

Food Service Department

Parent Handbook



Monroe County School District

2024-2025

This handbook holds information federally required to be available to every household annually.

This handbook has been translated to Spanish & Creole.

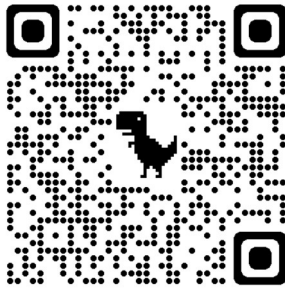
Useful info:

To access:

- **Free and Reduce application** go to the website:

<https://frapps.horizonsolana.com/MONC02>

or with your phone camera scan the QR code below:



The application is available in **MULTIPLE** languages.

- **Menu** go to the website:

<https://www.keysschools.com/Page/4509>

or with your phone camera scan the QR code below:



and choose Menu for the 2024-2025 School Year.

- **MyPamentsPlus** go to the website:

<https://mypaymentsplus.com/welcome>

or with your phone camera scan the QR code below:



Special Diets

To accommodate students with special diets due to medical needs, a Special Dietary Needs Form must be completed and signed by a licensed medical professional.



The form can be obtained from the nurse at your student's school, and they can assist with submitting it to the Food Service Department.

About us

Monroe County School Food Service Department offers students the opportunity to select nutritious meals every day for breakfast and lunch.

Our lunch program offers a variety of hot and cold entrees, along with fresh fruits and veggies. Lunch includes an entrée of lean protein, and whole grains, two servings of fruit, two servings of vegetables, 100 % juice, and 1% white or chocolate milk.

Our breakfast program includes entrees with whole grains and/or lean protein, fruit, 100% juice, and skim white or chocolate milk.

The USDA requires school districts to meet the following requirements:

- Calories from total fat will not exceed 30%
- Calories from saturated fat will not exceed 10%
- Items will not contain trans fat
- Offer a variety of vegetables and fruits
- Offer a variety of low-fat and fat-free milk
- 51% of all grains offered are whole grain rich
- Implement sodium reductions

School Meal Prices

Full Price		
Grade	Breakfast	Lunch
PK - 5	\$2.00	\$2.75
6 - 12	\$2.00	\$3.10
Reduced Price		
PK – 12	\$0.30	\$0.40

Second meals for students and adult meals are \$2.50 for breakfast and \$4.00 for lunch.

Applying for Meal Benefits (Free or Reduced Price Meals)

One application per family is required ANNUALLY.

(A family application MUST include all students in the Household)

If you have qualified for SNAP, TANF or MEDICAID an application MAY NOT be necessary. If you are unsure, please check with the Student Eligibility Coordinator 305-293-1400 ext. 53356.

To see if you qualify for meal benefits, fill out the online application found on our website:

<https://frapps.horizonsolana.com/MONC02>

To access the application on your smartphone, with your phone's camera scan the QR code, which can be found on the first page of this bulletin.

Your Child's Breakfast & Lunch

For breakfast and lunch, students have the opportunity to create a meal from a variety of food groups. The food groups include:

For Breakfast:



For Lunch:



For breakfast, students may select a minimum of three or all four of the above food groups to complete their meal. At least one of the selections must be from the fruit group.

For lunch, students may select a minimum of three or up to all five of the above food groups to complete their meal. At least one of the selections must be from the fruit or vegetable group.



Household Letter

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Children need healthy meals to learn. **Monroe County School District** offers healthy meals every school day. Breakfast Grades PK-5 costs **\$2.00**; lunch costs **\$2.75**. Breakfast Grades 6-12 costs **\$2.00**; lunch costs **\$3.10**. Your children may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals. Reduced price is **\$.30** for breakfast and **\$.40** for lunch. Below are some common questions and answers to aid in the process of determining your child's eligibility.

