

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF NUTRITION ASSISTANCE
SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE SECTION

This is the public release that will be sent to Teche News and SMILE on 8/1/2011. These groups must be advised of program availability, new programs, or changes in existing programs.

St. Martin Parish Local School Food Authority today announced its policy for free and reduced price meals served under the National School Lunch and/or School Breakfast Program(s). All schools and the central office have a copy of the policy, which may be reviewed by any interested party.

Application forms are being sent to all homes, along with a letter to households. To apply for free or reduced price meals, households should fill out one application for the household and return it to the school. Additional copies are available at the principal's office in each school. Applications may be submitted at any time during the year. The information provided by the household is confidential; it will be used for the purpose of determining eligibility. Information may be verified at any time during the school year by school or other program officials.

For the school officials to determine eligibility, each household that is now receiving SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly the Food Stamp Program) or that is on the Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP) must provide its SNAP or FITAP case number as well as the signature of an adult household member. All other households must provide the following information on the application: names of all household members; the social security number of either the parent/guardian who is the primary wage earner, or the adult household member who signs the application, or a statement that the household member does not possess one; the amount of income (before deductions for taxes, Social Security, etc.) each household member receives; how often the person receives the income; where it is from, such as wages, retirement, or welfare; and the signature of an adult household member certifying that the information provided is correct.

If a household member becomes unemployed or if the household size increases, the household should contact the school. Such changes may make the children of the household eligible for meal benefits.

Foster children who are the legal responsibility of a welfare agency or court may be eligible for benefits. If a household has foster children and wishes to apply for such meals for them, the household should contact the school for more information.

Households that receive SNAP or FITAP benefits are not required to complete an application. School officials will determine eligibility for free meals based on documentation obtained directly from the SNAP/FITAP office, which will certify that a child is a member of a household currently receiving SNAP or an assistance unit receiving FITAP benefits. School officials will notify households of their eligibility. Households who are notified of their eligibility but do not want their children to receive free meals must contact the school. SNAP and FITAP households should complete an application if they are not notified of their eligibility by August 15, 2011.

Under the provisions of the free and reduced price policy, Clair Angelle Blanchard, Determining Official will review applications and determine eligibility. If a parent or guardian is dissatisfied with the ruling of the official, he may wish to discuss the decision with the determining official on an informal basis. If the parent wishes to make a formal appeal, he may make either an oral or written response to the following:

Name: Ron Leblanc, Director of Administration and Operations
Address: P.O. Box 1000; Breaux Bridge LA 70517
Phone Number: 337-332-2105

The policy contains an outline of the hearing procedures.

Non-discrimination Statement: This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly. "In accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (Voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

