

Income Guidelines for Determining Eligibility for Free and Reduced-price Meals

in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) School Nutrition Programs

The income guidelines below are from the USDA’s annual adjustments to the Income Guidelines (7CFR Part 245.3(a)). They will be used in Connecticut from **July 1, 2016** to **June 30, 2017** for determining the eligibility of participants for free and reduced-price meals and milk in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs. These income guidelines must be used by all individuals who review applications, and should be distributed to all schools/sites for use by determining officials.

Before approving any free/reduced-price meal/milk applications, the determining official must:

- refer to and review the USDA *Eligibility Manual for School Meals* manual;
- review the 2016-17 Application for Free and Reduced-price School Meals or Free Milk, and accompanying instructions; and
- review the 2016-17 Parent/Guardian Letter to Households for Meals and Snacks and Parent/Guardian Letter to Households for Special Milk Program.

These documents are available on the Connecticut State Department of Education’s [Forms Web page](#).

FREE MEALS/MILK						REDUCED-PRICE MEALS					
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	\$15,444	\$1,287	\$644	\$594	\$297	1	\$21,978	\$1,832	\$916	\$846	\$423
2	20,826	1,736	868	801	401	2	29,637	2,470	1,235	1,140	570
3	26,208	2,184	1,092	1,008	504	3	37,296	3,108	1,554	1,435	718
4	31,590	2,633	1,317	1,215	608	4	44,955	3,747	1,874	1,730	865
5	36,972	3,081	1,541	1,422	711	5	52,614	4,385	2,193	2,024	1,012
6	42,354	3,530	1,765	1,629	815	6	60,273	5,023	2,512	2,319	1,160
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 Additional Family Member	+5,408	+451	+226	+208	+104	Each Additional Family Member	+7,696	+642	+321	+296	+148

* Income means income before deductions such as income taxes, Social Security taxes, insurance premiums, charitable contributions and bonds. It includes the following: 1) Monetary compensation for services, including wages, salary, commissions or fees; 2) net income from non-farm self-employment; 3) net income from farm self-employment; 4) Social Security; 5) dividends or interest on savings or bonds or income from estates or trusts; 6) net rental income; 7) public assistance or welfare payments; 8) unemployment compensation; 9) government civilian employee or military retirement, or pensions or veterans’ payments; 10) private pension or annuities; 11) alimony or child support payments; 12) regular contributions from persons not living in the household; 13) net royalties; and 14) other cash income. Other cash income would include cash amounts received or withdrawn from any source including savings, investments, trust accounts and other resources. “Income” as used here does not include any income or benefits received under any federal programs, which are excluded from consideration as income by any legislative prohibition, for example, the value of benefits received under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Income Guidelines, continued

If a household has only one source of income, or if all sources of income are the same frequency, do **not** use conversion factors. Compare the income or sum of the incomes to the chart above for the appropriate frequency and household size to make the eligibility determination. Many households have different sources of income coming into the home at different frequencies, such as weekly or bi-weekly wages and monthly social security benefits. In these situations, convert all sources of income to an annual amount using the calculations below.

- **Weekly:** Multiply by 52
- **Every two weeks:** Multiply by 26
- **Twice per month:** Multiply by 24
- **Monthly:** Multiply by 12

In applying the guidelines, the school food authority/institution **must** compare the household's size and total household income to the income guidelines to determine eligibility for free or reduced-price meals. Children of parents or guardians who become unemployed may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals or for free milk during the period of unemployment.

Nondiscrimination Statement: This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter 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:* (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) *email:* program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.