

Business

Non-instructional Operations

Free or Reduced Price Lunches

Meals for Needy Children

National School Lunch Program regulations require that lunches be provided for needy pupils when family income is insufficient to provide the basic necessities, including food of the proper quality and amount for good nutrition.

Parents shall be informed of the county office policy concerning "Meals for Needy Children." A letter and application form will be distributed to all parents during the first few weeks of school. The letter will contain information on the eligibility standards, procedures for applying for free "Meals for Needy Children," and how an appeal may be filed for an adjustment in the decision with respect to their application. This information and an application form will be provided whenever a new pupil is enrolled.

A public news release containing this same information will be made available to local news representatives early in the school year. Copies of this public release will be made available upon request to any interested party. Subsequent changes in the county office eligibility standards during the school year, which are approved by the state agency, will also be announced publicly.

1. Free or reduced price lunches and/or supplementary milk will be provided for all pupils who qualify on the basis of financial need. Breakfast snacks may be provided in cases of extreme nutritional deficiency.
2. There shall be no discrimination in the furnishing of meals or supplementary milk (because of race, religion, source of income, etc.).
3. The anonymity of pupils receiving assistance under this policy shall be protected. The names of these pupils will be treated in a confidential manner. They will use the same tickets for milk and lunch and will obtain these items in the same manner and place as do all other children.
4. Requests for free lunches, reduced price lunches, and/or supplementary milk which have been denied may be appealed to the superintendent.
5. Records of pupils receiving assistance will be kept in each school. A monthly report will be submitted to the county office where records for audit purposes will be maintained.
6. Eligibility for the "Meals for Needy Children" program will be based on the following:

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Free or Reduced Price Lunches (continued)

Meals for Needy Children (continued)

a. Emergency Situations

A child's statement of need is sufficient for providing assistance on a temporary basis. A family contact should be made immediately to determine extent and probable duration of need. In cases of family emergency such as sudden unemployment, illness, death, desertion or similar situation, assistance will be provided as needed.

b. Objective Standards of Need

Eligibility for assistance, other than that for emergency situations, will be determined on the basis of income and family size as indicated on the scale provided by the district.

c. Priority for Provision of Services

Priorities for provision of free or reduced price meals shall be those established by Education Code Section 49518 if it is not possible for the county to meet all requests for such meals.

7. If county office authorities feel that a family's financial situation has changed, and the pupils are no longer eligible for free meals, a hearing procedure will be used by the superintendent to challenge the continued eligibility. In the event of such a challenge, the family will be given a reasonable period of time in advance of the hearing to review the information on which the challenge is based. Children will continue to receive free meals until the conclusion of the hearing.

Legal Reference: Education Code
49490-49493 School breakfast and lunch programs
49500-49504 School meals for pupils (needy pupils)
49530-49536 Child Nutrition Act of 1974
49550-49556 Mandatory school district and county superintendent of schools meals for needy pupils in kindergarten and grades 1-2

Administrative Code, Title 5
15510 et seq. Mandatory meals for needy pupils
15530 et seq. Nutrition education
15550 et seq. School lunch and breakfast programs

Policy

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