Parts of the Free and Reduced-Price Meal Applications

Local education agencies have the option to use the U.S. Department of Agriculture prototype meal application materials or the Washington state prototype meal application materials. This reference sheet explains the Washington state prototype free and reduced price meal application.

Part 1: Student Listing
- ✓ List names of all students in the household.
- ✓ Identify if any student is a foster child.
  - Foster children are defined as children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court
  - Foster children are categorically eligible for free meals
  - Foster children are listed on the Direct Certification list or,
  - By the LEA Foster Care Liaison.
  - Foster children can be included in the household application and considered a member of the household
  - A foster child's eligibility is NOT extended to other students in the household.
  - Other students may be eligible for meal benefits based on the income and household size.
- ✓ Date of Birth
- ✓ School
- ✓ Grade
- ✓ Student Income and Income Frequency
  - Income earned on a consistent basis
  - Any income box left blank is an indication there is no income earned

Part 2: Case Number AND indicate from what program (if applicable)
- Any child or adult receiving Basic Food / TANF / FDPIR benefits are always categorically eligible for free meals and their eligibility extends to all children attending school or participating in Child Nutrition Programs
- A "good" case number:
  - Contains between 2 and 9 numbers (after the lead zeros are dropped)
  - Does not contain letters of the alphabet
  - Medical Coupon numbers are not "Case Numbers"

Homeless / Migrant:
- ✓ The status of a migrant child must be determined by your district's Migrant Administrator, OR
- ✓ From the Direct Certification list in EDS, OR

✓ The district can call the [Migrant Student Data Recruitment Office](#) in Sunnyside for information on how to access the statewide Migrant Data Base

> The Migrant Student Data and Recruitment Office Sunnyside, WA (509) 837-2712 OR 1-800-274-6084

✓ A person employed by the district who knows the status of the family can also qualify the student as a Migrant

- District employee may submit a signed statement to allow the student to receive immediate meal benefits
- The Migrant liaison must later validate the students status

✓ The status of a homeless student must be determined by your district's Homeless liaison or officials of homeless shelters where the student resides.

✓ A checked box for migrant or homeless means student may be eligible, but further confirmation is required.

Part 3: Names and income of ALL other household members

✓ Names of all other members of the household **not listed in Part 1**, whether members of the household are related to each other or not

✓ Income amount and payment frequency for each household member
- Any income box left blank is an indication there is no income earned

✓ If income is listed as received in MORE THAN ONE frequency convert to ANNUAL income
- Convert each amount, add together and then round

✓ Any income box left blank is an indication of zero income earned

✓ Any income not received on a consistent basis (such as overtime or child support) should not be counted. Confirm with household.

Part 4: Total household members

✓ Household adult enters total number of household members living in the household

✓ If the number listed is different from how many people are listed in Part 1 and 3 inquire with the household

✓ Write in the last four digits of their social security number OR indicate they do not have a social security number
- If an application is missing a signature or social security number, you must contact the household and obtain the missing information

✓ Social Security Numbers are NOT needed when the student is categorically eligible

Part 5: Signature

✓ An adult household member must sign or print their name

> **Certain information must be obtained prior to approving the application. Approving officials must document with the date and source of the information and write directly on the application to add information.**
> **A complete income application includes:**
>
> - **Names of all household members**
> - **Amount, source, and frequency of all income**
> - **Signature of an adult household member**
> - **Last four digits of the Social Security Number or indication of no social security number**
>
> **Any income box left blank is an indication there is no income earned.**
>
> **A complete case number application includes:**
>
> - **The names of the children for whom the application is made**
> - **A Basic Food, TANF, or FDPIR case number**
> - **Signature of the adult household member completing the application.**

Part 6: Children's Racial Ethnic Information
- ✓ Optional information

Part 7: Other Benefits

- ✓ Other programs may be listed here for reduced fees
- ✓ Adult household member must sign this section in order to release name and eligibility status to other programs
- ✓ A Data Sharing Agreement must be in place before information is released
- ✓ This section is optional. A version of the meal application, without this box, is available.

Use of Information Statement & Nondiscrimination Statement
- ✓ Required to be included on the application.

Approval / Denial
- ✓ Record the total income and mark the income frequency
- ✓ Convert to annual income if there is more than one income frequency
- ✓ Indicate if the application has been denied and why
- ✓ **Sign and date the application**

Other information:
- ✓ Indicate if the application has been denied and why
- ✓ There is no temporary approval of an application
- ✓ **Households that Fail to Apply**
  - A school official may complete an application on behalf of the child
  - The source of the information MUST be listed
  - Names of household members, social security numbers, and signatures of an adult household member are not required
  - Intended for very limited use

This is a brief description of the meal application and approval process. It is not all inclusive. The Eligibility Manual for School Meals contains in-depth information about certifying students for meal benefits.
Reference:
- ✓ Eligibility Manual for School Meals
- ✓ SP33-2015

Resources:
- ✓ OSPI CNS Free and Reduced Price Information web page
- ✓ Contact Information for OSPI LEA Homeless and Foster Liaisons

Acronym Reference	
-CNS	Child Nutrition Services
-FDPIR	Federal Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
-OSPI	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
-SS#	Social Security Number
-TANF	Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
-USDA	United States Department of Agriculture