



### ***STUDENT NUTRITION SERVICES EMERGENCY MEAL POLICY***

A written copy of the emergency meal policy will be provided to all households. Every school is required to follow the policy. Students who qualify for a free or a reduced-priced meal can always receive a free lunch (the district waives the .40 cost for the reduced-priced meal). All students regardless of eligibility status can receive a free breakfast. Paid students who forget their lunch money can receive a “charged” meal. To protect the identity of all children at the point of service, SNS uses a prepayment system that limits the exchange of money and prevents the disclosure of a student’s eligibility status.

1. Students are allowed to charge for meals when they don’t have money. The student will be given the same school lunch that other children are receiving. A La Carte Items can never be charged.
2. Parents of students who charge one meal will be notified by phone, after their child has received the meal. The parent will be encouraged to quickly pay for this meal and reminded of the policy.
3. Parents of students who continue to charge will receive notification in writing which will encourage the parent to pay off their charges.
4. If a student continues to come to school with no packed lunch or lunch money, attempts will be made to discuss the issue with the parent and to encourage them to complete a meal benefit application.
5. Any time there is an uncollected balance on a child’s meal account, the child will be prevented from purchasing A La Carte items.
6. Any unpaid balance on a child’s account will be carried over from year to year.
7. The parent is responsible for all uncollected meal balances which must be paid, prior to graduation.

### SAFE AT SCHOOL - Additional Precautions due to COVID-19

- All SNS employees and will be required to wear masks when preparing and serving food.
- Plexiglass shields are being installed where social distancing between the cashier and students isn't possible.
- Cleaning and sanitizing of frequently touched surfaces including serving lines, cafeteria tables and food production areas will occur throughout the day.
- All food items will be wrapped or packaged for serving.
- Meals will either be placed on a tray or in a bag (no self-service).
- Pinpads will remain on the line ONLY if they can be used in a safe, sanitary manner.
- Share Tables will be discontinued.



## General Information



### FREE BREAKFAST FOR ALL STUDENTS

All students are offered a nutritious breakfast free of charge.

### FREE MEAL BENEFITS - Lunch meals are available free of charge for those students who qualify

Parents are encouraged to submit a household meal benefit application either online at [www.sdhc.k12.fl.us/sns](http://www.sdhc.k12.fl.us/sns), or via a paper application. A household application means that parents complete only one application for all children in the same home. Parents can learn about the status of their application by calling 1-866-544-5575. *Parents are expected to pay for all meals until an application is processed and approved.*

### MEAL PRICES

Your child may qualify for free or reduced price meals. **Apply for FREE meals at <https://www.myschoolapps.com/Application>**  
**Apply for benefits through the Florida Department of Children and Families at <https://www.myflorida.com/accessflorida/>**  
The reduce price lunch cost of 40¢ is waived (provided at no charge) for children approved for reduced price meals. Breakfast is free for all students. Elementary lunch costs \$2.25, and Secondary lunch costs \$2.75.

### ON-LINE "MEAL HISTORY"/ON-LINE PAYMENTS

- Check out Meal History at <https://www.MyPaymentsPlus.com/> to review two weeks of menu selections for any student.
- Making **on-line payments** is a quick and easy way to be sure a child has enough money to pay for meals. Just go to <https://www.MyPaymentsPlus.com/> follow the instructions for online payments. ***Plus, you can receive regular e-mail "reminders" when your child's balance is low.***

### SPECIAL DIETS/MEALS

If a child requires a diet substitute because of a medical condition, the parent is encouraged to complete a **DIET PRESCRIPTION FORM**. A **meal preference form** can also be completed by the parent if other needs are required because of cultural or religious reasons. Both forms, available on the SNS web page, are ***required each school year.***

### NUTRITION INFORMATION

Visit the SNS website to get nutrition facts such as calories, fat grams and allergens for daily menu items. A comprehensive nutrition communication program provides serving line signage on nutrition info for all menu items.



Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn! Hillsborough County Student Nutrition Services offers healthy meals every school day. Breakfast is FREE for all students. Elementary lunch costs \$2.25, and Secondary lunch costs \$2.75. **Your child may qualify for free or reduced price meals!** The reduced price lunch cost of 40¢ is waived (provided at no charge) for children approved for reduced price meals. Below are some commonly asked questions with answers to help you with the application process.

