

Media Release

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August 9, 2011

The St. Johns County School District announced its policy today for free and reduced price meals for children unable to pay the full price of meals served under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs and Child Care Food Program. Interested persons may review a copy of the policy by contacting Elizabeth Binninger, Director of Food and Nutrition Services, 10 Hildreth Drive, St. Augustine, FL 32084 or (904) 547-3961 or toll free 1-(866) 984-7084.

Household size and income criteria will be used to determine eligibility. Children from families whose income is at or below the federal income eligibility guidelines are eligible for free or reduced price meals. Once approved, meal benefits are valid for an entire year. To apply for free or reduced price meals, households must complete the application and return it to the school or District Food and Nutrition Services Office.

For the purpose of determining household size, deployed service members are considered a part of the household. Families should include the names of the deployed service members on their application. Report only that portion of the deployed service member's income made available to them or on their behalf to the family. Additionally, a housing allowance that is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative is not to be included as income.

Application forms are being sent home with a letter to parents or guardians. Forms are also available at the front office in each school or can be found on the Food and Nutrition Service's website at <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/depts/business/food/free>. The information provided on the application will be used for the purpose of determining eligibility and may be verified at any time during the school year.

Households that receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) are required to list on the application only the child's name, SNAP/TANF case number, and signature of adult household member.

Foster children will receive free benefits regardless of the child's personal income or the income of the household.

Households with children who are considered migrants, homeless, or runaway should contact Homeless Liaison Coordinator Chamane Williams (904) 547-7587.

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All other households must provide the following information listed on the application:

- 1) The total household income must be listed by amount and frequency (i.e. weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, etc.) received by each household member to include all children whether in a school or not and the type of income (such as wages, child support, etc.);
- 2) Names of all household members, check the “no income” box if applicable. If household member is a child, list name of school for each;
- 3) The last four digits of the Social Security number of the adult signing the application or the word “NONE” for this household member if he or she does not have a Social Security number; and
- 4) Signature of an adult household member certifying the information provided is correct.

Applications may be submitted at any time during the year.

If a household member becomes unemployed or if the household size changes, the Food and Nutrition Services Department should be contacted at (904) 547-3960 or toll free (866) 984-7084. Such changes may make the children of the household eligible for reduced price meals or for additional benefits such as free meals.

Under the provisions of the free and reduced price meal policy, St. Johns County School District officials will review applications and determine eligibility. If a parent or guardian is dissatisfied with the ruling of the official, he/she may wish to discuss the decision with the determining official on an informal basis.

If the parent wishes to make a formal appeal, he/she may make a request either orally or in writing to the Director of Student Services, 47 Orange Street, St Augustine, FL 32084; (904) 547-7536.

Unless indicated otherwise on the application, the information on the free and reduced price meal application may be used by the school system in determining eligibility for other educational programs.

To determine annual income:

- If you receive the income every week, multiply the total gross income by 52.
- If you receive the income every two weeks, multiply the total gross income by 26.
- If you receive the income twice a month, multiply the total gross income by 24.
- If you receive the income monthly, multiply the total gross income by 12.

The total income before taxes, social security, health benefits, union dues, or other deductions must be reported.

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**FLORIDA INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES
FOR FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE MEALS**
Effective from July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012

FREE MEAL SCALE					
Household Size	Annual	Monthly	Twice Per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	14,157	1,180	590	545	273
2	19,123	1,594	797	736	368
3	24,089	2,008	1,004	927	464
4	29,055	2,422	1,211	1,118	559
5	34,021	2,836	1,418	1,309	655
6	38,987	3,249	1,625	1,500	750
7	43,953	3,663	1,832	1,691	846
8	48,919	4,077	2,039	1,882	941
For each additional family member, add	4,966	414	207	191	96

REDUCED-PRICE MEAL SCALE					
Household Size	Annual	Monthly	Twice Per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	20,147	1,679	840	775	388
2	27,214	2,268	1,134	1,047	524
3	34,281	2,857	1,429	1,319	660
4	41,348	3,446	1,723	1,591	796
5	48,415	4,035	2,018	1,863	932
6	55,482	4,624	2,312	2,134	1,067
7	62,549	5,213	2,607	2,406	1,203
8	69,616	5,802	2,901	2,678	1,339
For each additional family member, add	7,067	589	295	272	136

In accordance with Federal Law, and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (Voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.