



COLUMBIA LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administration Center

25796 Royalton Road

Columbia Station, OH 44028

(440) 236-5008

“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 every school day. **Breakfast costs \$1.50. Lunch costs \$3.50. Your children may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals. Reduced price is \$0.30 for breakfast and \$0.40 for lunch.** This packet includes an application for free or reduced-price meal benefits, and a set of detailed instructions. Below are some common questions and answers to help you with the application process.

1. **Who can get free or reduced-price meals?**

- All children in households receiving benefits from the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) or Ohio Works First (OWF) 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.
- Your children may receive free or reduced-price meals if your household’s income is within the limits on the federal income eligibility guidelines.

Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$23,107	\$1,926	\$445
2	31,284	2,607	602
3	39,461	3,289	759
4	47,638	3,970	917
5	55,815	4,652	1,074
6	63,992	5,333	1,231
7	72,169	6,015	1,388
8	80,346	6,696	1,546
Each additional person:	8,177	682	158

2. **How do I know if my children qualify as homeless, migrant or runaway?** If the members of your household lack a permanent address;

are you staying together in a shelter, hotel, or other temporary housing arrangement; relocate on a seasonal basis; or if 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 been told your children will receive free meals, please call or email **Liz Wenzel, Homeless Liaison, wenzell@columbia.k12.oh.us or 440/236-1236** to see if they qualify.

3. **Do I need to fill out an application for each child?** No. Use one Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application for all children in your household. We cannot approve an application that is not complete. Please submit all required information. Return application to any school office or to **Elaine Webber, Director of Nutrition Services, Columbia Middle School, 13646 West River Road, Columbia Station, Ohio 44029, (440) 236-5741, webbere@columbia.k12.oh.us** immediately.

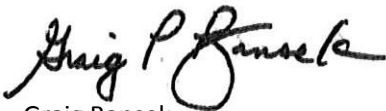
4. **Should I complete an application if I received a letter this school year saying my children are approved already for free meals?** No, but please read the letter you got carefully and follow the instructions. If any children in your household are missing from your eligibility notification, contact **Elaine Webber, Director of Nutrition Services, Columbia Middle School, 13646 West River Road, Columbia Station, Ohio 44029, (440) 236-5741, webbere@columbia.k12.oh.us** immediately.

5. **My child’s application was approved last year. Do I need to complete another application?** Yes, your child’s application is only good for that school year and for the first few days of this school year, through **September 20, 2019**. You are required to submit a new application unless the school notified you that your child is eligible for the new school year.

6. **I receive 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 send in an application.
7. **Will the information I give be checked?** Yes. We may also ask you to send written proof.
8. **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 for free or reduced-price meals if the household income drops below the income limit.
9. **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: **Patricia Cieslak, Secretary to the Superintendent, Columbia Local School District, 25796 Royalton Road, Columbia Station, OH 44028, cieslak@columbia.k12.oh.us, 440/236-1213.**
10. **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.
11. **What if my income is not always the same?** List the amount that you normally receive. For example, if you normally make \$1000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only made \$900, submit the report with the routing amount of \$1000 per month. If 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 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.
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 is also 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 who qualify for free meal benefits. School Food Service personnel must have parent consent to share student meal application if your child(ren) qualify for a fee waiver. If you agree to allow your child(ren)'s meal application to be shared with school officials to see if he/she/they qualifies for a fee waiver then **check "yes" in part 5 and sign and date the section.** If you do not wish for that information to be shared, then check "no" in part 5. Answering no to this question will mean your child will not be able to be considered for a fee waiver. Answering this question either way will not change whether your child(ren) will get free or reduced-price meals.
16. **My family needs more help. Are there other programs we might apply for?** To find out how to apply for Ohio 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, Ohio 44029, (440) 236-5741, webbere@columbia.k12.oh.us.**

Sincerely,



Graig Bansek
Superintendent
Columbia Local School District

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 school grade level for each child.

