

# NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM



## 1) What is the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)?

The National School Lunch Program is a meal program under federal supervision that operates in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions.

## 2) How does the NSLP work?

This meal program is typically operated by public and nonprofit private schools. These school participants receive cash and USDA foods for every reimbursable meal that is served by the institution. In this process, the institutions participating in the NSLP need to meet the federal meal pattern requirements and must offer free or reduced priced lunches to those eligible.

## 3) Who administers the National School Lunch Program?

The Food and Nutrition service of the United States Department of Agriculture which is also known as the USDA, administers this program at a federal level. The NSLP is implemented by the Department of Education at state level.

## 4) How can children qualify for a free or reduced priced school lunch?

Children may be qualified for a free lunch depending on their status of being homeless, a foster child or from their household income. They can also be eligible through the participation in certain Federal Assistance Programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Families with incomes at or below the 130 percentiles of the federal poverty level can qualify for free meals, and families between the 130 to 185 percentiles of income are eligible for reduced price meals. Every institution participating in the NSLP must not charge children no more than 40 cents for a reduced priced meal.

## 5) What are the current reimbursement rates for participating institutions?

The current meal reimbursement for school food authorities depends on the children's free or reduced priced eligibility status. All in all, schools that participate in Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico are eligible for a higher reimbursement rate since the cost of food is higher in those regions.

## 6) How can I learn more about NSLP?

For more information about NSLP contact:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/school-meals-contacts>



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