



School Year 2023-2024

Public Media Release for Free and Reduced-Price Meals

Santa Cruz County Office of Education announces its policy to serve nutritious meals every school day under the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and Afterschool Snack Program. Effective July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, children are eligible for free or reduced-price meals if the household income is less than or equal to the federal guidelines.

**Free Eligibility Scale
 Meals, Snacks, and Milk**

Household Size	Annual	Monthly	Twice Per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	\$ 18,954	\$ 1,580	\$ 790	\$ 729	\$ 365
2	\$ 25,636	\$ 2,137	\$ 1,069	\$ 986	\$ 493
3	\$ 32,318	\$ 2,694	\$ 1,347	\$ 1,243	\$ 622
4	\$ 39,000	\$ 3,250	\$ 1,625	\$ 1,500	\$ 750
5	\$ 45,682	\$ 3,807	\$ 1,904	\$ 1,757	\$ 879
6	\$ 52,364	\$ 4,364	\$ 2,182	\$ 2,014	\$ 1,007
7	\$ 59,046	\$ 4,921	\$ 2,461	\$ 2,271	\$ 1,136
8	\$ 65,728	\$ 5,478	\$ 2,739	\$ 2,528	\$ 1,264

Reduced-price Eligibility Scale Meals and Snacks

Household Size	Annual	Monthly	Twice Per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	\$ 26,973	\$ 2,248	\$ 1,124	\$ 1,038	\$ 519
2	\$ 36,482	\$ 3,041	\$ 1,521	\$ 1,404	\$ 702
3	\$ 45,991	\$ 3,833	\$ 1,917	\$ 1,769	\$ 885
4	\$ 55,500	\$ 4,625	\$ 2,313	\$ 2,135	\$ 1,068
5	\$ 65,009	\$ 5,418	\$ 2,709	\$ 2,501	\$ 1,251
6	\$ 74,518	\$ 6,210	\$ 3,105	\$ 2,867	\$ 1,434
7	\$ 84,027	\$ 7,003	\$ 3,502	\$ 3,232	\$ 1,616
8	\$ 93,536	\$ 7,795	\$ 3,898	\$ 3,598	\$ 1,799

Households do not need to turn in an application when the household receives a notification letter saying that all children automatically qualify for free meals when any household member receives benefits from CalFresh, CalWORKs, or FDPIR. Children who meet the definition of foster, homeless, migrant, or runaway, and children enrolled in their school's Head Start program are eligible for free meals. Contact school officials if any child in the household is not on the notification letter. The household must let school officials know if they do not want to receive free or reduced-price meals.

Applications will be sent to the household with a letter about the free and reduced-price meal program. Households that want to apply for meal benefits must fill out one application for all children in the household and give it to the nutrition office at the Santa Cruz County Office of Education, 400 Encinal Avenue, Santa Cruz, Ca. 95060. For a simple and secure method to apply, use our online application at www.santacruzcoe.org. Contact Nikki Cendreda at 831-466-5721 for help filling out the application. The school will let you know if your application is approved or denied for free or reduced-price meals

Households may turn in an application at any time during the school year. If you are not eligible now, but your household income goes down, household size goes up, or a household member starts receiving CalFresh, CalWORKs, or FDPIR, you may turn in an application at that time. Information given on the application will be used to determine eligibility and may be verified at any time during the school year by school officials. The last four digits of the Social Security number from any adult household or checking that you do not have a Social Security number is required if you include income on the application.

Households that receive Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits, may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals by filling out an application.

Foster children are eligible for free meals and may be included as a household member if the foster family chooses to also apply for the non-foster children on the same application. Including foster children as a household member may help the non-foster children qualify for free or reduced-price meals. If the non-foster children are not eligible, this does not keep foster children from receiving free meals.

Your child's eligibility status from last school year will continue into the new school year for up to 30 school days or until the school processes your new application, or your child is otherwise certified for free or reduced-price meals. After the 30 school days, your child will have to pay full price for meals, unless the household receives a notification letter for free or reduced-price meals. School officials do not have to send reminder or expired eligibility notices.

If you do not agree with the decision or results of verification, you may discuss it with school officials. You also have the right to a fair hearing, which may be requested by calling or writing the hearing official, John Rice, Executive Director, Alternative Education Program at 831-466-5724.

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 retaliation 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., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a [Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#) (PDF), from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

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: 833-256-1665 or 202-690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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