

[Agency Letterhead]

[Date]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. [Name of Agency] offers healthy meals every day. Although all children receive meals at no charge, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides funds that support the nutrition program based on your child's eligibility. This letter is a request for you to complete the information on the enclosed application to assist our agency's food service program.

1. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD? No. Use one Meal Benefit Application for all children 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: [name, address, phone number].
2. ADDITIONAL USDA REIMBURSEMENT IS AVAILABLE TO OUR AGENCY FOR MEALS SERVED TO CHILDREN IN THE FOLLOWING HOUSEHOLDS:
 - getting money or help from the Food Supplement Program (FSP) or Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA).
 - with Foster children.
 - with a gross income within the free limits or reduced limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines.
 - with children certified as homeless, runaway, Head Start, Early Head Start, Even Start or migrant.
 - with some people participating in WIC.
3. I COMPLETED AN APPLICATION LAST YEAR. DO I NEED TO FILL OUT A NEW ONE? **Yes.** Your child's application is only good for one year. You must send in a new application each year.
4. WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED? **Yes** and we may also ask you to send written proof.
5. MAY I APPLY IF SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOLD IS NOT A U.S. CITIZEN? **Yes.** You or your children do not have to be U.S. citizens to qualify.
6. WHO SHOULD I INCLUDE AS MEMBERS OF MY HOUSEHOLD? You must include all people living in your household, related or not (such as grandparents, other relatives, foster children, or friends) who share income and expenses. You must include yourself and all children living with you. If you live with other people who are economically independent (for example, people who you do not support, who do not share income with you or your children, and who pay a pro-rated share of expenses), do not include them.
7. 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.
8. WE ARE IN THE MILITARY. DO WE REPORT OUR INCOME DIFFERENTLY? Your basic pay and cash bonuses must be reported as income. If you get any cash value allowances for off-base housing, food, or clothing, it must also be included as income. However, if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income. Any additional combat pay resulting from deployment is also excluded from income.
9. MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP. ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAMS WE MIGHT APPLY FOR? To find out how to apply for **FSP, TCA, and medical assistance programs** or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call 1-800-332-6347.

If you have other questions or need help, call [phone number].

Sincerely,
[signature]