

Unpaid Meal Charges Procedure

Procedure for Students with Insufficient Funds for School Meals and Delinquent Accounts in the School Nutrition Programs

Goals

1. Ensure students will receive good nutrition
2. Eliminate overt identification of students with insufficient funds to pay for meals
3. Maintain financial integrity of non-profit school food service account

Regulations

Source: 2 CFR Part 200 Section 143 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010

The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs (SNP) are integral in ensuring that students have access to nutritious meals to support their academic success. It is also imperative to protect the financial stability of School Nutrition Programs.

The intent of this procedure is to establish a process to handle situations when children eligible for reduced-price or full-price meal benefits have insufficient funds to pay for school meals. Additionally, the procedure establishes protocols for collecting unpaid meal charges and delinquent account debt of any student. The ultimate outcome is to provide a complete meal to the students of Charlottesville City Schools.

Requirement

All school food authorities (SFAs) must develop a written procedure for children eligible for reduced-price or full-price meals that do not have money to pay for meals at the time of service and communicate the procedure to all students and households by the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year.

1. Students who qualify for free meals will not be denied a reimbursable meal even if they have accrued a negative balance on their cafeteria account.
2. Students who have money to pay for a reduced-price or full price meal at the time of service must be provided a meal. If the student intended to use the money for that day's meal, the SFA will not use the money to repay a negative balance or other unpaid meal charge debt.
3. Students without funds to pay for a reduced-price or full price meal are allowed to charge breakfast and lunch.
4. Students are allowed to charge meals.
5. Students who charge a meal will receive a reimbursable meal.
6. No student will be permitted to charge extra items or a la carte foods/beverages.

The procedure must be communicated to all students and households by the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. SFAs must document methods of communicating the procedure to households and training of staff responsible for procedure enforcement.

Communicating the procedure

1. The written meal charge procedure will be communicated to the household by posting on the
2. CCS Nutrition website.

3. The written meal charge procedure will be communicated to all division staff prior to the first day of school.
4. Child Nutrition Program staff will receive training on meal charge procedure and record of training will be maintained as part of the professional development portfolio.
5. Documentation of the communication and training plan will be maintained for the Federal Program Administrative Review.

Notifying the Household of Low or Negative Balance in Student Cafeteria Account

1. The student's household will be notified when a student's cafeteria account falls below \$10.00.
2. The Nutrition office will notify households of negative balances via phone, US mail, email, or written notice sent home with the student.
3. Notifications to households will include:
 - the amount of unpaid meal charges,
 - expected payment dates, and
 - where to go for questions or assistance.
4. The persons responsible for managing unpaid meal charges are the Principal and SNP Central Office staff.
 - SNP school-based staff will collect payment for meals at the POS.
 - Individual schools will manage the distribution of negative balance notices at the school level weekly.
 - SNP central office staff will collect funds and attempt to contact parents after the initial weekly contacts by the school's principal. Where applicable, technology resources such as text alerts may be implemented to facilitate in reminding parents of negative balances.

Requirement

Collection of delinquent meal charge debt must also be included in the written meal charge procedure.

Bad debt is defined as delinquent debt that is deemed uncollectible at the end of the school year. Bad debt is disallowable in the SNP and can be carried over to the next school year. Funds resulting from bad debt cannot be recovered using SNP funds and must be offset by non-federal sources.

At the end of the school year, the SNP Director and the Finance Director will evaluate all delinquent debt for conversion to bad debt. All graduating seniors and students who have transferred out of the district who have negative balances will be considered bad debt. All remaining negative balances will be carried over to the following school year. Bad debt will be restored to the SNP from the general fund as approved by the school board prior to the end of the same fiscal year.

Assistance to Households

Households with questions or needing assistance may contact their student's school office or School Nutrition Programs at 434-245-2830.