

OPERATIONAL SERVICES

4:130 Free and Reduced-Price Food Services

Notice

The Executive Director or designee shall be responsible for implementing the Cooperative's free and reduced-price food services policy and all applicable programs.

If State funding is available for the Healthy School Meals for All Program, the Board will annually determine if it will participate in the program.

Eligibility Criteria and Selection of Children

A student's eligibility for free and reduced-price food services shall be determined by the income eligibility guidelines, family-size income standards, set annually by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and distributed by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Notification

At the beginning of each school year, by letter, the Cooperative shall notify students and their parents/guardians of: (1) eligibility requirements for free and reduced-price food service; (2) the application process; (3) the name and telephone number of a contact person for the program; and (4) other information required by federal law. The Executive Director or designee shall provide the same information to: (1) informational media, the local unemployment office, and any major area employers contemplating layoffs; and (2) the Cooperative's website (if applicable), all school newsletters, or students' registration materials. Parents/guardians enrolling a child in the Cooperative for the first time, any time during the school year, shall receive the eligibility information.

Nondiscrimination Assurance

The Cooperative shall avoid publicly identifying students receiving free or reduced-price meals and shall use methods for collecting meal payments that prevent identification of children receiving assistance.

Appeal

A family may appeal the Cooperative's decision to deny an application for free and reduced-price food services or to terminate such services as outlined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 7 C.F.R. §245.7, Determining Eligibility for Free and Reduced-Price Meals and Free Milk in Schools. The Executive Director shall establish a hearing procedure for adverse eligibility decisions and provide by mail a copy of them to the family. The Cooperative may also use these procedures to challenge a child's continued eligibility for free or reduced-price meals or milk.

During an appeal, students previously receiving food service benefits shall not have their benefits terminated. Students who were denied benefits shall not receive benefits during the appeal.

The Executive Director or designee shall keep on file for a period of three years a record of any appeals made and the hearing record. The Cooperative shall also maintain accurate and complete records showing the data and method used to determine the number of eligible students served free and reduced-price food services. These records shall be maintained for three years.

LEGAL REF.:

U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, National School Lunch Program, 7 C.F.R. Part 210.

U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Determining Eligibility for Free and Reduced-Price Meals and Free Milk in Schools, 7 C.F.R. Part 245.

105 ILCS 125/, School Breakfast and Lunch Program Act.

105 ILCS 126/, Childhood Hunger Relief Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §305.10 et seq.

Adopted: January 17, 2024

Proviso Area for Exceptional Children (P.A.E.C.)
