

School-Based Child Nutrition Programs Rates of Reimbursement

Effective July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027

National School Lunch Program

	Less Than 60%	Less Than 60% + 9 Cents**	60% or More*	60% or More* + 9 Cents**
Paid	\$0.45	\$0.54	\$0.47	\$0.56
Reduced-Price	\$4.36	\$4.45	\$4.38	\$4.47
Free	\$4.76	\$4.85	\$4.78	\$4.87

The maximum price a sponsor can charge for a student reduced-price lunch is \$0.40.

* The higher rate of reimbursement for lunch (60% or more) applies if 60% or more of the lunches served by an SFA during the second preceding school year were served free or at a reduced price.

** Additional 9 cents requires a one-time [menu certification](#)

School Breakfast Program

	Non-Severe Need	Severe Need*
Paid	\$0.42	\$0.42
Reduced-Price	\$2.24	\$2.75
Free	\$2.54	\$3.05

The maximum price a sponsor can charge for a student reduced-price breakfast is \$0.30.

* The higher rate of reimbursement for breakfast (Severe-Need) applies if 40% or more of the lunches served at the site in the second preceding school year were served free or at a reduced price.

Special Milk Program

	All Milk	Paid Milk	Free Milk
Pricing Program Without Free Option and Nonpricing Programs	\$0.28		
Pricing Program With Free Option		\$0.28	Average cost per ½ pint milk

After-School Snacks in After-School Care Programs

	Snack
Paid	\$0.12
Reduced-Price	\$0.65
Free	\$1.30

The maximum price a sponsor can charge for a student reduced-price after-school snack is \$0.15.

Food Distribution Program

Planned Assistance Level (PAL) for NSLP = \$0.47 (per lunch rate of \$0.32 PLUS the 12% provision dollars and the \$20M breakfast dollars for NSLP)

Illinois Free Breakfast and Lunch Programs

\$0.11 per each free breakfast and/or lunch

A la Carte Equivalency Factor – for use in FSMC/Vendor contracts

Federal free lunch reimbursement (more than 60% + 9 cents) plus PAL plus Illinois free lunch reimbursement

SY2026-2027 Contract - \$5.20

SY2027-2028 Contract - \$5.45

Message details



SY26-27 PAL Factor Increased - Order More Now!

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The final PAL factor for school year 2026-27 was released by USDA and is \$0.47, which is a 2-cent increase from the estimated PAL factor of \$0.45 used during the Annual Order Period.

As a result, beginning PAL balances in ICS have been updated and have increased for all school districts. Please spend your additional funds now! Spending options include:

- USDA Foods (select items only – see list below)
- DOD Fresh – email Paula Williams at pawillia@isbe.net to have funds added

You may increase your USDA Foods requests on your own, in ICS, on the 2027 Annual Order Form, following Step 6 of the [ICS Instructions](#). At this point in the year, **only increase requests for USDA Foods that are included on the list below. Other items, even though they appear on the Annual Order Form, can no longer be ordered with USDA.**

The PAL Factor is used in the calculation of each school district's Food Distribution Program planned assistance level (PAL). The PAL factor is multiplied by the lunch meal counts from the prior school year.

As an example:

$\$0.47 \text{ PAL Factor} \times 50,000 \text{ SY24-25 NSLP} + \text{SSO lunch meal counts} = \$23,500$
Beginning PAL Balance

Please send questions to fdp@isbe.net or call 217-782-2491.

USDA Foods Available:

Code	USDA Foods Name
110361	APPLESAUCE CUPS, UNSWT, 96/4.5 OZ
110541	APPLESAUCE, CND, UNSWT
100359	BEANS, BLACK (TURTLE), LOW-SODIUM, CND
100364	BEANS, VEGETARIAN, LOW-SODIUM, CND

100134	BEEF CRUMBLES, COOKED W/SPP
110322	BEEF PATTY W/SPP COOKED HMSTYLE 2.2oz
100158	BEEF, FINE GROUND RAW FRZ
100034	CHEESE, MOZZ LT SHRED FRZ
110462	CHICKEN STRIPS, COOKED UNSEASONED
100101	CHICKEN, DICED, COOKED, FRZ
111881	CHICKEN, PULLED, COOKED
111751	EGG PATTY
100046	EGGS, WHOLE, FROZEN
100187	HAM, COOKED, SLICED, FRZ.
100439	OIL, VEGETABLE
110393	PANCAKES, WHOLE GRAIN FRZ
100396	PEANUT BUTTER, SMOOTH
110730	PORK, UNSEASONED PULLED COOKED FRZ
100935	SUNFLOWER SEED BUTTER
110187	TOMATO SAUCE POUCH, LOW SODIUM
111900	TURKEY BREAST SLC
100119	TURKEY TACO FILLING