




Free & Reduced Price Meal Applications

School Year 2020-2021







Objectives


- ▶ Purpose of applications
- ▶ The Free and Reduced Price Meal Application
- ▶ Application Materials
- ▶ Reviewing & processing applications
- ▶ Carryover period
- ▶ Master List
- ▶ Second / Independent Review of Applications

Purpose of Applications

- ▶ Documentation is required for student to receive free or reduced benefits
 - ▶ Direct Certification
 - ▶ Categorical Eligibility / Other Source Categorical Eligibility (participates in assistance program, homeless, runaway, migrant, foster)
 - ▶ Meal Applications
- ▶ Without documentation, student must pay for meals









Certification & Benefit Issuance – A Critical Area (PS 1)

- ▶ USDA research finds more than 1 in 5 applicants are certified incorrectly
 - ▶ Leads to mistaken denial of benefits
- ▶ Errors in the Certification and Benefit Issuance process are considered a Performance Standard 1 violation



Potential for Fiscal Action! \$






Direct Certification (DC)


- ▶ As soon as **July 1, 2020**, check the DC list in HCNP_S and complete matches
- ▶ Print and mail DC letters to households







Free and Reduced Price Application - Prototype

- ▶ DO NOT use last year's application
- ▶ The SY 2020-2021 version is available on HCNP website
- ▶ Recommend using HCNP's prototype application
 - ▶ Modeled after USDA prototype
- ▶ "HCNP Free and Reduced Price Meal Application SY 2020-21"
 - ▶ <http://hcnpp.hawaii.gov/overview/nsip/> ,
Program Resources → Free and Reduced Price Application






SP 09-2018

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cn/SP09-2018os.pdf>

- ▶ Web-based prototype released by USDA in 2016
 - ▶ Does not 'mimic' paper applications
 - ▶ Contains integrity features that ensure completeness & accuracy
- ▶ USDA encourages use of online applications to decrease error
 - ▶ Check if your POS is capable
- ▶ Potential to reach more families







Application Materials

- ▶ **Send to all households at or near the beginning of the school year:**
 - ▶ Free and Reduced Price Meal Application, SY 2020-2021
 - ▶ 'How to Apply for Free and Reduced Price School Meals'
 - ▶ 'Frequently Asked Questions About Free and Reduced Price School Meals'
- ▶ These are posted on HCNP website
 - ▶ <http://hcnp.hawaii.gov/overview/nsfp/>

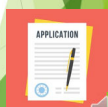

Program Resources → Free and Reduced Price Application

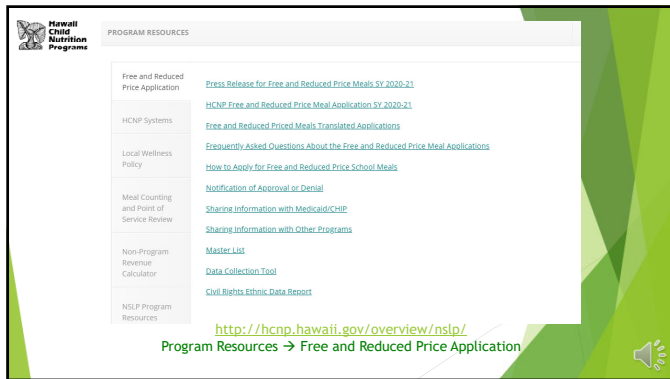




Application Materials

- ▶ Notice to Households of Approval/Denial of Benefits
- ▶ Sharing Information with Other Programs
- ▶ Sharing Information with Medicaid/CHIP

