

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 5, 2026

TO: Child and Adult Care Food Program
Adult Day Service Program Operators

FROM: Amy Wiatr-Rodriguez, Manager, Division of Home & Community Services

SUBJECT: CACFP MEMO No. 26-02
Food and Nutrition Service
Child Nutrition Programs: Income Eligibility Guidelines
Federal Register Vol. 91 No. 68 Released: April 9, 2026

PURPOSE: This memorandum announces the annual adjustments to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Income Eligibility Guidelines for July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027, to be used in determining participant eligibility for free and reduced-price meals or the default to paid meals.

BACKGROUND: Pursuant to sections 9(b)(1), 13A(h)(2), and 17(c)(4) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act ([42 U.S.C. 1758\(b\)\(1\)](#), [42 U.S.C. 1762\(h\)\(2\)](#), and [42 U.S.C. 1766\(c\)\(4\)](#)), and sections 3(a)(6) and 4(e)(1)(A) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 ([42 U.S.C. 1772\(a\)\(6\)](#) and [1773\(e\)\(1\)\(A\)](#)), the Department annually issues the Income Eligibility Guidelines for free and reduced price meals for the National School Lunch Program ([7 CFR part 210](#)), the Commodity School Program ([7 CFR part 210](#)), School Breakfast Program ([7 CFR part 220](#)), Summer Food Service Program ([7 CFR part 225](#)), Child and Adult Care Food Program ([7 CFR part 226](#)), free milk in the Special Milk Program for Children ([7 CFR part 215](#)), and program benefits in the Summer EBT Program ([7 CFR part 292](#)). These eligibility guidelines are based on the Federal income poverty guidelines and are stated by household size. The guidelines are used to determine eligibility for free and reduced-price meals, free milk, and Summer EBT benefits in accordance with applicable program rules.

The organization's representative is to use the eligible participant's household size and income and the charts below to determine a participant's meal and supplement reimbursement category which is to be documented on the participant's Income Eligibility Form (IEF). Each CACFP participant must be authorized under a reimbursement category: free, reduced-price, or paid. The IEF must be completed upon enrollment and updated on an annual basis. The annual IEF update requirement is applicable to those participants that fall into the free and reduced-price reimbursement categories.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Income Eligibility Guidance shall be utilized for determining income eligibility for all applicants/participants of the CACFP program. This policy notice replaces the previous Eligibility Guidelines and is effective **July 1, 2026**. The CACFP Household Letter must be revised to reflect the updated 2025-2026 Eligibility Guidelines.

REGULATION CITATION:

Federal Register Link: [Child Nutrition Programs – Income Eligibility Guidelines \(2026-2027\)](#)
FNS Website Link: [Child Nutrition Programs – Income Eligibility Guidelines \(2026-2027\)](#)

Federal Fiscal Year 2026-2027 CACFP Income Eligibility Guidelines

Below are the Income Eligibility Guidelines identified by Household Size for the CACFP **Free** and **Reduced-Price** categories. All thresholds are based on an increased percentage of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

*The **Paid** category is applicable to those individuals that exceed the Reduced-Price threshold by family size.*

CACFP FREE MEAL CATEGORY 130%				
Household Size	Federal Poverty Guidelines Annual	Annual	Monthly	Weekly
1	16,960	\$20,748	\$1,729	\$399
2	21,640	\$28,132	\$2,345	\$541
3	27,320	\$35,516	\$2,960	\$683
4	33,000	\$42,900	\$3,575	\$825
5	38,680	\$50,284	\$4,191	\$967
6	44,360	\$57,668	\$4,806	\$1,109
7	50,040	\$65,052	\$5,421	\$1,251
8	55,720	\$72,436	\$6,037	\$1,393
For each add't family member	5,680	\$7,384	\$616	\$142

CACFP REDUCED-PRICE MEAL CATEGORY 185%				
Household Size	Federal Poverty Guidelines Annual	Annual	Monthly	Weekly
1	16,960	\$29,526	\$2,461	\$568
2	21,640	\$40,034	\$3,337	\$770
3	27,320	\$50,542	\$4,212	\$972
4	33,000	\$61,050	\$5,088	\$1,175
5	38,680	\$71,558	\$5,964	\$1,377
6	44,360	\$82,066	\$6,839	\$1,579
7	50,040	\$92,574	\$7,715	\$1,781
8	55,720	\$103,082	\$8,591	\$1,983
For each add't family member	5,680	\$10,508	\$876	\$203

EFFECTIVE DATE:

July 2, 2026 – June 30, 2027

Respect for yesterday. Support for today. Planning for tomorrow.

www.ilaging.illinois.gov

The Illinois Department on Aging does not discriminate in admission to programs or treatment of employment in programs or activities in compliance with appropriate State and Federal statutes. If you feel you have been discriminated against, call the Senior Helpline at 1-800-252-8966; 711 (TTY)