## COLUMBIA LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



"Achieving Excellence Together"

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

#### Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. The Columbia Local School District offers healthy meals each school day. Breakfast costs \$2.00 and lunch costs \$3.50. 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.
- 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

INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES 2022-2023									
Household size	Yearly	Weekly							
1	\$25,142	25,142 \$2,096							
2	33,874	3,874 2,823							
3	42,606	42,606 3,551							
4	51,338	51,338 4,279							
5	60,070	60,070 5,006							
6	68,802	5,734	1,324						
7	77,534	6,462	1,492						
8	86,266	7,189	1,659						
Each Additional Person:	8,732	728	168						

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 **Liz Wenzel**, **Homeless Liaison at** <u>lwenzel@clsdraiders.org</u> or (440) 236-1236 to see if they qualify.

- 3. **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 Elaine Webber, Director of Nutrition Services, Columbia Middle School, 13646 West River Road, Columbia Station, OH 44028, (440) 236-5741, <u>ewebber@clsdraiders.org</u>**
- 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 Elaine Webber, Director of Nutrition Services, Columbia Middle School, 13646 West River Road, Columbia Station, OH 44028, (440) 236-5741, <a href="ewebber@clsdraiders.org">ewebber@clsdraiders.org</a> 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 <a href="https://www.clsdraiders.org/LunchMenu.aspx">https://www.clsdraiders.org/LunchMenu.aspx</a> to begin or to learn more about the online application process. Contact <a href="mailto:Elaine Webber">Elaine Webber</a>, <a href="Director of Nutrition Services">Director of Nutrition Services</a>, <a href="Columbia Middle School">Columbia Station</a>, OH 44028, (440) 236-5741, <a href="mailto:ewebber@clsdraiders.org">ewebber@clsdraiders.org</a> 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.

- 7. I receive Women, Infants and Children (WIC) benefits. Can my child(ren) get free meals? Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Please submit a completed application. Will the information I give be checked? Yes, we also may ask you to send written proof.
- 8. **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.
- 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: Patricia Cieslak, Secretary to the Superintendent,
  Columbia Local School District, 25796 Royalton Road, Columbia Station, OH 44029, (440) 236-1213,
  pcieslak@clsdraiders.org
- 10. 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.
- 11. 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.
- 12. 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.
- 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 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.
- 14. 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 any school building to receive a second application.
- 15. 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.
- 16. 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, contact Elaine Webber, Director of Nutrition Services, Columbia Middle School, 13646 West River Road, Columbia Station, OH 44028, (440) 236-5741, ewebber@clsdraiders.org

Si necesita ayuda, por favor llame al teléfono: Elaine Webber, Director of Nutrition Services, Columbia Middle School, 13646 West River Road, Columbia Station, OH 44028, (440) 236-5741, <a href="mailto:ewebber@clsdraiders.org">ewebber@clsdraiders.org</a>

Si vous voudriez d'aide, contactez nous au numero: Elaine Webber, Director of Nutrition Services, Columbia Middle School, 13646 West River Road, Columbia Station, OH 44028, (440) 236-5741, <a href="mailto:ewebber@clsdraiders.org">ewebber@clsdraiders.org</a>

Sincerely,

Graig Bansek
Superintendent

**Columbia Local School District** 

## 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 Liz Wenzel, Homeless Liaison at <a href="mailto:lwenzel@clsdraiders.org">lwenzel@clsdraiders.org</a> or (440) 236-1236. 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) qualifies 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 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 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 Liz Wenzel, Homeless Liaison at Iwenzel@clsdraiders.org or (440) 236-1236. 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 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.

### 2022-2023 FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE SCHOOL MEALS APPLICATION

Part 1. ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS	1112271112					1.102 3011			,		/ (i   LiO/ (i i		-				
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Names of <u>all</u> household members (First, Middle Initial, Last)	child/or	child/or indicate "NA" if child			d is not in	agency or court) *If all children listed below are					No Income						
(*****, ********, ******,				iool.		1	foster children, skip to Part 5 to sign this form.										
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Part 2. BENEFITS: If any member of your house	hold receives S	Supp	leme	ntal	Nutr	rition Assistan	ce P	rogr	am	(SNA	P) or Ohio Wor	ks F	irst	(OV	/F) I	benefit	s, provide the
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Part 3. If any child you are applying for is hon	neless, migrant	, or	a rur	awa	y ch	eck the appro	pria	te b	ох а	nd c	all Liz Wenze	l, H	om	ele	ss L	.iaiso	n at
lwenzel@clsdraiders.org or (440) 236-1	.236		Hom	eles	s 🗌	Migrant 🗌	Ru	ınaw	ay [								
Part 4. TOTAL HOUSEHOLD GROSS INCOME (b			List a	II inc	ome	on the same	line	as t	he p	erso	n who receives	it. (	Chec	k th	е		
box for how often it is received. Record each in																	
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Part 5. SCHOOL INSTRUCTIONAL FEE WAIVER																	
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not change whether your children will receive		•						0 W2	ivo								
Yes, I agree to have my meal application used to determine if my child(ren) qualifies for a fee waiver.  No, I do not agree to have my meal application used to determine if my child(ren) qualifies for a fee waiver.																	
Signature of Parent/Guardian:																	
Part 6. SIGNATURE AND LAST FOUR DIGITS OF	SOCIAL SECU	RITY	NUN	1BER	(AD	ULT MUST SIG	GN)										
An adult household member must sign the app	lication. If Part	4 is	com	plet	ed, t	he adult signi	ng t	he fo	orm	mus	t also list the la	st f	our	digi	ts o	f his o	r her Social
Security Number or mark the "I do not have a																	
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: Y																	
Sign here: XPrint name:Date: Address:Phone Number:																	
Last four digits of your Social Security Number: I do not have a Social Security Number																	
Part 7. 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-																	
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Not Hispanic/Latino	White		_	_		Hawaiian or o					_	~	,uii ,	,c			
Do not complete this section. Intended for school use only.																	
Annual Income Conversion: Weekly x 52, Every 2 Weeks x 26, Twice A Month x 24, Monthly x 12																	
Total Income: Per: Week, Every 2 Weeks, Twice per Month, Month, Year Household size: Categorical Eligibility: Date Withdrawn: Eligibility: Free Reduced Denied Reason:																	
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Follow-up Official's Signature:										:							
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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

INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES							
2022-2023							
Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly				
1	\$25,142	\$2,096	\$484				
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6	68,802	5,734	1,324				
7	77,534	6,462	1,492				
8	86,266	7,189	1,659				
Each Additional							
Person:	8,732	728	168				

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.

#### **USDA Nondiscrimination Statement**

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.

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: <a href="https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf">https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf</a>, 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:

## 1. mail:

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

- 2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
- 3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.