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DATE: August 18, 2021
TO: WIC Coordinators
FROM: Nutrition and Clinic Services Unit
SUBJECT: Free and Reduced-Price School Meals Program and Adjunctive Eligibility

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has implemented waivers to increase funding and support access to school meals through the 2021-2022 school year, see [USDA Issues Pandemic Flexibilities for Schools and Day Care Facilities through June 2022 to Support Safe Reopening and Healthy, Nutritious Meals](#). That means all students at schools participating in the National School Lunch Program will receive free meals regardless of income. Local WIC Agencies are asking how that impacts the use of Free and Reduced-Price School Meals as an Adjunctive Eligibility option.

The Minnesota Department of Education has provided additional information about the Free and Reduced-Price School Meals program for the upcoming year. Although all children will receive school meals at no charge, families that might qualify for Free and Reduced-Price School Meals will be asked to complete the Application for Educational Benefits for the school year. The application helps determine a child's eligibility for other educational benefits. Additionally, school compensatory funding depends on families completing the application.

Families that qualify for the Free and Reduced-Price School Meals program (below 130% of Federal Poverty Guidelines) will receive a qualification letter. **The Free and Reduced-Price School Meals qualification letter will continue to be required for WIC Adjunctive Eligibility purposes.** It provides the required documentation that a member of the household is enrolled in a program with comparable income guidelines.

Reference – Complete Listing of Hyperlinks

[USDA Issues Pandemic Flexibilities for Schools and Day Care Facilities through June 2022 to Support Safe Reopening and Healthy, Nutritious Meals](https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2021/04/20/usda-issues-pandemic-flexibilities-schools-and-day-care-facilities) (<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2021/04/20/usda-issues-pandemic-flexibilities-schools-and-day-care-facilities>)

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