



**APPLY EVERY SCHOOL YEAR**  
for  
**FREE or REDUCED**  
**Breakfast & Lunch Programs**



**Answers to Common Questions**

**What measures can I take to expedite my applications approval?**

- Use **Black** or **Blue** ink ONLY
- Print Clearly
- Use your student's name as it appears on their Birth Certificate
- Fill in the last 4 digits of the Social Security Number for the person signing application OR write "NONE"
- Make sure to sign your paper application
- Confirm all required information is completed accurately

**Who can get free or reduced priced meals?**

- Children may receive free or reduced priced meals if your household's gross income is within the limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines.
- All children in households receiving benefits from CalFresh, CalWORKS, or FDPIR are eligible for free meals.
- Children who meet the definition of homeless, migrant, or runaway are eligible for free meals. Please contact the school the child will be attending for more information.
- Foster children under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals. Fill out a separate application for foster children only.

**How do I know if my children qualify as homeless, migrant, or runaway?\***

- Do members of your household lack a permanent address?
- Are you staying together in a shelter, hotel, or other temporary housing arrangement?
- Does your family relocate on a seasonal basis? (**Migrant**)
- Are any children living with you who have chosen to leave their prior family or household?

**\*Please contact the school the child will be attending if you believe you qualify.**

**My child's application was approved last year; do I need to fill out a new one?**

Yes, all returning students need to re-apply every school year to confirm eligibility and avoid charges. Your child's application is only good for one (1) school year at a time and for the first 30 days of the following school year. Please note, on September 30 your child's eligibility will change to PAID if your application is not received.

**Do I need to complete an application for each child attending Covina-Valley USD?**

No. Complete ONE application per family and include ALL children attending Covina-Valley USD.

**If I have a student living at home that goes to another School District, private school, charter school or Pre-K school, should I include them on the application?**

Yes, but include them as Household Members not students.

**Notice of Direct Certification - Should I complete an application if I received a letter this school year saying my children are already approved for free meals?**

No, but please read the letter carefully, make sure that all of your children are listed on the letter and follow any instructions.

If you have received a Notice of Direct Certification for free meals, do not complete the application, but DO let the Nutrition Services office know if any children in your household are not listed on the Notice of Direct Certification letter you received.

Please email Nutrition Services at [acasillas@c-vusd.org](mailto:acasillas@c-vusd.org) or call (626) 974-7000 ext.800134 or ext.800132 immediately.

## **WIC - I receive Women, Infants and Children (WIC) benefits. Can my children receive free meals?**

Children in households participating in WIC MAY be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please complete a meal application and include your income information to confirm eligibility.

## **Household Members - Who should I include as members of my household?**

- Include yourself and all children living with you.
- Include all people living in your household, related or not (such as grandparents, other relatives or friends)

Please note the consideration for approval of an application is based on the income and the number of household members.

## **Income - What if my income is not always the same? Unemployment income?**

Earnings from work – Gross monthly income received this month before taxes. If this amount includes overtime include it only if you normally work overtime, but do not include it if you only occasionally work overtime. If you have lost your job or had your hours or wages reduced, use your current, most recent income.

**Unemployment income** – If you are receiving unemployment please include this amount within “All Other Income” section.

## **No Income - What if some household members have no income to report?**

All household members must be included on the application even if the individual does not receive income. Whenever this happens, please write a “0” in the income field. However, if any income fields are left empty or blank, the income will be counted as zero. Please be careful when leaving income fields blank, as we will assume you meant to do so.

## **Military - We are in the military. Do we report our income differently?**

- Your basic pay and cash bonuses must be reported as income.
- Cash value allowances for off-base housing, food, or clothing must also be included as income. However, if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income.
- Combat pay resulting from deployment is not counted as income.

## **May I apply if someone in my household is not a U.S. Citizen?**

Yes. You, your children, or other household members do not have to be U.S. citizens to apply/qualify for free or reduced price meals.

## **Where do I submit my application?**

- Online – Complete an application online at [www.c-vusd.org](http://www.c-vusd.org) and click on the Meal Application icon link.  
\*\* If you apply online, please record your confirmation number.
- By Mail - If you would like to apply by mail please email [acasillas@c-vusd.org](mailto:acasillas@c-vusd.org) or call (626) 974-7000 ext. 800133 to request an application be mailed to you. Please include your name, student's name, and home address.

If you need assistance completing a meal application, please email [acasillas@c-vusd.org](mailto:acasillas@c-vusd.org) to schedule an appointment.

## **What happens after I submit my application?**

Upon receipt, Nutrition Services:

- Checks application for completeness and then processes it to determine eligibility.
- Once the application is reviewed, you will receive a letter regarding your eligibility within 10 business days.

If application is incomplete:

- Nutrition Services will attempt to contact you via phone and mail to obtain missing information.

An application cannot be processed until it is complete, therefore if you receive a call or letter from Nutrition Services please respond immediately in order to process your application to confirm eligibility and avoid charges.

## **If I do not qualify now, may I apply later?**

- Yes, you can apply at any time during the school year. For example, children with a parent or guardian who becomes unemployed/income changes may be eligible for free and reduced price meals if the household income drops below the income limit. Please note you will need to provide proof of income.

## **Verification - Will the information I provide be checked?**

Yes. Nutrition Services may verify the information on the application at any time during the school year. You may be asked to send additional information to prove your income, or current eligibility for CalFresh, CAIWORkS, or FDPIR.