFTEN IT WAS RECEIVED														
	Earnings from work before deductions	Weekly	Every 2 Weeks	Twice Monthly	Monthly	Public Assistance, Child Support, Alimony	Weekly	Every 2 Weeks	Twice Monthly	Monthly	Pensions, retirement, All other Income	Weekly	Every 2 Weeks	Twice Monthly	Monthly
(Example) Jane Smith	\$200	☒	☐	☐	☐	\$150	☐	☒	☐	☐	\$0	☐	☐	☐	☐
	\$	☐	☐	☐	☐	\$	☐	☐	☐	☐	\$	☐	☐	☐	☐
	\$	☐	☐	☐	☐	\$	☐	☐	☐	☐	\$	☐	☐	☐	☐
	\$	☐	☐	☐	☐	\$	☐	☐	☐	☐	\$	☐	☐	☐	☐
	\$	☐	☐	☐	☐	\$	☐	☐	☐	☐	\$	☐	☐	☐	☐
	\$	☐	☐	☐	☐	\$	☐	☐	☐	☐	\$	☐	☐	☐	☐

Part 5. SIGNATURE AND LAST FOUR DIGITS OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (ADULT MUST SIGN)

An adult household member must sign the application. **If Part 4 is completed, the adult signing the form must also list the last four digits of his or her Social Security Number or mark the "I do not have a Social Security Number" box.** (See Privacy Act Statement on the back of this page.)

I certify (promise) that all information on this application is true and that all income is reported. I understand that the school will receive federal funds based on the information I give. I understand that school officials may verify (check) the information. I understand that deliberate misrepresentation of the information may cause my children to lose meal benefits and I may be subject to prosecution under state and federal statutes.

Sign here: X _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Last four digits of your Social Security Number: _____ ☐ I do not have a Social Security Number

Part 6. Children's ethnic and racial identities. 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.

Choose one ethnicity:

- ☐ Hispanic/Latino
☐ Not Hispanic/Latino

Choose one or more (regardless of ethnicity):

- ☐ Asian ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native ☐ Black or African American
☐ White ☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

Do not complete this section. Intended for school use only

Annual Income Conversion: Weekly x52, Every 2 Weeks x 26, Twice A Month x 24, Monthly x 12.

Total Income: _____ Per ☐ Week ☐ Every 2 Weeks ☐ Twice per Month ☐ Monthly ☐ Yearly

Household Size _____ Categorical Eligibility: ☐ Free ☐ Reduced ☐ Denied Reason Denied: _____

Determining/Approval Official's Signature _____ Date _____

Your children may qualify for free or reduced-price meals if your household income falls at or below the limits on this chart.

Privacy Act Statement: This explains how we will use the information you give us.

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires the information on this application. You are not required to provide information, but if information is not provided, the state agency cannot approve your child for free or reduced-price meals. You must include the last four digits of the social security number of the adult household member who signs the application. The last four digits of the social security number is not required when you apply on behalf of a foster child or you list a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Ohio Works First (OWF) case number or other identifier for your child or when you indicate that the adult household member signing the application does not have a social security number. We will use your information to determine if your child is eligible for free or reduced price meals, and for administration and enforcement of the lunch and breakfast programs. We may share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them evaluate, fund, or determine benefits for their programs, auditors for program reviews, and law enforcement officials to help them look into violations of program rules.

INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES 2026-2027			
Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$29,526	\$2,461	\$568
2	40,034	3,337	770
3	50,542	4,212	927
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6	82,066	6,839	1,579
7	92,574	7,715	1,781
8	103,082	8,591	1,983
Each additional Person:	10,508	876	203

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and USDA civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, 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, [AD-3027](#), 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;
2. **Fax:** (202) 690-7442; or
3. **Email:** program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

SHARING INFORMATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

Dear Parent/Guardian:

To save you time and effort, the information you gave on your Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application may be shared with other programs for which your children may qualify. **For the following programs, we must have your permission to share your information. Sending in this form will not change whether your children get free or reduced price meals.**

☐ No! I **DO NOT** want information from my Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application shared with any of these programs.

☐ Yes! I **DO** want school officials to share information from my Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application with **Copley-Fairlawn Kiwanis Holiday Food Program and Copley Police Department Share-A-Christmas.**

☐ Yes! I **DO** want school officials to share information from my Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application with **Summer School Program, School Field Trips, and School Fees.**

☐ Yes! I **DO** want school officials to share information from my Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application with **Copley Outreach Center.**

If you checked yes to any or all of the boxes above, fill out the form below. Your information will be shared only with the programs you checked.

Child's Name: _____ School: _____

Child's Name: _____ School: _____

Child's Name: _____ School: _____

Child's Name: _____ School: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Address: _____

For more information, you may call **Steve Robinson** at 330-664-4800.

Please return this form to:

**Steve Robinson
3797 Ridgewood Road
Copley, OH 44321**

SHARING INFORMATION WITH MEDICAID/Healthy Start, Healthy Families

Dear Parent/Guardian:

If your children receive free or reduced-price school meals, they may also be able to get free or low-cost health insurance through Medicaid or the State of Ohio Healthy Start, Healthy Families Program. Children with health insurance are more likely to get regular health care and are less likely to miss school because of sickness.

Because health insurance is so important to children's well-being, **the law allows us to tell Medicaid and Healthy Start, Healthy Families that your children are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, unless you tell us not to.** Medicaid and Healthy Start, Healthy Families only use the information to identify children who may be eligible for their programs. Program officials may contact you to offer to enroll your children. Filling out the Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Application does not automatically enroll your children in health insurance.

If you do not want us to share your information with Medicaid or Healthy Start, Healthy Families, fill out the form below and send it in (Sending in this form will not change whether your children get free or reduced-price meals).

☐ **No! I DO NOT** want information from my Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Application shared with Medicaid or the Healthy Start, Healthy Families.

If you checked no, fill out the form below.

Child's Name: _____ School: _____

Child's Name: _____ School: _____

Child's Name: _____ School: _____

Child's Name: _____ School: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____ Address: _____

For more information, you may call **Steve Robinson** at 330-664-4800.

Please return this form to:

**Steve Robinson
3797 Ridgewood Road
Copley, OH 44321**

Do not complete this section. Intended for school use only

This form is to Certify that the Children listed above are Categorically Eligible as:

☐ Free ☐ Reduced ☐ Denied Reason Denied: _____

Determining/Approval Official's Signature _____ Date: _____

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Does your child qualify for the School Meals Program?
If so, your family may qualify for free health coverage!



Healthy Start & Healthy Families

Healthy Start offers free health care coverage
for kids (birth to age 19) and pregnant women.

Healthy Families offers free health care coverage for the
entire family - parents AND kids.

Healthy Start & Healthy Families Covers:

Doctor Visits
Hospital Care
Immunizations
Substance Abuse

Prescriptions
Vision Services
Dental Care
Mental Health

And Much More!

For more information or an application, call:

1-800-324-8680 (a free call!)

TDD 1-800-292-3572

Monday - Friday 7 am to 8 pm

Saturday - Sunday 12 pm to 5 pm



Your family's size and income determines if you and your family are eligible for Healthy Start or Healthy Families.
Healthy Start & Healthy Families are Medicaid Programs administered by The Ohio Department of Job & Family Services.