1. **DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR EACH CHILD?** No. 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 and include all students regardless of what school they attend.
2. **CAN I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION ONLINE?** Yes! Applying online is quick, confidential, and easy! Paper applications will **NOT** be sent to households. You are encouraged to complete an online application. To apply online, visit, <https://frapps.horizonsolana.com/MONC02> or scan the QR code with your smart phone provided at the beginning of this booklet and click "Begin Application." Contact **Student Eligibility Coordinator at 305-293-1400 ext. 53356** if you have any questions about the online application process.
3. **WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A COMPUTER TO COMPLETE AN ONLINE APPLICATION?** The application can be completed easily with a smart phone. Computers are available for use at no cost at the local public library. Your child's school or cafeteria may also have a computer that can be used to complete an application.
4. **WHO CAN GET FREE MEALS?** All children in households receiving benefits from **FL SNAP**, the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (**FDPIR**) or **FL TANF**, 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.



If you have received a NOTICE OF DIRECT CERTIFICATION for free meals, **do NOT** complete an application. Contact the **Student Eligibility Coordinator at 305-293-1400 ext. 53356** if any children in your household are not listed on the **Notice of Direct Certification** letter you received.

5. **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. The school must have copies of the agency/court documents.
6. **CAN HOMELESS, RUNAWAY AND HEAD START CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS?** Yes, children who meet the definition of homeless or runaway are eligible for free meals. If you believe children in your household meet these descriptions and have not been told your children will get free meals, please contact the school front office to complete an SRQ form.
7. **WHO CAN GET REDUCED PRICE MEALS?** Your children can get reduced price meals if your gross household income is within the reduced price limits on the Federal Eligibility Income Chart.
8. **SHOULD I FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF I RECEIVED A LETTER THIS SCHOOL YEAR SAYING MY CHILDREN ARE APPROVED FOR FREE MEALS?** No, but contact the **Student Eligibility Coordinator at 305-293-1400 ext. 53356** if:
 - There are students in the household that are not listed in the letter
 - You have questions about the letter
9. **MY CHILD'S APPLICATION WAS APPROVED LAST YEAR, DO I NEED TO FILL OUT ANOTHER ONE?** Yes. An application must be completed every school year and include all students regardless of what school they attend.

10. **I RECEIVE WIC. CAN MY CHILDREN GET FREE MEALS?** Children in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced price meals. You must submit an application to verify eligibility.
11. **WILL THE INFORMATION I GIVE BE CHECKED?** Yes, further verification may be required.
12. **IF I DON'T QUALIFY NOW, MAY I APPLY LATER?** Yes, you may apply at any time during the school year if there is a change in your household income, size, or if you become unemployed. Please contact the **Student Eligibility Coordinator at 305-293-1400 ext. 53356** for assistance.
13. **WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH THE DECISION ABOUT MY APPLICATION?** Contact the Food Services Department at **305-293-1400 ext. 53356**. You may also ask for a hearing by writing to: Executive **Director of Operations and Planning, 241 Trumbo Road, Key West, FL 33040**.
14. **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 for free or reduced price meals. The Monroe County School District Food Service Department will not release any information for immigration related purposes*
15. **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, 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.
16. **WHAT IF MY INCOME IS NOT ALWAYS THE SAME?** List the amount you normally receive. If you receive overtime most pay periods, include it, but do not include it if you only receive overtime occasionally or seasonally. If you have lost a job, or had your hours or wages reduced, use your current income.
17. **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.
18. **MY SPOUSE IS DEPLOYED TO A COMBAT ZONE. IS THEIR COMBAT PAY COUNTED AS INCOME?** No, if the combat pay is received in addition to their basic pay because of their deployment and it was not received before they were deployed, combat pay is not counted as income.
19. **MY FAMILY NEEDS MORE HELP; ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAMS WE MIGHT APPLY FOR?** To find out how to apply for Florida SNAP or other assistance benefits, contact your local assistance office or call 866-762-2237.
20. **IF I QUALIFY FOR FREE/REDUCED MEALS, ARE THERE OTHER SCHOOL PROGRAMS THAT MAY USE THIS INFORMATION TO RECEIVE OTHER BENEFITS?** Because your information is confidential, you must give us permission to share your information with other departments to obtain benefits beyond free/reduced lunch.

If you have other questions or need help, please call 305-293-1400 ext. 53356

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the agency (state or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (833) 620-1071, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to: mail: Food and Nutrition Service, USDA 1320 Braddock Place, Room 334 Alexandria, VA 22314; or fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or email: FNCSIVILRIGHTSCOMPLAINTS@usda.gov
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Unpaid Meal Policy

Purpose

School food service programs are designed and federally funded to operate on a self-supporting cash basis and intended to provide nutritious meals to students. It is recognized, however, that students may periodically forget or lose lunch money.

