



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

Determining Meal Prices for Adults

Calculations required for SY 2026-20267 if school board approved on or after July 17, 2026.

Click [here](#) for adult meal price calculations for rates approved prior to July 17, 2026.

Background: Breakfast and lunch served to adults under the School Nutrition Programs must be priced so that the adult payment is sufficient to cover the overall cost of the meal, including the value of any USDA entitlement and bonus donated foods used to prepare the meal. Since the nonprofit food service account cannot pay for or subsidize adult meals, School Food Authorities (SFAs) must appropriately set adult meal prices. See [7 CFR 210.14\(f\)](#) and [FNS Instruction 782-5 Rev. 1](#)

PY 2027 Adult Lunch Meal Calculation for Pricing SFAs

Include the highest price a student pays, plus the federal reimbursement for a paid meal, including the 9 cents menu certification rate, plus the federal cash-in-lieu of commodities rate. If the SFA receives the 2 cents severe need lunch rate, include this amount.

Highest paid student lunch price	\$
Add federal reimbursement rate for paid lunch	\$ 0.45 (2026-2027)
Add 9 cents menu certification rate	\$ 0.09
Add per meal value of USDA donated foods (if applicable)	\$ 0.45 (2025-2026)
Add 2 cents severe need lunch rate (if applicable)	\$ 0.02
Minimum Adult Lunch Price	\$

PY 2027 Adult Lunch Meal Calculation for Non-Pricing SFAs

For non-pricing sites (those operating the Community Eligibility Provision), the minimum adult lunch price should be at least the rate received for a free student's meal, which includes the federal reimbursement rate for a free meal and the 9 cents menu certification rate plus the federal cash-in-lieu of commodities rate. If the SFA receives the 2 cents severe need lunch rate, include this amount.

Federal reimbursement rate for free lunch	\$4.76 (2026-2027)
Add 9 cents menu certification rate	\$ 0.09
Add per meal value of USDA donated foods (if applicable)	\$ 0.45 (2025-2026)
Add 2 cents severe need lunch rate (if applicable)	\$ 0.02
Minimum Adult Lunch Price	\$5.32*

*Remember to subtract the value of USDA donated foods or 2 cents severe need lunch rate if not applicable.

PY 2027 Adult Breakfast Meal Calculation for Pricing SFAs

Include the highest price a student pays, plus the federal reimbursement for a paid meal. *USDA Food value is not included in the breakfast meal price.*

Highest paid student breakfast price	\$
Add federal reimbursement rate for paid breakfast	\$0.42 (2026-2027)
Minimum Adult Breakfast Price	\$

PY 2027 Adult Breakfast Meal Calculation for Non-Pricing SFAs

For non-pricing sites (those operating the Community Eligibility Provision), the minimum adult breakfast price should be the federal reimbursement rate for a free meal and the severe need breakfast rate (if applicable). *USDA Food value is not included in the breakfast meal price.*

Federal reimbursement rate for a free breakfast	\$2.54 (2026-2027)
Add severe need reimbursement rate (if applicable)	\$0.51
Minimum Adult Breakfast Price	\$3.05*

*Remember to subtract the 51 cents severe need breakfast rate if not applicable.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Can I use the previous school year's federal reimbursement rate when determining the following school year's adult paid price?**

SFAs are allowed to use the most current federal reimbursement rates at the time of school board approval. Retain the board meeting minutes on file to document the discussion and date of approval. If the SFA does not have a school board, documentation of school administration discussion and approval would be allowed, as well. Calculations from the previous year can be found [here](#) (these calculations are allowed only if approval was obtained prior to July 17, 2026).

- **The cost of producing our adult meal is greater than the minimum allowable charge determined using the adult pricing formula, what do we do?**

The SFA should charge enough to recover the full cost of producing the meal. So in this case, the SFA will need to price adult meals higher than the minimum determined using the formula.

- **Since adults are charged a higher price, can they receive larger portions?**

No, adult meals must be the equivalent portion to the student meal. Larger portions or double entrees served to adults must be charged as a la carte.

- **When can adults have a school breakfast or lunch at no cost?**

There are two situations where adults can receive a free meal under the School Nutrition Program:

1. Meals for food service staff who are directly involved in the operation and administration (program staff) of the school nutrition programs (e.g., managers, cooks, servers, etc.). The cost of these meals may be covered by the non-profit food service account.

2. Meals for non-program staff (teachers, administrators, custodians, etc.) as long as the cost of the meals are covered with non-federal funds.
- **Do we need to track adult meals served?**
Yes, all adult meals must be tracked and documentation retained for reviews.