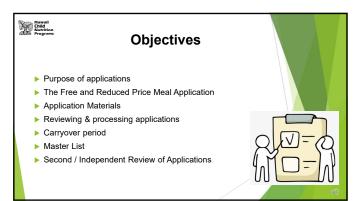
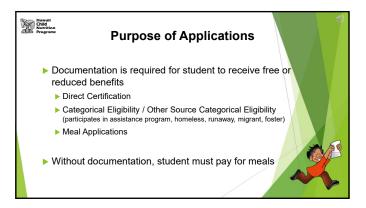
Free & Reduced Price Meal Applications School Year 2025-2026





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!

Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs

Direct Certification (DC)

- As soon as <u>July 1, 2025</u>, check the DC list in HCNP Systems and complete matches
- ▶ Print and mail DC letters to households



Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs

Free and Reduced Price Application - Prototype

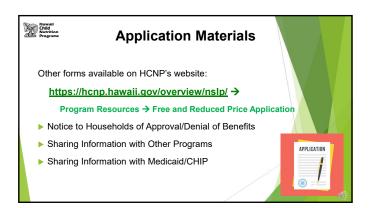
- ▶ No changes to the prototype application for SY 2025-2026
- ▶ ALWAYS use the current application
 - ▶ DO NOT use applications from previous school year(s)
- ▶ Recommend using HCNP's prototype application
- ▶ The SY 25-26 version is available on HCNP's website
 - http://hcnp.hawaii.gov/overview/nslp/,

Program Resources → Free and Reduced Price Application



Ellio d	Free and Reduced Price Application Web-Based Prototype	
	USDA Web-Based Prototype Application for Free & Reduced Price School Meals	
	https://www.fns.usda.gov/schoolmeals/model-application/web-based	
	Inform households:	
	▶ How to access the electronic application system	
١	▶ Still have the option to submit a paper application → wo	
١	► How to obtain and submit a paper application	4
	SFA's responsibility to maintain program integrity	7

Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs	Application Materials
▶ Send to a	II households at or near the beginning of the school year:
▶ Free and	d Reduced Price Meal Application, SY 2025-2026
▶ 'How to	Apply for Free and Reduced Price School Meals'
▶ 'Frequer	ntly Asked Questions About Free and Reduced Price School Meals'
▶ These are	posted on HCNP website
► http://ho	cnp.hawaii.gov/overview/nslp/,
Prograr	m Resources → Free and Reduced Price Application
	di di



X	Hawall 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
 - https://hcnp.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Press-Release-for free-and-Reduced-Price-Meals-SY-25-26.doc
- Don't pay to publish
- ▶ Keep copy on file for HCNP to review during Administrative Review



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
- ▶ All materials are available at:

 $\underline{\text{https://hcnp.hawaii.gov/overview/nslp/}} \hspace{0.1cm} \text{under}$

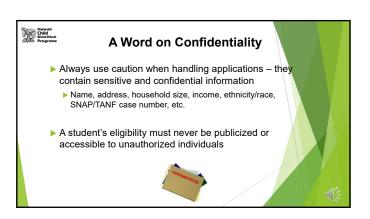
Program Resources → Free and Reduced Price Application



ild	2025-2026 Prototype Household A Complete one application per household.	lease use a p	en (not a pencil)		_	-	operes.	(school/	istrict Nam	e):	=	>		
trition	GIED List ALL children, infants, and student													
Programs List ALL children in the bousehold. Do not forget to list infants, children attend							Student?	Fo		noven not return	d to you in you	ar household.		
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	STEP 3 List ALL household members and inco			d de de miles el										
	deductions) for each source in whole dollars Name of Julian Translated Marrison (First and Last)	Sara San	We Facts 1 Sec.	ne often worker?	eta base	Public Assistance, Child Support, Allmony	X=10	Now other ra	rised?	Parasions, Battle Social Security, VA Barrarity, Al Statement	SR 100w		Lavaria	Lvan
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	Sometimes children in the household earn or reco	ctions) receive			5	Insert so	C thool addre	C ss. bere						
	Sometimes children in the household earn or recr include the 101AL income (before taxes and deb	ctions) receive ere. <u>BETUR</u> pplication is tr	N COMPLETED FORM TO se and that all income is	YOUR CHILD'S	SCHOOL:	is informatio	thool addre	connection	with the rece	igt of Federal f		t school offici	ials may v	ority

Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs	STEP 3: Sending to Households	
	d application packet near beginning of the school yea <mark>r to</mark> v time for processing	
▶ Sch	chool year begins July 1st	
▶ Best	practices for making materials available:	2
▶ Ser	end home with each student on first day of school	
▶ Ma	ail to household (email as an alternative)	
▶ Put	ut in registration/enrollment packet	7
▶ Pos	ost on school website, if applicable	
▶ Trans	slated Applications:	
https	s://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/translated-applications	

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.



