

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The school meals program is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, school corporations across the country have been operating with the use of a federal waiver that allowed them to feed every child for free through the end of this school year. The use of this waiver will not be available after this school year and corporations will return to the traditional eligibility requirements for free, reduced and paid meals. This means that for School Year 2022-2023, our school corporation will process free and reduced-price meal benefit applications.

The Food Services Department does have the ability to Directly Certify students who receive SNAP, TANF, some Medicaid, are certified as homeless, migrant, or are wards of the state (foster children). Households who are found to be directly certified will be notified in writing of the free or reduced-price meal status prior to the start of school and will not need to complete an application.

Meal benefit applications will not be available until July 1\*. Households are encouraged to apply before the start of the school year to avoid unpaid meal charges. Students who are not approved for free or reduced-price meal benefits before the start of the school year will be classified as paid status and meal charges may begin to accumulate starting the first day of school. Meal charges accrued before the approval of a meal benefit application will be the responsibility of the household.

**You do NOT need to complete an application if:**

- You receive notification that your child(ren) are directly certified.
- You know your household does not qualify for meal benefits. (Please have money in your child's account on the first day of school.)

\*Applications received prior to July 1 will not be effective for the 2022-2023 school year.

Remember that the 22-23 SY applications will not be available until after July 1st. Meal pricing for this year will also not be available until after July 1st.

If you have any questions please contact, [hcenter@benton.k12.in.us](mailto:hcenter@benton.k12.in.us)

Thank you,  
Helen Center  
Food Service Director  
Benton Community School Corporation

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), disability, age, 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 responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or 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/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, 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 USDA by:

1. mail:  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax:  
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)