Part 2: List the 7 or 10-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 GETS SNAP OR OWF BENEFITS AND IF ANY CHILD IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD IS HOMELESS, A 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 or email **Liz Wenzel, Homeless Liaison, wenzell@columbia.k12.oh.us or 440/236-1236.**

Part 4: Complete only if a child in your household isn't 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 didn't need to fill 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 ARE APPLYING 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 school grade level for each child. Check the box indicating 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 of the 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 or 10-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 or email **Liz Wenzel, Homeless Liaison, wenzell@columbia.k12.oh.us 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 box to tell us 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 the take-home pay. Gross income is the

amount earned *before* taxes and other deductions. You should be able to find it on your pay stub or your boss can tell you. For other income, list the amount and check the box to note how often each person got for the month 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 doesn't 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 school 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 to 10-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 or email **Liz Wenzel, Homeless Liaison, wenzell@columbia.k12.oh.us 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 box to tell us 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 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: An adult household member must sign the form and list the last four digits of his or her Social Security Number (or mark the box if he or she doesn't 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.

2019-2020 FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS FAMILY APPLICATION

Part 1. ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

Names of <u>all</u> household members (First, Middle Initial, Last)	Name of school and school grade level for each child/or indicate "NA" if child is not in school.		Check if a foster child (legal responsibility of welfare agency or court). *If all children listed below are foster children, skip to Part 5 to sign this form.	Check if No Income
	School	Grade		
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 2. BENEFITS: If any member of your household receives Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Ohio Works First (OWF) benefits, provide the name and 7 or 10-digit case number for the person who receives benefits and **skip to Part 5**. If no one receives these benefits, **skip to Part 3**.

NAME: _____ 7 or 10-DIGIT CASE NUMBER: _____

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, 440/236-1236

Homeless Migrant Runaway

Part 4. TOTAL HOUSEHOLD GROSS INCOME (before deductions). List all income on the same line as the person who receives it. Check the box for how often it is received. Record each income only once.

1. NAME (List all household members with income)	2. GROSS INCOME AND HOW OFTEN IT WAS RECEIVED															
	Earnings from work before deductions	Weekly	Every 2 Weeks	Twice Monthly	Monthly	Welfare, child support, alimony	Weekly	Every 2 Weeks	Twice Monthly	Monthly	Pensions, retirement, Social Security, SSI, VA benefits	Weekly	Every 2 Weeks	Twice Monthly	Monthly	All Other Income (indicate frequency, such as "weekly" "monthly" "quarterly" "annually")
<i>(Example) Jane Smith</i>	\$200	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$150	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$50.00/quarterly
	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$_____/____
	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$_____/____
	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$_____/____
	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$_____/____

Part 5. SCHOOL INSTRUCTIONAL FEE WAIVER ADULT CONSENT: Your child(ren) may qualify for a waiver of their school instructional fees. Your permission is required to share your meal application information with school officials if your child(ren) qualifies for a fee waiver. Answering this question will not change whether your children will get free or reduced price meals. Please check a box:

- Yes, I agree to have my meal application used to determine if my child(ren) qualify for a fee waiver.
 No, I do not agree to have my meal application used to determine if my child(ren) qualify for a fee waiver.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN for the Instructional Fee Waiver Question: _____ Date: _____

Part 6. SIGNATURE AND LAST FOUR DIGITS OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (ADULT MUST SIGN)

An adult household member must sign the application. **If Part 4 is completed, the adult signing the form must also list the last four digits of his or her Social Security Number or mark the "I do not have a Social Security Number" box.** (See Privacy Act Statement on the back of this page.)

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: X _____ PRINT 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 price meals.

Choose one ethnicity:

- Hispanic/Latino
 Not Hispanic/Latino

Choose one or more (regardless of ethnicity):

- Asian American Indian or Alaska Native Black or African American
 White Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

DON'T FILL OUT THIS PART. THIS IS 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 A Month, Month, Year Household size: _____

Categorical Eligibility: _____ Date Withdrawn: _____ Eligibility: Free _____ Reduced _____ Denied _____ Reason: _____

Determining/Approval Official's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Confirming Official's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Follow-up Official's Signature: _____ Date: _____

If selected for Verification, Date Verification Notice Sent: _____ Response Date: _____ 2nd Notice Sent: _____ Results Sent: _____

Verification Result: No Change _____ Free to Reduced Price _____ Free to Paid _____ Reduced Price to Free _____ Reduced Price to Paid _____

Your children may qualify for free or reduced-price meals if your household income falls at or below the limits on this chart.

INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES 2018-2019			
Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$23,107	\$1,926	\$445
2	31,284	2,607	602
3	39,461	3,289	759
4	47,638	3,970	917
5	55,815	4,652	1,074
6	63,992	5,333	1,231
7	72,169	6,015	1,388
8	80,346	6,696	1,546
Each additional person:	8,177	682	158

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 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.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, 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.usda.gov> How to File a Complaint, 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.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.