

Cosmopolis School District Meal Charge and Food Service Policy

The Cosmopolis School District meal charge policy seeks to establish consistent meal charging and collection procedures. The Cosmopolis School District will annually review the Meal Charge Policy and provide the policy to households and staff on an annual basis through our online registration process and annual staff training.

Every effort will be made to qualify eligible families for free or reduced-price meals. The District will conduct direct certification at least monthly throughout the school year. The process of direct certification is used to certify categorically eligible children that are members of households receiving Basic Food, TANF, FDIPR or are eligible via foster care, homeless, migrant, head start, and even head start. The Free and Reduced-Price Meal application is part of our annual registration/update for families. Please complete the application online as required or opt out of the application.

Communication from our school district about amounts owed for meals previously served to students will only be directed to the student's parent or guardian. Communication may be sent home with your student, or it may be sent by email or mail to the student's parent or guardian.

Students are allowed to charge meals if they do not have money on their account. A negative balance notice will be sent home with your student daily until the balance is again positive. You can set up the Skyward system to alert you by email when the balance falls below \$5.00. Meals that are charged will be added to the negative balance of the account.

As required by the Hunger-Free Students' Bill or Rights, students with a negative balance will not be offered an alternative meal. All students will be offered the same meal regardless of a negative balance.

When an account has a negative balance of more than \$20.00, a letter will be sent home and/or phone call or email will be made in addition the negative balance notices sent home daily. If an account has a negative balance of \$50.00 or more, the account will be referred to the business office for collection. The business office will work with the families on a payment schedule to get the balance paid off while also allowing students to purchase meals. Emails and phone calls may be made on a regular basis to remind you of the negative balance.

If the negative balance is not paid in a timely manner, the district may turn the debt over to a collection agency.

Employees of the Cosmopolis School District are **not** allowed to charge a meal. Staff must have funds available on their account. Visiting students and/or parent or guardian are **not** allowed to charge a meal. Any visiting student or parent/guardian must pay at the time of purchase.

Important Information about Meal Benefits:

How can I qualify for Free or Reduced-Priced Meals?

Applications are part of the online registration system through Skyward as well as paper copies at the school building. Students can qualify via direct certification by being members of a household receiving Basic Food, TANF, FDIPR or are eligible via foster care, homeless, migrant, head start and even head start.

Applications/Eligibility from the prior year are only valid for the first 30 school days. If a new application is not received by the 31st day, or the student is not directly certified, students will be charged at the full price for lunch and breakfast until a new application is approved. **Households are responsible for charges made.**

Reimbursable Meals

Students must take all of the required components of a meal for it to be considered reimbursable and qualify under the USDA Free and Reduced Meal Program. *If any of the required components are declined, the meal is considered non-reimbursable and will be charged accordingly.* Students charge their meal through a point of sale system after they receive their meal.

Milk

If a student qualifies for Free or Reduced meals and only chooses milk, the milk is not considered reimbursable and will be charged at the current rate of 35 cents per milk. Students may purchase additional milk as long as they have money in their food service account.

Field Trips/Sack Lunches

Any students wishing to receive a reimbursable meal for a field trip or special occasion, must inform their teacher a week before the event. Field trip meals will be sack lunches and consist of all of the required components of the USDA School Meals Program.

Food Service Payments

Funds can be added to a student meal account by sending cash or check to the school or by using a credit or debit card online through Skyward Family Access.

Special Dietary Accommodations

If your student is participating in our meal programs and would like to request special dietary accommodations, please fill out the "A Request for Special Dietary Accommodations" form (see

below). If you have submitted a special dietary accommodation request in the past, please contact Food Services if there have been any changes.

A request for Special Dietary Accommodations form must be completed in its **entirety and signed by your student's physician** (or a licensed health care professional authorized to write medical prescriptions in Washington State). Please download the form by clicking on the link below. The completed form must be turned in and reviewed by the family, school nurse, and Food Service Director before Food Services can make adjustments to the published menu to meet a special dietary need. Please return the form to your students' school.

[Request for Special Dietary Accommodations Form](#)

Non Discrimination Statement:

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 \(link is external\)](#), 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: [USDA Program Intake\(link is external\)](#)

This institution is an equal-opportunity provider.