# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE APPLICATION FOR SUMMER EBT AND EDUCATION BENEFITS WITH THE MICHIGAN SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAM

August 2023

### Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. Fowlerville Community Schools offers healthy meals each day. For school year 2023-24, we are joining the Michigan School Meals Program. All students can get one breakfast and one lunch free of charge each day at school. Although no application is required to receive this free meal benefit, filling out the Application for Educational Benefits is still important! Your child(ren) may qualify for other benefits like reduced fees at school. Your application may also help the school qualify for education funds, discounts, and other meal programs.

- 1. WHO CAN GET FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE MEAL STATUS?
  - All children in households receiving benefits from the Food Assistance Program (FAP), Family
     Independence Program (FIP), or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) are
     eligible for free meals.
  - Foster children that are 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 of 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 this chart.

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Household Size	Annually	Monthly	Weekly
1	26,973	2,248	519
2	36,482	3,041	702
3	45,991	3,833	885
4	55,500	4,625	1,068
5	65,009	5,418	1,251
6	74,518	6,210	1,434
7	84,027	7,003	1,616
8	93,536	7,795	1,799
Each additional person:	9,509	793	183

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 have not been told your children will get free meals, please call:

Adva Ringle, Homeless Liaison & Migrant Coordinator (517) 223-6027 or ringlea@fowlervilleschools.org

- 3. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD? No. *Use one 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. Return the completed application to:
  - Amy Verhelle-Smith, Director, Food & Nutrition Services, 7677 W Sharpe Rd, Fowlerville MI 48836
- 4. SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LETTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN ARE ALREADY APPROVED THROUGH DIRECT CERTIFICATION? 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 Amy Verhelle-Smith, Director, at (517) 223-6115 or verhellesmitha@fowlervilleschools.org 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 <a href="https://sisweb.resa.net/MISTAR/Fowlerville">https://sisweb.resa.net/MISTAR/Fowlerville</a>/ to begin or to learn more about the online application process. Contact <a href="mailto:Amy Verhelle-Smith">Amy Verhelle-Smith</a>, <a href="mailto:Director">Director</a>, at (517)223-6115 or <a href="mailto:verhellesmitha@fowlervilleschools.org">verhellesmitha@fowlervilleschools.org</a> 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 few days of this school year, through **October 10**, **2023**. You must send in a new application unless the school told you that your child is eligible for the new school year.
- 7. I GET WIC. DO I NEED TO COMPLETE AND APPLICATION? Children in households participating in WIC <u>may</u> be eligible for supplemental benefits. Please send in 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 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: **Adva Ringle, Assistant Superintendent, Phone:** (517)223-6027 or Email: ringlea@fowlervilleschools.org
- 11. MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOULD IS NOT A U.S. CITIZEN? Yes. You, your children, or other household members do not have to be U.S. citizens to apply.
- 12. WHAT IF MY INCOME IS NOT ALWAYS THE SAME? List the amount that you <u>normally</u> 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 occasionally. 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 **Amy Verhelle-Smith, Director, at (517)223-6115 or verhellesmitha@fowlervilleschools.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 **Food Assistance Program (FAP)** or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office <a href="https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/s/isd-partnershiplanding?language=en\_US">https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/s/isd-partnershiplanding?language=en\_US</a>.

If you have other questions or need help, call **Amy Verhelle-Smith**, **Director**, **at (517)223-6115**.

# **HOW TO APPLY FOR SCHOOL MEALS AND SUMMER EBT**

Please use these instructions to help you fill out the School Meals and Summer EBT application. You only need to submit one application per household, even if your children attend more than one school in Fowlerville Community Schools. The application must be filled out completely to certify your children for school meals and summer EBT. Please follow these instructions in order. Each step of the instructions is the same as the steps on your application. If at any time you are not sure what to do next, please contact Amy Verhelle-Smith, Food & Nutrition Director: 517-223-6115 or verhellesmitha@fowlervilleschools.org.

#### PLEASE USE A PEN (NOT A PENCIL) WHEN FILLING OUT THE APPLICATION AND DO YOUR BEST TO PRINT CLEARLY.

#### STEP 1: LIST ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS WHO ARE INFANTS, CHILDREN, AND STUDENTS UP TO AND INCLUDING GRADE 12

Tell us how many infants, children, and school students live in your household. They do NOT have to be related to you to be a part of your household.