This procedure outlines how students without funds will still receive meals. All matters related to students without lunch money are to be handled discreetly to respect the privacy of the student. Once a meal is served to a student, it is not to be taken away.

Procedure

All students will be allowed to charge breakfast and/or lunch reimbursable meals, with the exception of a la carte items, when they forget/lose lunch money. The repayment for the meal will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian. *Students approved for free meals cannot be denied a meal, even if they have a negative balance on other accounts.* Food Service will provide a weekly negative balance report by student to the school principal/designee listing outstanding balances of all student meal charges for their school. Food Service managers will provide school administration sealed negative balance letters weekly for student distribution which will include the policy reminder, information on where/how to fill out free/reduced meal application, Free/Reduced Specialist phone number and email, and other methods to pay the debt. School administration will send Robo-calls to advise the parent/guardian that their student has a negative lunch balance due, repayment being the parent/guardian responsibility. Food Service will provide monthly charge totals to Principals. *Delinquent accounts will be addressed with parent/guardian and not with the student in order to prevent overt identification of student's eligibility for free, reduced priced, or paid meals.* Parent/guardian will be encouraged to use the meal pre-payment system, MyPaymentsPlus at <https://www2.mypaymentsplus.com/welcome>. School administration will be responsible for the collection of all outstanding student meal charges on a yearly basis. Any and all unpaid student meal charges will be reimbursed by the school's general fund to the non-profit school food service account at the end of each fiscal year in which the student meal charges occur to make the food service program whole. Food service managers will then apply funds to the delinquent accounts.

Donations to assist families with student unpaid meal charges may be made at your school's cafeteria or by calling Denise Pollack at (305) 293-1400 ext. 53361

When a student has charged meals more than five days or repeatedly has no lunch money, it indicates the need for principal/designee intervention in contacting the family to determine why the student is coming to school without a packed meal or consistently does not have the money to purchase a meal. The family is encouraged to submit an online Free and Reduced meal application. Families can receive assistance from the **Student Eligibility Coordinator, 305-293-1400 ext. 53356** in filling out an online meal benefit application at <https://frapps.horizonsolana.com/MONC02>. Weekly phone calls by food service will be made to remind parent/guardian of delinquent account, their responsibility for repayment, how to apply for free/reduced meals, and/or provide a repayment plan. Families are advised they may fill out an application at any time during the school year, especially if there is a decline in income or an increase in household size.

Unpaid meal charge procedures will be communicated to families in this guidebook and as part of the negative balance letter sent home. It will also be available on the food service website. All food service staff will receive a copy of the procedure and training yearly or as needed. Administration will receive a yearly email with a copy of this policy.



Paying for school meals online helps speed up cafeteria lines and ensures your student will get a hot, healthy meal.

Even if you do not make payments online, all parents are encouraged to create a MyPaymentsPlus account in order to:

- View student cafeteria balances anytime from anywhere
- See what your student is purchasing in the cafeteria
- Set up alerts so you know when the balance is low
- Make payments to your student's cafeteria account, online or with the MyPaymentsPlus Mobile app

Signing up is FREE and Easy:

- Visit www.mypaymentsplus.com
- Click "Register a free account"
- Add your students using their Student ID Number – ten digit number which starts with 44000XXXXX. You may obtain it from your child's school front office or the cafeteria manager. Please do not use the 5-digit PIN number.

*Please note that there are two options when adding money to your child's account. If you choose **MEAL**- your child will be able to use the money for meals only. If you choose **GENERAL** – the money can be used for both meals and a la carte (snacks).*

For assistance with your MyPaymentsPlus account

call the Parent Hotline at 1 (877)-237-0946

For account refunds please contact Denise Pollack (305) 293-1400 ext. 53361



Your Food Service Team is here to serve you!

Food Service Director: Effie.Jackson@keysschools.com

Food Service Staff Accountant: Denise.Pollack@keysschools.com

Food Service Specialist: Susan.Lawson@keysschools.com

Food Service Office Manager: Lucia.CuCulino@keysschools.com

Please feel free to contact us via e-mail:

FoodService@keysschools.com