1. WHO CAN GET FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEALS?



- All children in households receiving benefits from **SNAP (food stamps)** or **TANF**, are eligible for free meals, regardless of your income. Households receiving SNAP or TANF benefits may exclude income information and the last four digits of the signer's social security number on their application.
- If you received a **NOTICE OF DIRECT CERTIFICATION**: DO NOT complete an application. Please read the entire letter and follow the instructions carefully. See #6 for more information.
- **Foster children** that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals. Foster children may be included as part of a household application, and are eligible for free meals, even if the household does not qualify.
- 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. See #9 for more information.
- Children may receive free or reduced price meals if your **household income** is within the limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines. Your children may qualify for free or reduced price meals if your household gross income falls at or below the limits on the chart below:

REDUCED PRICE MEAL SCALE for School Year 2020-2021					
Household Size	Annually	Monthly	Twice Per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	23,606	1,968	984	908	454
2	31,894	2,658	1,329	1,227	614
3	40,182	3,349	1,675	1,546	773
4	48,470	4,040	2,020	1,865	933
5	56,758	4,730	2,365	2,183	1,092
6	65,046	5,421	2,711	2,502	1,251
7	73,334	6,112	3,056	2,821	1,411
8	81,622	6,802	3,401	3,140	1,570
<b>For each additional family member, add</b>	<b>+8,288</b>	<b>+691</b>	<b>+346</b>	<b>+319</b>	<b>+160</b>

- CAN I APPLY ONLINE? Yes! Beginning July 1<sup>st</sup> each school year, and you are encouraged to do so! Applying online is quick, confidential, and easy! The online application has the same requirements and will ask for the same information as the paper application. To apply online, visit the district website at **www.hillsboroughschools.org**, type "Go SNS" in the search bar, click on the big green application button, and follow the instructions. Contact **the Healthy Meals Express Application Center at 813-840-7066 if you have any questions about the online application process.**
- IS THE ONLINE APPLICATION AVAILABLE IN MORE THAN ONE LANGUAGE? Yes! It is available in 7 languages - English, Spanish, French, Arabic, Filipino (Tagalog), Vietnamese (Tiếng Việt), and Chinese (Mandarin). FOR REFERENCE ONLY you may view a SAMPLE free and reduced meal application in 49 languages here: [www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/translated-applications](http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/translated-applications)
- WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A COMPUTER TO COMPLETE AN ONLINE APPLICATION? Computers are available for use at no cost at the local public library and at the **Healthy Meals Express Application Center, 9014 Brittany Way, Tampa, Florida, 33619**. Your child's school may also have a computer that can be used to complete an application. Need information where to obtain a paper application? Contact the **Healthy Meals Express Application Center at 813-840-7066**.

5. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD? No. *Use one meal 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. If approved, your child's status will remain in effect for the entire school year.
6. 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 received carefully and follow the instructions. If any children in your household were missing from your eligibility notification, contact the **Healthy Meals Express Application Center at 813-840-7066** immediately.
7. 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. If you do not submit a new application that is approved, or you have not received a NOTICE OF DIRECT CERTIFICATION, your child will be charged the full price for meals.
8. WHERE CAN I VERIFY THE STATUS OF MY CHILD'S MEAL ELIGIBILITY? Call the meal status hotline at 1-866-544-5575. Make sure to have your child's 7-digit student ID number handy when calling.
9. HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILDREN QUALIFY AS HOMELESS, MIGRANT, OR RUNAWAY? Are your housing arrangements temporary? Does your family relocate on a seasonal basis? Have you taken in a runaway child? If you believe children in your household meet these descriptions, please contact the liaison at the child's school for assistance.
10. I RECEIVE WIC. CAN MY CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS? Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please submit an application.
11. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED? Yes. We may also ask you to send written proof of the household income you report.
12. IF I DON'T QUALIFY NOW, MAY I APPLY LATER? Yes, you may apply at any time during the school year if there is a change in your household income or size, or if you become unemployed.
13. WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE DECISION ABOUT MY APPLICATION? Contact the **Healthy Meals Express Application Center at 813-840-7066**. You may also ask for a hearing by writing to: **General Manager of Student Nutrition Services, 9014 Brittany Way, Tampa, Florida 33619**.
14. 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.
15. WHAT IF MY INCOME IS NOT ALWAYS THE SAME? List the amount that you normally receive. If you normally receive 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.
16. WHAT IF SOME HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS HAVE NO INCOME TO REPORT? If there is no income to report, mark the box that says "None" for each household member. If you enter '0' or leave any fields blank, you are certifying (promising) that there is no income to report.
17. WE ARE IN THE MILITARY. DO WE REPORT OUR INCOME DIFFERENTLY? Your basic pay and cash bonuses must be reported as income. If you receive 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. Deployed service members are considered part of the household. List deployed service members in the Household section (PART 4), but report only the portion of their income made available to them or on their behalf to the family.
18. WHAT IF THERE ISN'T ENOUGH SPACE ON THE APPLICATION FOR MY FAMILY? Contact the **Healthy Meals Express Application Center at 813-840-7066 for instructions**.
19. I'M A GROUP HOME ADMINISTRATOR. HOW DO I APPLY FOR CHILDREN IN MY CARE? Contact the **Healthy Meals Express Application Center at 813-840-7066 for instructions**.

If you have other questions or need help completing your household application for school meal benefits, contact the **Healthy Meals Express Application Center at 813-840-7066**.

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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 Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), 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:

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

fax: (202) 690-7442; or  
email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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