

IMPORTANT INFORMATION
2017-18 FREE & REDUCED SCHOOL MEALS APPLICATION

The Free and Reduced School Meals Application is updated each year by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. This updated application dated 2017-18 is the **ONLY** application that can be used for this upcoming school year.

These applications may be obtained at:

- The School Nutrition Office after August 21, 2017
- Contacting Christine Turner at 774-315-5642 after August 21st to receive one by email.
- The School Nutrition Webpage at <http://www.walpole.k12.ma.us>. (under Departments/School Nutrition)
- Your child's School Office (applications will be sent home with each student the first week of school).

Applications will be mailed to parents of current Free & Reduced students, as a reminder to re-apply for the 2017-18 school year before the expiration date.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT YOU MUST RE-APPLY FOR FREE & REDUCED BENEFITS EACH YEAR

Failure to re-apply before the expiration date will result in losing your current benefit and your child will be required to have funds available in their meal account in order to purchase meals, until such time as a new application is submitted and approved.

Any parent or guardian may apply at any time during the school year. **Send or drop off completed applications to the School Nutrition Office only, where it will be confidentially processed.** Once processed, you will receive a letter informing you whether or not you are eligible to receive Free or Reduced Meal benefits. If approved, these benefits will be effective the date of approval and are **NOT retroactive**.

- All students, including Free or Reduced students will use a PIN CARD to ensure confidentiality.
- Free or Reduced students **must take a full meal** to be eligible for this benefit. Selecting ala carte items such as, milk only, water or a 2nd meal is not covered under this benefit. Student will need to pay full price for these items and must have funds available in their accounts to purchase such items.

If you currently receive SNAP benefits (formerly called Food Stamps), your child is automatically eligible to receive FREE school meals. However, you still need to complete and sign an application listing the Agency ID# which appears on your benefits letter or EBT card and send the application to the School Nutrition Office. (See Page 2 for important SNAP information).

APPLICATIONS IN OTHER LANGUAGES: A translated application, in 34 different languages, is available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/family-friendly-application-translations>

For questions or concerns regarding the 2017-18 Free & Reduced Meals Application or for help in completing it, you may call Christine Turner at 774-315-5642 after August 21, 2017 or email cturner@walpole.k12.ma.us anytime. Visit our webpage at <http://www.walpoleschoolnutrition.com> to obtain other printable forms, parent information and menus.

HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING SNAP (FOOD STAMPS) BENEFITS:

If you receive SNAP (Food Stamps) Benefits, children in your household are automatically eligible for FREE school meals, however, you still need to complete a 2017-18 Free or Reduced School Meals Application for the upcoming school year.

You must enter your **Agency ID # in Part 2** of the application (see below).

You will also need to complete Part 1 and Part 5 of the application, as well. You can skip Part 4 pertaining to income information.

This Agency ID# is a 7-9 digit number that appears on your SNAP Benefits Letter. It also appears on some (not all) EBT Debit cards in the right hand corner. It IS NOT the long number starting with a 6000....

If you do not have or cannot find your SNAP Benefits letter or the ID# does not appear on your EBT card, you can find it here:

How To Find Your SNAP Benefits Agency ID#

Go to this link: <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/consumer/basic-needs/vg/map/>

If you have a Virtual Gateway account already, click on the **Login to the Virtual Gateway** on the right side of your screen or go here: <https://gateway.hhs.state.ma.us/authn/login.do>

If you don't have a Virtual Gateway account, click on Create a **Virtual a Gateway Account** on the right side of your screen or go here: <https://gateway.hhs.state.ma.us/authn/selfReg.do>

After you login or create an account and then login, you should be able to **View your Health Assistance Benefit Information** including your SNAP Benefits Letter which contains the Agency ID#.

If you need help with this process you can click the **Contact Us** link at the bottom of any of these pages.

**PLEASE REMEMBER THAT YOU NEED TO RE-APPLY FOR
FREE OR REDUCED MEALS EACH NEW SCHOOL YEAR.**

If your child(ren) received Free or Reduced Benefits last year, that eligibility **will expire 30 school days after the start of the new school year.**

If you do not receive a letter stating that your child(ren) will receive FREE meals this school year (2017-18) based on Direct Certification, you will need to submit an application to continue benefits from last school year, if you think you qualify.

Thank you,

Christine Turner
Walpole School Nutrition
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