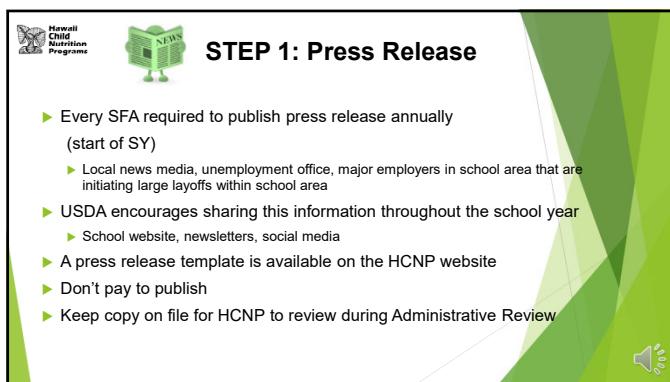


Hawaii Child Nutrition Program

PROGRAM RESOURCES

- Free and Reduced Price Application
 - [Press Release for Free and Reduced Price Meals SY 2020-21](#)
 - [HCNP Free and Reduced Price Meal Application SY 2020-21](#)
- HCNP Systems
 - [Free and Reduced Price Meals Translated Applications](#)
- Local Wellness Policy
 - [Frequently Asked Questions About the Free and Reduced Price Meal Applications](#)
 - [How to Apply for Free and Reduced Price School Meals](#)
- Meal Counting and Point of Service Review
 - [Notification of Approval or Denial](#)
 - [Sharing Information with Medicaid/CHIP](#)
 - [Sharing Information with Other Programs](#)
- Non-Program Revenue Calculator
 - [Master List](#)
 - [Data Collection Tool](#)
 - [Civil Rights Ethnic Data Report](#)
- NSLP Program Resources
 - <http://hcnp.hawaii.gov/overview/nslp/>

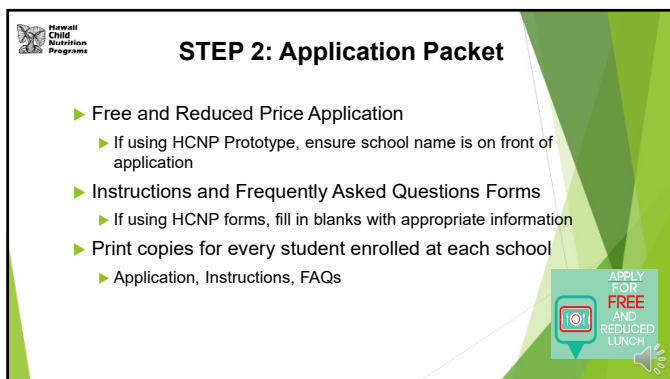
Program Resources → Free and Reduced Price Application



Hawaii Child Nutrition Program

STEP 1: Press Release

- ▶ Every SFA required to publish press release annually (start of SY)
 - ▶ Local news media, unemployment office, major employers in school area that are initiating large layoffs within school area
- ▶ USDA encourages sharing this information throughout the school year
 - ▶ School website, newsletters, social media
- ▶ A press release template is available on the HCNP website
- ▶ Don't pay to publish
- ▶ Keep copy on file for HCNP to review during Administrative Review



Hawaii Child Nutrition Program

STEP 2: Application Packet

- ▶ Free and Reduced Price Application
 - ▶ If using HCNP Prototype, ensure school name is on front of application
- ▶ Instructions and Frequently Asked Questions Forms
 - ▶ If using HCNP forms, fill in blanks with appropriate information
- ▶ Print copies for every student enrolled at each school
 - ▶ Application, Instructions, FAQs

APPLY FOR FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH



A Word on Confidentiality

- ▶ Always use caution when handling applications – they contain sensitive and confidential information
 - ▶ Name, address, household size, income, ethnicity/race, SNAP/TANF case number, etc.
- ▶ A student's eligibility must never be publicized or made accessible to unauthorized individuals





STEP 4: Processing Applications

- ▶ Date stamp applications when they are returned to school
- ▶ Application must be processed **within 10 operating days** of receipt
- ▶ Check applications for completeness
- ▶ Remember: the sooner you process and certify an application, the sooner that student receives the benefit they are entitled to







SNAP / TANF Case Number

When a household submits an application indicating an Assistance Program:


- ▶ Verify that case number matches the format used by the applicable program
- ▶ The child must be given free meals
- ▶ The determining official should compare the case number to the DC list
 - ▶ If there's a match:
 - ▶ Retain the application on file, but do not process it
 - ▶ Place household on the DC list
 - ▶ Eligibility is extended to all children in the household
 - ▶ If no match:
 - ▶ Contact the household for clarification, or
 - ▶ Verify for cause





