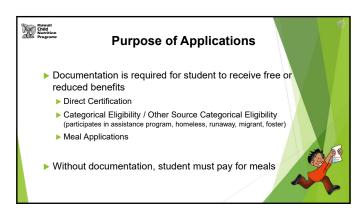
Free & Reduced Price Meal Applications School Year 2023-2024

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



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!

200	Child
	Nutrition

Direct Certification (DC)

- As soon as <u>July 1, 2023</u>, check the DC list in HCNP Systems and complete matches
- ▶ Print and mail DC letters to households



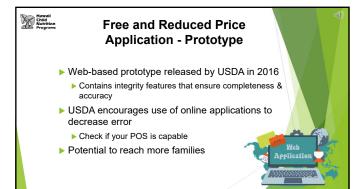
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Hawall Child Nutrition Programs

Free and Reduced Price Application - Prototype

- ▶ Prototype application has been revised for SY 2023-2024
 - ▶ Includes updates from USDA memo SP 16-2023
- ▶ ALWAYS use the current application
 - ▶ DO NOT use applications from previous school year(s)
- ▶ Recommend using HCNP's prototype application
- ▶ The SY 23-24 version is available on HCNP's website
 - ► http://hcnp.hawaii.gov/overview/nslp/ ,

Program Resources → Free and Reduced Price Application



Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs	Application Materials	
▶ Send to a	II households at or near the beginning of the school year:	
▶ Free and	Reduced Price Meal Application, SY 2023-2024	
▶ 'How to	Apply for Free and Reduced Price School Meals'	
▶ 'Freque	ntly Asked Questions About Free and Reduced Price School Meals'	
▶ These are	posted on HCNP website	
► http://hc	np.hawaii.gov/overview/nslp/,	
Progran	m Resources → Free and Reduced Price Application	





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

4;

NO.	Child
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STEP 2: Application Packet

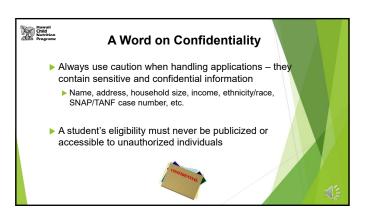
- ▶ Free and Reduced Price Application
- If using HCNP Prototype, ensure school name is on front of application
- ▶ Instructions and Frequently Asked Questions Forms
 - ▶ If using HCNP forms, fill in blanks with appropriate information
- ▶ Print copies for every student enrolled at each school
 - ▶ Application,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



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Nurrition STEP 3: Sending to Households
 School year begins July 1st Send application packet near beginning of school year to allow time to process
 ▶ Best practices for making materials available: ▶ Send home with each student on first day of school ▶ Mail to household (email as an alternative) ▶ Put in registration/enrollment packet ▶ Post on school website, if applicable

Remember, you <u>CANNOT</u> require any child or household to submit an application. However, they must be aware that they have the right to do so at any time during the school year.





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 answered 'yes')
- ▶ SNAP/TANF number is questionable
- ▶ No adult signature
- No social security number, "no Social Security Number" 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)

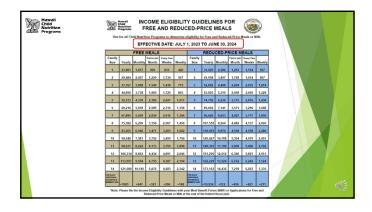


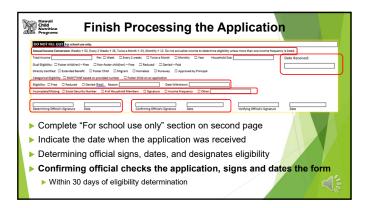


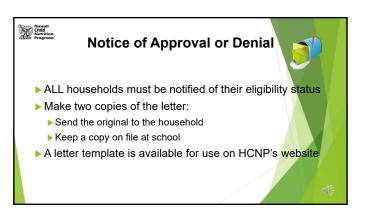
Income Eligibility Guidelines

- ▶ Not available to general public
- ▶ Ensure the SY 2023-24 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













Carryover Period

Eligibility from previous SY carries over for up to 30 operating days into new school year <u>or</u> 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: <u>MUST</u> make determination and notify household



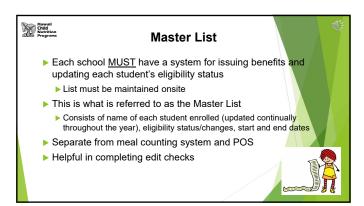


Discontinuing Benefits

- 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



Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs	Helpful Tips	
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▶ Identify err	or prone applications	
▶Add a d	check mark, use post-its, etc	p.
►MUCH	easier when verification roll	s around in October



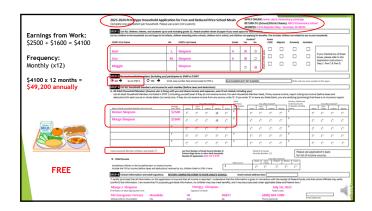


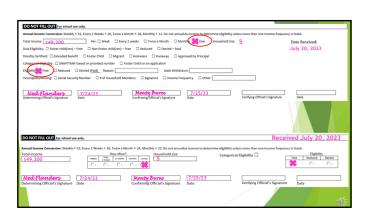
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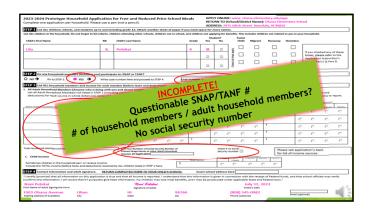




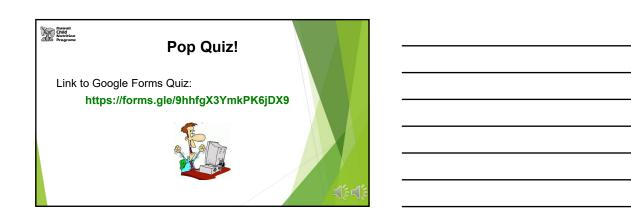
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	Non-Discrimination Statement
	In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retailation for prior civil rights activity.
	Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g. siziliali, large print; adolinged, merican signal, anguage), should contact the responsible state or local agency that admissibles the program or USDNs TARGET Certific 12(20) 720-2000 (viole and TTY) or contract USDN trought he Federal Resilvation (1800) 877-8339.
	To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complain Form which can be exhained or file at Immunities and program of the progra
	mail: US. Department of Agriculture US. Department of Agriculture USICs of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, DC. 20250-9410, or
	fax: (833) 256-1865 or (202) 690-7442; or
l	email: program inteles@usda.gov.
	This institution is an equal opportunity provider.