

Stoneham Public School District

Department of Food Services

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Public Release

Stoneham Public Schools has announced its policy for determining eligibility of children who may receive free or reduced price meals served under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.

School officials have adopted the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Income Eligibility Guidelines following family size and income criteria for determining eligibility.

The following income guidelines will be used in Massachusetts from **July 1, 2015** to **June 30, 2016** for determining eligibility of participants for free and reduced price meals in the Child Nutrition Programs.

<u>FREE MEALS</u>						<u>REDUCED PRICE MEALS</u>					
Number in Family	Annual Gross Income	Monthly Gross Income	Twice Per Month Gross Income	Every Two Weeks Gross Income	Weekly Gross Income	Number in Family	Annual Gross Income	Monthly Gross Income	Twice Per Month Gross Income	Every Two Weeks Gross Income	Weekly Gross Income
1	\$15,301	\$1,276	\$ 638	\$ 589	\$ 295	1	\$21,775	\$1,815	\$908	\$838	\$419
2	20,709	1,726	863	797	399	2	29,471	2,456	1,228	1,134	567
3	26,117	2,177	1,089	1,005	503	3	37,167	3,098	1,549	1,430	715
4	31,525	2,628	1,314	1,213	607	4	44,863	3,739	1,870	1,726	863
5	36,933	3,078	1,539	1,421	711	5	52,559	4,380	2,190	2,022	1,011
6	42,341	3,529	1,765	1,629	815	6	60,255	5,022	2,511	2,318	1,159
7	47,749	3,980	1,990	1,837	919	7	67,951	5,663	2,832	2,614	1,307
8	53,157	4,430	2,215	2,045	1,023	8	75,647	6,304	3,152	2,910	1,455
Each Add'l Family Member	+5,408	+ 451	+ 226	+ 208	+ 104	Each Add'l Family Member	+ 7,696	+ 642	+321	+ 296	+ 148

To determine annual income:	If income is received:	Multiply by:
	Weekly	52
	Every Two Weeks	26
	Twice per Month	24
	Monthly	12

Children from families whose income is at or below the levels shown are eligible for free or reduced price meals. Households can also fill out an application and return it to the school. Applications are available at the principal's office at each school. The information provided on the application is confidential and will be used only for the purposes of determining eligibility and for administration and enforcement of the lunch and breakfast programs. Note that the district MAY share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them evaluate, fund, or determine benefits for their programs, auditors for program reviews, and law enforcement officials to help them look into violations of program rules. This information may also be verified at any time during the school year by school or other program officials. Applications may be submitted at any time during the year.

No application is required if the district directly certifies a child based on a household member receiving assistance from:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR); or
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), if the State program meets the Federal standards

An application is not required for free meal benefits for Assistance Program participants and all of the children in the household are eligible for free meal benefits. If any children were not listed on the notice of eligibility, the household should contact the school to have free meal benefits extended to them.

If a child is not directly certified, the household should complete a free and reduced price meal application. The application for the SNAP, FDPIR or TANF households require the name of the person in the household receiving the SNAP, FDPIR or TANF benefits and their case number. The signature of an adult household member is also required. Households receiving assistance under the SNAP/FDPIR/TANF programs will be notified of their eligibility and their children will be provided free benefits unless the household notifies the school that it chooses to decline benefits.

When known to the district/school, households will be notified of any child's eligibility for free meals if the individual child is Other Source Categorically Eligible because the child is categorized as either: Homeless; runaway as defined by law; or enrolled in an eligible Head Start, Even Start or pre-kindergarten class as defined by law. For any child not listed on the eligibility notice, the households should contact the district or school about any child also eligible under one of these programs or should submit an income application for other children.

If households/children receive benefits under Assistance Programs or other source programs are not notified by the district/school of their free meal benefits, the parent/guardian should contact their school. Households notified of their children's eligibility must contact the LEA or school if it chooses to decline the free meal benefits.

Application forms for all other households require a statement of total household income, household size and names of all household members. The last four digits of the social security number of an adult household member must be included or a statement that the household member does not have one. The adult household member must also sign the application certifying that the information provided is correct. Only one application, listing all family members, should be completed per household.

Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court, are eligible for free meals. A foster parent does not have to complete a free/reduced meal application if they can submit a copy of the legal document or legal court order showing that the child is a foster child. Additionally, a *foster child* is categorically eligible for free meals and may be included as a member of the foster family if the foster family chooses to also apply for benefits. If the foster family is not eligible for free or reduced price meal benefits, it does not prevent a foster child from receiving free meal benefits. Note however, that a foster child's free eligibility does not automatically extend to all students in the household.

Under the provisions of the policy for determining eligibility for free and reduced price meals, assistant principals will review applications and determine eligibility. If a parent is dissatisfied with the ruling of the determining official, he/she may wish to discuss the decision with the determining official on an informal basis. If he/she wishes to make a formal appeal, a written request may be made to Dr. Les Olson - Superintendent of Schools, 149 Franklin Street, Stoneham, MA 02180 for a hearing to appeal the decision.

If a household member becomes unemployed or if household size changes at any time, the family should contact the school to file a new application. Such changes may make the children of the household eligible for reduced price meals or free meals if the family income falls at or below the levels shown above.

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