Who should I list here? When filling out this section, please include ALL members in your household who are:

- Children age 18 or under AND are supported with the household's income;
- In your care under a foster arrangement, or qualify as homeless, migrant, or runaway youth;
- Students attending Fowlerville Community Schools, regardless of age.
- **A)** List each child's name. Print each child's name. Use one line of the application for each child. When printing names, write one letter in each box. Stop if you run out of space. If there are more children present than lines on the application, attach a second piece of paper with all required information for the additional children.
- **B)** Is the child a student at Fowlerville Community Schools? Mark 'Yes' or 'No' under the column titled "Student" to tell us which children attend Fowlerville Community Schools. If you marked 'Yes,' write the grade level of the student in the 'Grade' column to the right.
- C) Do you have any foster children? If any children listed are foster children, mark the "Foster Child" box next to the child's name. If you are ONLY applying for foster children, after finishing STEP 1, go to STEP 4.

Foster children who live with you may count as members of your household and should be listed on your application. If you are applying for both foster and non-foster children, go to step 3.

**D)** Are any children homeless, migrant, or runaway? If you believe any child listed in this section meets this description, mark the "Homeless, Migrant, Runaway" box next to the child's name and complete all steps of the application. Homeless, Migrant, Runaway status must be confirmed with the appropriate program staff. If the school district cannot confirm your student's homeless, migrant, or runaway status, then the school district will contact you to complete an income-based application. You may choose to provide income information now to prevent the school district from potentially needing to contact you later

#### STEP 2: DO ANY HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS CURRENTLY PARTICIPATE IN SNAP, TANF, OR FDPIR?

# If anyone in your household (including you) currently participates in one or more of the assistance programs listed below, your children are eligible for free school meals:

- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Food Assistance Program (FAP).
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Family Independence Program (FIP).
- The Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR).
- A) If no one in your household participates in any of the above listed programs:
- Leave STEP 2 blank and go to STEP 3.
- B) If anyone in your household participates in any of the above listed programs:
- Write a case number for SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR. You only need to provide one case number. If you participate in one of these programs and do not know your case number, contact your MDHHS caseworker.

  Go to STEP 4.

#### STEP 3: LIST ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS AND INCOME FOR EACH MEMBER

#### How do I report my income?

- Use the charts titled "Sources of Income for Adults" and "Sources of Income for Children," printed on the back side of the application form to determine if your household has income to report.
- Report all amounts in GROSS INCOME ONLY. Report all income in whole dollars. Do not include cents.
  - o Gross income is the total income received **before** taxes.
  - o Many people think of income as the amount they "take home" and not the total, "gross" amount. Make sure that the income you report on this application has NOT been reduced to pay for taxes, insurance premiums, or any other amounts taken from your pay.
- Write a "0" in any fields where there is no income to report. Any income fields left empty or blank will also be counted as a zero. If you write '0" or leave any fields blank, you are certifying (promising) that there is no income to report. If local officials suspect that your household income was reported incorrectly, your application will be investigated.
- Mark how often each type of income is received using the check boxes to the right of each field.

#### 3.A. REPORT INCOME EARNED BY CHILDREN

#### STEP 3: LIST ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS AND INCOME FOR EACH MEMBER

- A) List all income earned or received by children. Report the combined gross income for ALL children listed in STEP 1 in your household in the box marked "Child Income." Only count foster children's income if you are applying for them together with the rest of your household.
- What is Child Income? Child income is money received from outside your household that is paid DIRECTLY to your children. Many households do not have any child income.

#### **3.B. REPORT INCOME EARNED BY ADULTS**

#### Who should I list here?

- When filling out this section, please include ALL adult members in your household who are living with you and share income and expenses, even if they are not related and even if they do not receive income of their own.
- Do NOT include:
  - o People who live with you but are not supported by your household's income AND do not contribute income to your household.
  - o Infants, children, and students already listed in **STEP 1.**
- **B)** List adult household members' names. Print the name of each household member in the boxes marked "Names of Adult Household Members (First and Last)." Include college students, unless they are declared independently on taxes (all college students are considered adults). Do not list any household members you listed in Step 1.
- C) Report earnings from work. List all income from work in the "Earnings from Work" field on the application. This is usually the money received from working at jobs. If you are a self-employed business or farm owner, you will report your net income. Net income is your income after taxes and deductions have been subtracted.
  - What if I have multiple jobs? List each job separately by entering your name and income from each job on a new line. Add an additional sheet of paper if necessary.
  - What if I am self-employed? List income from your business as a net amount. This net amount is calculated by subtracting the total operating expenses of your business from its gross receipts (revenue). Gross receipts or revenue are all the income earned from the sale of any products or services offered.
- **D)** List income from public assistance/child support/alimony. List all income that applies in the "Public Assistance/Child Support/Alimony" field on the application. <u>Do not report the cash value of any public assistance benefits NOT listed on the chart.</u> If income is received from child support or alimony, only report court-ordered payments. Informal but regular payments should be reported as "other" income in the next part.
- E) List income from pensions/retirement/all other income. List all income that applies in the "Pensions/Retirement/ All Other Income" field on the application.
- **F)** List total household size. Enter the total number of household members in the field "Total Household Members (Children and Adults)." This number MUST be equal to the number of household members listed in **STEP 1** and **STEP 3**. If there are any members of your household that you have not listed on the application, go back and add them. It is very important to list all household members, as the size of your household affects your eligibility for free and reduced-price meals.
- **G) Provide the last four digits of your Social Security Number.** An adult household member must enter the last four digits of their Social Security Number in the space provided. You are eligible to apply for benefits even if you do not have a Social Security Number. If no adult household members have a Social Security Number, leave this space blank and mark the box to the right labeled "Check if no Social Security Number."