Incomplete Applications

- ▶ Number of household members does not equal number of names on application
- ▶ Frequency of income is missing
- ▶ Missing SNAP/TANF number (when #2 was checked 'yes')
- ▶ SNAP/TANF number is questionable
- ▶ No adult signature
- ▶ No SS# and 'none' box is not checked








Incomplete Applications

The SFA "should make reasonable efforts to contact the household in order to clarify or obtain the required information"


- ▶ Contact household to obtain missing information
- ▶ Document the communication
 - ▶ Initial/date, who was contacted in the household, and the outcome
 - ▶ Do not use white out!
- ▶ For missing signature: request parent come to school to sign the application
- ▶ If unable to contact the household, send "Notice of Approval/Denial of Benefits"
 - ▶ Denied for incomplete application





Indication of 'No Income'


- ▶ Application instructions explain how a household should report income
 - ▶ If a household member(s) does not have income, they should mark 'zero' in income field
 - ▶ Leaving income field blank is indicative of 'no income'
- ▶ An application with a blank income field is considered complete and can be processed
 - ▶ Suspicious applications – Verify for Cause (October)



Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs

Income Eligibility Guidelines

- ▶ Not available to general public
- ▶ Ensure the SY 2020-21 guidelines are being used
- ▶ Income conversion factors are on bottom back of HCNP prototype application
- ▶ If application indicates multiple income frequencies:
 - ▶ Convert to annual income then make determination



Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs

INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES FOR FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE MEALS

Use for all Child Nutrition Programs to determine eligibility for Free and Reduced-Price Meals in 2020.

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 2020 TO JUNE 30, 2021


FREE MEALS				REDUCED-PRICE MEALS			
Family Size	Annual Income	Monthly Income	Weekly Income	Family Size	Annual Income	Monthly Income	Weekly Income
1	16,000	1,333	308	1	16,000	1,333	308
2	21,776	1,815	424	2	21,776	1,815	424
3	27,552	2,296	534	3	27,552	2,296	534
4	33,328	2,779	654	4	33,328	2,779	654
5	39,104	3,261	774	5	39,104	3,261	774
6	44,880	3,743	894	6	44,880	3,743	894
7	50,656	4,225	1,014	7	50,656	4,225	1,014
8	56,432	4,707	1,134	8	56,432	4,707	1,134
9	62,208	5,189	1,254	9	62,208	5,189	1,254
10	67,984	5,671	1,374	10	67,984	5,671	1,374
11	73,760	6,153	1,494	11	73,760	6,153	1,494
12	79,536	6,635	1,614	12	79,536	6,635	1,614
13	85,312	7,117	1,734	13	85,312	7,117	1,734
14	91,088	7,599	1,854	14	91,088	7,599	1,854
15	96,864	8,081	1,974	15	96,864	8,081	1,974
16	102,640	8,563	2,094	16	102,640	8,563	2,094
17	108,416	9,045	2,214	17	108,416	9,045	2,214
18	114,192	9,527	2,334	18	114,192	9,527	2,334
19	119,968	10,009	2,454	19	119,968	10,009	2,454
20	125,744	10,491	2,574	20	125,744	10,491	2,574


*Note: Please Refer Income Eligibility Guidelines to our Meal Service Forms 2020 for applications for Free and Reduced-Price Meals in 2020 and Effective Date: July 1, 2020.

Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs


Finish Processing the Application

- ▶ Complete bottom portion of back page: (FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY)
- ▶ Determining official signs, dates, and designates eligibility
- ▶ **Confirming official checks the application, signs and dates the form** ← NEW
- ▶ Within 30 days of eligibility determination







Notice of Approval or Denial

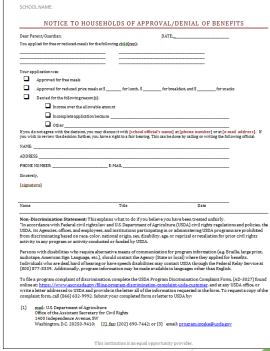




- ▶ ALL households must be notified of their eligibility status
- ▶ Make two copies of the letter:
 - ▶ Send the original to the household
 - ▶ Keep a copy on file at school
- ▶ A letter template is available for use on HCNP's website





<http://hcnp.hawaii.gov/overview/nsip/>
Program Resources →
Free and Reduced Price Application








Carryover Period


Eligibility from previous SY carries over for up to 30 operating days into new school year or when new eligibility is determined (whichever comes first)


- ▶ 30 operating days begins on the first operating day of school
- ▶ 30 OPERATING days / Carryover Period
 - ▶ Notification not required, but highly encouraged
 - ▶ Encourage families to reapply PRIOR to the end of the carryover period
- ▶ Remember...10 OPERATING days: MUST make determination and notify household





 **Discontinuing Benefits**


- ▶ At end of 30 operating days, benefits must be stopped if an application for current SY was not submitted
- ▶ If the child has been determined ineligible based on new application, new status is effective immediately
 - ▶ Do not wait until end of 30 day carryover period







 **Helpful Tips** 

- ▶ Keep a separate log with a tally of the answers to the ethnicity/race questions
 - ▶ This will be useful for completing the Ethnic Data Report
- ▶ Identify error prone applications
 - ▶ Add a check mark, use post-its, etc.
 - ▶ MUCH easier when verification rolls around in October



 **Master List**

- ▶ Each school **MUST** have a system for issuing benefits and updating each student's eligibility status
 - ▶ List must be maintained onsite
- ▶ This is what is referred to as the Master List
 - ▶ Consists of name of each student enrolled (updated continually throughout the year), eligibility status/changes, start and end dates
- ▶ Separate from meal counting system and POS
- ▶ Helpful in completing edit checks



[illegible][illegible][illegible]

Reminders

- ▶ Only ONE application per household is needed
- ▶ You cannot require a household to submit an application
- ▶ If a household qualifies for benefits, but refuses, a statement of refusal (in writing) must be obtained – ensure signed and dated
- ▶ Households have right to re-apply during the year
- ▶ All approvals are good for the entire school year, plus 30 day carryover
 - ▶ Verification – may cause change in status

Activity:

Certifying Applications

2020-2021 Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals
School: Springfield Elementary School

Earnings from Work:
\$2000 + \$1500 = \$3500

Frequency:
Monthly (x12)

\$3500 x 12 months =
\$42,000 annually

STEP 1: ALL Household Members who are infants, children, and students up to and including grade 12 if no income are required for children's names, select another sheet if repeat.		STEP 2: All currently participating members (including and currently participating in one or more of the following assistance programs: SNAP or EBT)	
A. Child's Name (Print Middle Initial, Last)	B. Name of School	C. Program(s) (Check all that apply)	
Bart J. Simpson	Springfield Elementary School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> EBT	
Lisa M. Simpson	Springfield Elementary School	<input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> EBT	
Maggie Simpson		<input type="checkbox"/> SNAP <input type="checkbox"/> EBT	

STEP 3: Report on ALL Household Members (skip this step if you answered "Yes" to STEP 2)

A. Child Income: \$ 0000000000

B. All Adult Household Members (including yourself):


Name of Adult Household Member (Print Last, First)	1. Age	2. Sex	3. Marital Status	4. Employment Status	5. Income Source	6. Monthly Income	7. Annual Income
Homer Simpson	40	M	Married	Employed	Wage/Salary	\$2000	\$24000
Marge Simpson	40	F	Married	Employed	Wage/Salary	\$1500	\$18000

STEP 4: Contact information and adult signature

Signature of Adult completing the form: Marge J. Simpson Date: July 25, 2020



Signature of Adult (if different): _____ Date: _____


REDUCED




Pop Quiz!

Link to Google Forms Quiz:
<https://forms.gle/N3JAigBV9CY2hQ4n9>





QUESTIONS?



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