CONTR.	Hawali
1	Child
R. M. C.	Nutrition
6500	Programs

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





Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs

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)

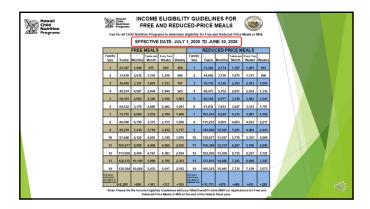


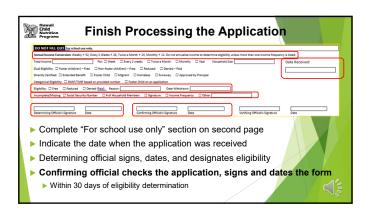


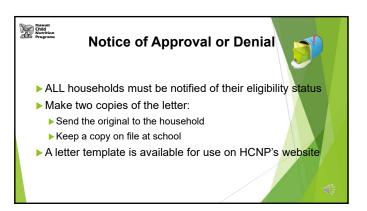
Income Eligibility Guidelines

- ▶ Not available to general public
- ▶ Ensure the SY 2025-26 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

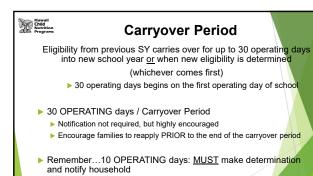












Discontinuing Benefits At end of 30 operating days, benefits must be stopped if an application for current SY was not submitted If the child has been determined ineligible based on new application, new status is effective immediately Do not wait until end of 30 day carryover period

Hawall Child Nutrition Programs

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

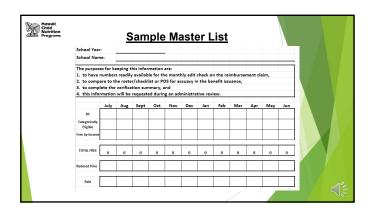
Hawaii Child Nutrition Programs

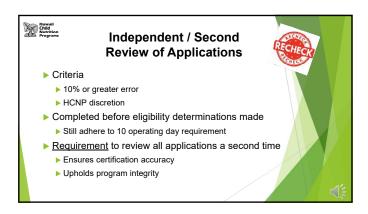
Master List

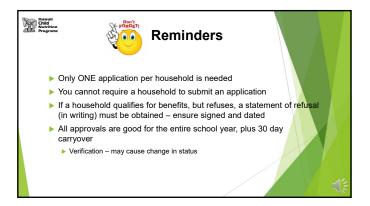
- ▶ Each school MUST have a system for issuing benefits and updating each student's eligibility status
 - ▶ List must be maintained onsite
- ▶ This is what is referred to as the Master List
 - Consists of name of each student enrolled (updated continually throughout the year), eligibility status/changes,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



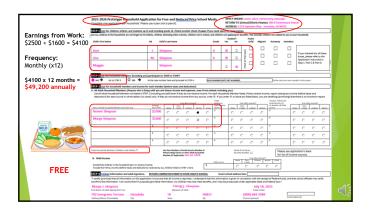
Mawali Child	MASTER LIST FOR NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM									
Nutrition Programs	Free By Income (Application)									
	School Year:	2025-2026								
	School:	Akamai Elementary								
	Free Students by Income (Application)		Start Date End Date		Comments					
	Johnny Aloha		7/3/2025							
	Kealani Jones		7/7/2025	8/4/2025	Changed to DC					
Sample Master			_							
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http://hcnp.hawaii.gov/over	view/nslp/	Program Resources	→ Free and	Reduced	Price Application					

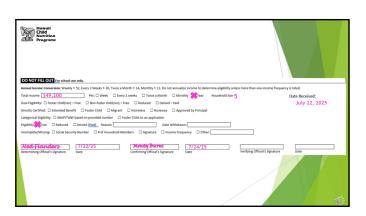


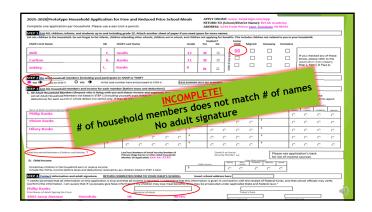












2025-2026 Prototype Household Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals Complete one application per household. Please use a pen (not a pencil). APPLY ORLINE: www. mile, school edu/app RETURN TO (School/District Hame): Mele High School ADDRESS: 7551 Hausel Diver: Biology. ADDRESS: 7551 Hausel Diver: Biology.											
STEP 1 List ALL children, infants, and students up											
List ALL children in the household. Do not forget to list	nfants, children attending other schools, children	n not in school, and children	not applying for Student?		includes child	ren not relate	to you in you	household	L		
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O NO → GO TO STEP 3. O YES →) participate in SPAP or TANE? With case mustar be: MORE INFO Verify if ch	TRMALIE	•	nc li	St						
STEP 3 List ALL household members and income	HORE INC	01.5	the	DC							
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include the TOTAL income (before taxes and deduction	come. s) received by ALL children listed in STEP 1 here.	>		С.	0 0	0					
STEP 4 Contact information and adult signature.	RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR CHILI	D'S SCHOOL: Inse	ert school addre	is here							
"I certify (promise) that all information on this applic (confirm) the information. I am aware that if I purpos							inds, and that	school offi	cials may v	rerity	
loe Swanson	Joe Swanson		ou prosecuteur		August 1,					4%	
Print Name of Adult Signing the Form	Signature of Adult			T	oday's Date					- Ball 3	
1903 Hauoli Way Hilo	HII State	96720		Phone (optio	onari)		Email (opt	ionati		410	
Mailing Address (Favailable) City	State	Zip		Transition (appro-		_	2-12-109				