#### STEP 4: CONTACT INFORMATION AND ADULT SIGNATURE

An adult member of the household must sign the application. By signing the application, that household member is promising that all information has been truthfully and completely reported. Before completing this section, please also make sure you have read the privacy and civil rights statements on the back of the application.

- A) Provide your contact information. Write your current address in the fields provided if this information is available. If you have no permanent address, this does not make your children ineligible for free or reduced-price school meals. Sharing a phone number, email address, or both is optional, but helps us reach you quickly if we need to contact you.
- B) Print and sign your name and write today's date. Print the name of the adult signing the application and that person signs in the box "Signature of adult."
- C) Mail Completed Form to: Amy Verhelle-Smith, Food & Nutrition Services, 7677 W Sharpe Rd, Fowlerville MI 48836

#### **Optional**

Share children's racial and ethnic identities (optional). On the back of the application, we ask you to share information about your children's race and ethnicity. This field is optional and does not affect your children's eligibility for free or reduced-price school meals. This information is requested solely for the purpose of determining the State's compliance with Federal civil rights laws, and your response will not affect consideration of your application and may be protected by the Privacy Act. By providing this information, you will assist us in assuring that this program is administered in a nondiscriminatory manner.

Please return the application directly to your child's SCHOOL. DO NOT mail, fax, or email completed applications or questions about applications to the USDA Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights or your child's eligibility for free or reduced-price meals will be delayed.

## 2023-2024 Application for Summer EBT and Education Benefits with the

Michigan School Meals Program Complete one application per household. Please use a pen (not a pencil).

**STEP 1:** List ALL children, infants, and students up to and including grade 12. Attach another sheet of paper if you need space for more names.

List ALL children in the household. Do not forget to list infants, children attending other schools, children not in school, and children not applying for benefits. This includes children not related to you in your household.

Apply online: https://sisweb.resa.net/MISTAR/Fowlerville/

Child's First Name	MI 	Child's Last Name	Stude Yes		School				irade	Foster Child	Homele Migrant, R	
2)												any of these
3)										$\overline{\Box}$		refer to the Application
4)										$\Box$		Instruction's Step 1: Part
5)												& Part D.
STEP 2: Do any Household Men		g you) currently particip	ate in: SNAP, TANF,	 , or FI								
		here, then go to STEP 4 (Do n				se Numb						
STEP 3: List ALL household me	mbore and inco	ome for each member (be	ofore taxes and dedu	ctions	) Skin this st	on if you	•	rite only one			is space)	
List all Adult Household Members not listed deductions) for each source in whole dolla	ed in STEP 1 (inclu	ding yourself) even if they do r	ot receive income. For ea	ach Ho	usehold Member	listed, if th	ey receive	e income, rep	oort total	gross incom	`	
A. Child Income							Child	d Income			Please put a	
Sometimes children in the household earn	or receive income	e. Please include the TOTAL inc	come received by ALL chi	ildren I	sted in STEP 1 h	ere.	\$		<u>\</u>	Neekly Bi-Wee	ekly 2x Month	Monthly Annual
B. All Adult Household Member List all Household Members not listed in Seleductions) for each source in whole dollar PLEASE PRINT	TEP 1 (including yours (no cents) only.	ourself) even if they do not rec	rom any source, write '0'.	If you	,	,		are certifying	g (promis	ing) that the	re is no inco	
Name of Adult Household Members (First and Last)	Earnings from Work	How often received?  Weekly Bi-Weekly 2x Month Mo	Public Assistar onthly <u>Annual</u> Alimony/Child Su		ow often received? Weekly Bi-Weekly 2	2x Month M	onthly Annu			How often red Weekly Bi-We		Monthly Annual
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Total Household Members (Children and Adults)		of Social Security Number (Searner or Other Adult Househo		e)				heck if no S	SN			
STEP 4: Contact information and	adult signature.	RETURN COMPLI	ETED FORM TO: Ar	my Ver	helle-Smith, Food	d & Nutriti				d, Fowlervil	le MI 48836	
' <u>l certify (promise) that all information on t</u> (confirm) the information. I am aware that	his application is tru	ue and that all income is report	ted. I understand that this	inform	ation is given in co	onnection	with the re	eceipt of Fed	eral Fund	ds, and that		
Street Address (if available)	Apt #	City		State	Zip			Phone (Opt	ional)	Email	(Optional)	
Printed Name of Adult Signing Form		Signate	ure of Adult					Today's Da	te			

