

Hawkins County Schools Meal Charge Administrative Procedure

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

As provided in SP 46-2016, all school food authorities (SFAs) operating the federal school meal programs (National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program) must have a written and clearly communicated meal charge administrative procedure in place no later than July 1, 2017. All SFAs must have an administrative procedure in place for children participating at the reduced price or paid meal rate who either do not have money in their account or in hand to cover the cost of the meal at the time of service. SFAs are required to communicate that administrative procedure to families and school and/or district-level staff members as appropriate. SFAs should ensure the administrative procedure is communicated on an annual basis.

Families will have access to the meal charge administrative procedure via a written copy of the district-wide charge administrative procedure which will be included in student handbooks or in packets that are given to each student at the start of each school year. Families of transfer students (during the year) will receive a written copy of the district-wide charge administrative procedure which will be included in the student handbook, and/or a hard copy will be given to each student entering the district during the school year.

Local Charge Administrative Procedure Considerations

General

Students who are unable to pay for their meals at the time of the meal service are allowed to charge:

- Breakfast
- Lunch

Students charging breakfast and/or lunch will receive reimbursable meals. Only reimbursable meals should be charged. A la carte items (additional food, snack food, or beverages) should not be charged.

Charge limits

The number of charges allowed for all students is the dollar equivalent of four (4) lunch meals. Once the student reaches the allowable four (4) meals, their account becomes delinquent and the parent/guardian will be notified. The school cafeteria manager may choose to send notes home with students, utilize the auto call system, or make personal calls.

Household Notification

Low balance notification: The cafeteria manager will notify households monthly of low balances below \$5.00 by an automated call or by sending printed notifications home with students. Balance information is also available online in Skyward Parent Portal and online at www.myschoolbucks.com.

Negative balance notification: The school cafeteria manager will notify households at least weekly of negative balances by an automated call or by sending printed notifications home with students. Balance information is also available online in Skyward Parent Portal and online at www.myschoolbucks.com.

Delinquent Debt

Delinquent debt is defined as overdue unpaid meal charges that are considered collectable, with efforts being made to collect them. The debt may remain on the accounting documents until it is either collected or determined to be uncollectable. The debt may be carried over at the end of the school year (beyond June 30), provided the household requests a repayment plan.

The household's debt will be delinquent for fifteen (15) days before the SFA requests payment. If the delinquent debt is not paid within fifteen (15) days of the formal request for payment, the school

cafeteria manager, Child Nutrition Office, or school principal will contact the household for debt collection. The school principal may, at their discretion, withhold student grades and/or participation in specified student activities until the delinquent debt is paid, a repayment plan is requested, or good faith effort is made by the household to satisfy the debt.

Repayment plans

Each household may request a repayment plan that will include payment levels and due dates appropriate to a household's particular circumstances. Please contact the Child Nutrition Office at 423-272-2128 for establishing a repayment plan.

Bad Debt

Bad debt is determined to be uncollectable, with further collection efforts for delinquent debt deemed useless or too costly. Delinquent debt will be considered as bad debt after June 30 of each year.

- Bad debts (debts which have been determined to be uncollectable), including losses (whether actual or estimated) arising from uncollectable accounts and other claims, are unallowable. Related collection costs, and related legal costs, arising from such debts after they have been determined to be uncollectable are also unallowable (section 200.426 of subpart E).
- Bad debt must be written off as an operating loss as of June 30 of each year; the nonprofit school food service account (NSFSA) resources may not be used to cover the costs related to the bad debt. The funds to restore bad debt to the Child Nutrition Department will be taken from the district's general fund.
- Once delinquent meal charges are converted to bad debt, records relating to those charges must be maintained in accordance with record retention requirements in 7 CFR 210.9(b)(17) and 7 CFR 210.15(b).

Additional Resources

Families may find assistance with applying for free or reduced price schools meals by contacting their child's school office, the Hawkins County Schools Child Nutrition Office at 423-272-2128, or online at www.hck12.net.

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), 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. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at:

http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter 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;
- 2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- 3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

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