



## National School Lunch Program 2011 - 2012

### Frequently Asked Questions

1. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD? No. Complete the application to apply for free or reduced price meals. *Use one Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application for all students in your household.* We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information. Return the completed application to:

Sandra Hasan, Food Service Coordinator  
Bear Creek Community Charter School  
2000 Bear Creek Boulevard  
Bear Creek Township, PA 18702  
Phone: (570) 820-4070  
E-mail: [sandra.hasan@bearcreekschool.com](mailto:sandra.hasan@bearcreekschool.com)

2. WHO SHOULD I INCLUDE AS MEMBERS OF MY HOUSEHOLD? You must include all those living in your household, related or not, who share income and expenses.
3. WHO CAN GET FREE MEALS? All children in households receiving benefits from Pennsylvania's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or Pennsylvania's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, can get free meals regardless of your income. Also, your children can get free meals if your household's gross income is within the free limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines.
4. CAN FOSTER CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS? Yes, foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court, are eligible for free meals. Any foster child in the household is eligible for free meals regardless of income and should be included on the household application. They are no longer considered a household of one.
5. SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LETTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN ARE APPROVED FOR FREE MEALS? Please read the letter you got carefully and follow the instructions. Call the school at (570) 820-4070 if you have questions.
6. MY CHILD'S APPLICATION WAS APPROVED LAST YEAR. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT ANOTHER ONE? Yes. Your child's application is only good for that school year and for the first 30 operating days of this school year. You must send in a new application by October 5, 2011 unless the school told you that your child has been directly certified for free meals for the new school year.
7. I GET WIC. CAN MY CHILD(REN) GET FREE MEALS? Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. Please fill out an application.
8. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED? Yes, and we may also ask you to send written proof.
9. IF I DON'T QUALIFY NOW, MAY I APPLY LATER? Yes, you may apply at any time during the school year. For example, children with a parent or guardian who becomes unemployed may become eligible for free and reduced price meals if the household income drops below the income limit.

10. WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE SCHOOL'S DECISION ABOUT MY APPLICATION? You should talk to school officials. You also may ask for a hearing by calling or writing to:

Jim Smith, Chief Executive Officer  
Bear Creek Community Charter School  
2000 Bear Creek Boulevard  
Bear Creek Township, PA 18702  
Phone: (570) 820-4070  
E-mail: jim.smith@bearcreekschool.com

11. MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOLD IS NOT A U.S. CITIZEN? Yes. You or your child(ren) do not have to be U.S. citizens to qualify for free or reduced price meals.
12. WHAT IF MY INCOME IS NOT ALWAYS THE SAME? List the amount that you normally receive. For example, if you normally make \$1000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only made \$900, put down that you made \$1000 per month. If you normally get overtime, include it, but do not include it if you only work overtime sometimes. If you have lost a job or had your hours or wages reduced, use your current income.
13. WE ARE IN THE MILITARY. DO WE INCLUDE OUR HOUSING ALLOWANCE AS INCOME? If you get an off-base housing allowance, it must be included as income. However, if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income.
14. MY SPOUSE IS DEPLOYED TO A COMBAT ZONE. IS HER COMBAT PAY COUNTED AS INCOME? No, if the combat pay is received in addition to her basic pay because of her deployment and it wasn't received before she was deployed, combat pay is not counted as income. Contact your school for more information.
15. MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP. ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAMS WE MIGHT APPLY FOR? To find out how to apply for other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call 1-800-692-7462.