Sources of Child Income			Examples	Examples					
Earnings from work				A child has a regular full or part-time job where they earn a salary or wages					
Social Security			A child is blind or disabled and receives Social Security Benefits.						
- Disability Payments			A parent is disable	A parent is disabled, retired, or deceased, and their child receives Social Security benefits.					
- Survivor's Benefits			A 6 :	16 college de la constante de la college de					
Income from person outside the household				ed family member regularly giv					
Income from any other source			A child receives re	egular income from a private pe	ension fund, annuity, or trust.				
Sources of Adult Income		Examples							
Earnings from work		-If you are in the -Allowances for o	Salary, wages, cash bonuses / Net income from self-employment (farm or business) / -If you are in the US Military: - Basic pay and cash bonuses (do NOT include combat pay, FSSA or privatized housing allowances) -Allowances for off-base housing, food and clothing						
Public Assistance / Alimony / 0	Child Support		-Unemployment Benefits -Workers compensation -Supplemental Security Income (SSI) -Cash assistance from State or local government -Alimony payments-Child support payments -Veteran's benefits -Strike benefits						
Pensions / Retirement / All Oth	ner Income	-Social Security (	including railroad retiremen	t and black lung benefits) -Priv	rate pensions or disability benefits st -Regular cash payments from o	-Annuities			
OPTIONAL: Children's ethi	nic and racial identities.	This information is l	kept confidential and may be	e protected by the Privacy Act	of 1974.				
We are required to ask for informa and does not affect your children's			is information is important an	d helps to make sure we are fully	serving our community. Responding	to this section is optional			
· · ·				merican, or other Spanish Culture	or origin, regardless of race) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islar	Not Hispanic or Latino			
Race (check one or more)	American Indian or	Alaskan Native	AsianBlack or	African American	Native Hawaiian of Other Pacific Islan	idei			
may also use your information to nother adult does not have one, 'Chec	nake sure that program ruck if no Social Security Nu AP) or Temporary Assistal	les are met. Please be imber' Applications for nce for Needy Familie	e sure to provide the last four a foster child do not need to s (TANF) or Food Distribution	numbers of the Social Security n list a Social Security number. Ap Program on Indian Reservations	egram benefits to your household. Insumber of the adult household member plications for children in households result (FDPIR) do not need to list a Social ess, migrant, or runaway.	er who signs the application. I eceiving Supplemental			
nstitution is prohibited from discrir Program information may be made	ninating on the basis of ra available in languages of ge), should contact the res	ce, color, national orig ther than English. Per	gin, sex (including gender ider sons with disabilities who requ	ntity and sexual orientation), disal uire alternative means of commu	nt of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights re oility, age, or reprisal or retaliation for nication to obtain program information enter at (202) 720-2600 (voice and T	prior civil rights activity. n (e.g., Braille, large print,			
Complaint Form (https://www.usda	n.gov/sites/default/files/doc etter must contain the com	cuments/USDA-OASC	CR%20P-Complaint-Form-050 ress, telephone number, and	8-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.p a written description of the allege	nich can be obtained online at <u>USDA</u> df), from any USDA office, by calling d discriminatory action in sufficient do bmitted to USDA	(866) 632-9992, or by writing			
1400	Department of Agriculture of the Assistant Secretar, Independence Avenue, Stington, D.C. 20250-9410;	y for Civil Rights W	(3) email: program.i	-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or intake@usda.gov.	*Do not mail applications to complaints of discriminati				
DO NOT FILL OUT: For	School Use Only								
Annual Income Conversion: Weel	kly x 52, Every 2 Weeks x	26, Twice a Month x	24, Monthly x 12. Do not annu	ualize income to determine eligib	ility unless more than one income fre	quency is listed.			
Total Income: \$ \$	\$ \$ \$ \$ \text{Veekly 2x Month M}	\$	Household Size:	_ Categorical Eligibilit	y: Eligibility: _	-			
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