

**The Pathway School**  
**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE SCHOOL**  
**MEALS or**  
**THE SPECIAL MILK PROGRAM (SMP)**

Apply online at <https://www.schoolcafe.com/>

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. **The Pathway School** offers healthy meals every school day. **Your child(ren) may qualify for free meals or for reduced-price meals.** This packet includes an application for free and reduced-price meal benefits, and a set of detailed instructions. Below are some common questions and answers to help you with the application process.

Due to the Pandemic, The Department of Agriculture has continued the waiver for schools to provide free meals to all students for the 2021-2022 school year. However, an application is still required from families.

If you have received a **NOTICE OF DIRECT CERTIFICATION** for free meals, **do not** complete the application. But **do** let the school know if any children in your household are not listed on the **Notice of Direct Certification** letter you received.

**1. WHO CAN GET FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE MEALS OR SPECIAL MILK?**

- All children in households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (formerly the Food Stamp Program) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits 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 on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines. **Your children may qualify for free or reduced-price meals/Milk if your household income falls at or below the limits on this chart.**

Income Eligibility Reduced-Price Guidelines—July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022					
Family Size	Annually	Monthly	Twice Per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	\$23,828	1,986	993	917	459
2	32,227	2,686	1,343	1,240	620
3	40,626	3,386	1,693	1,563	782
4	49,025	4,086	2,043	1,886	943
5	57,424	4,786	2,393	2,209	1,105
6	65,823	5,486	2,743	2,532	1,266
7	74,222	6,186	3,093	2,855	1,428
8	82,621	6,886	3,443	3,178	1,589
<b>For each additional family member add:</b>					
	8,399	700	350	324	162

**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 haven't been told your children will get free meals, please call or e-mail **Catherine Lepley at 610-277-0660 ext. 281 or [clepley@pathwayschool.org](mailto:clepley@pathwayschool.org)**.

**3. Do I need to fill out an application for each child?** No. Use one Free and Reduced-Price School Meals 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: **Catherine Lepley at [clepley@pathwayschool.org](mailto:clepley@pathwayschool.org) or The Pathway School, 162 Egypt Road, Jeffersonville, PA 19403.**

**4. 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 got carefully and follow the instructions. If any children in your household were missing from your eligibility notification, contact **Catherine Lepley at [clepley@pathwayschool.org](mailto:clepley@pathwayschool.org) or 610-277-0660 ext. 281** 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 **<https://www.schoolcafe.com/>** or visit the PA Department of Human Services website at [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us). to begin or to learn more about the online application process. Contact **Catherine Lepley at [clepley@pathwayschool.org](mailto:clepley@pathwayschool.org) or 610-277-0660 ext. 281** 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 30 days of this school year, through **October 1, 2021**. You must complete a new application unless the school told you that your child is eligible for the new school year. If you do not complete a new application

that is approved by the school or you have not been notified that your child is eligible for free meals, your child will be charged the full price for meals.

**7. I get WIC. Can my children get free meals?** Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Please complete 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 for free and reduced-price meals 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: **Lester Gallagher at 610-277-0660 or lgallagher@pathwayschool.org.**

**11. 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.

**12. 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, 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 sometimes. 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 **Catherine Lepley, Director of Education at 610-277-0660 ext. 281 or clepley@pathwayschool.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 **SNAP** or other assistance benefits, visit [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us), contact your local county assistance office, or call The Department of Human Services at **1-800-692-7462**.

If you have other questions or need help, call **Catherine Lepley, Director of Education at 610-277-0660 ext. 281** or [clepley@pathwayschool.org](mailto:clepley@pathwayschool.org).

**Sincerely,**

*Catherine Lepley*

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

(2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) E-mail: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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