



Special Milk Program Fact Sheet

What is the Special Milk Program?

- Provides milk to children in schools, child care institutions, and eligible camps that do not participate in other Federal child nutrition meal service programs.
- Participating schools and institutions receive reimbursement from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for each half pint of milk served.
- Sponsors must operate their milk program on a non-profit basis and agree to use Federal reimbursement to reduce the selling price of milk to all children.
- Children may buy milk or receive it free, depending on the school's choice of program options.

Who can participate?

- Public, charter, or nonprofit private schools of high school grade or under that do not participate in the other Federal child nutrition meal service programs.
- Public or nonprofit private residential child care institutions and eligible camps that do not participate in the other Federal child nutrition meal service programs.
- Half-day pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs where children do not have access to the school meal programs when the school also operates the National School Lunch and/or School Breakfast Program.

What types of milk can be served?

- Pasteurized, fluid-types of fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk, either flavored or unflavored, depending on ages below:
 - 1 year old: unflavored whole milk
 - 2-5 years old (not yet in Kindergarten): unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk
 - 6 years and older: flavored or unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk
- Must meet all State and Local Standards.
- Should contain Vitamins A and D at level specified by the FDA.

How does reimbursement work?

- Sponsors are reimbursed based on the number of half pints of milk served.
- The Federal reimbursement rates change each program year. Visit the [Reimbursement Rates webpage](#) to view the current rates.
- For students who receive their milk free, the USDA reimburses schools the net purchase price of the milk.



What are my pricing options?

- Non-Pricing Program
 - The sponsor provides milk to all children at no charge or the price of milk is included in the tuition, boarding fees, or paid for by donation or endowment so that all children automatically receive milk.
- Pricing Program
 - With Free Milk
 - The sponsor provides free milk to children who qualify in accordance with the family size and Income Eligibility Guidelines established by USDA and then charges those students that do not qualify.
 - Without Free Milk
 - The sponsor charges all students for milk regardless of income eligibility.
 - The charge for milk is minus the federal reimbursement rate.
 - The charge for milk is also not included in tuition.

How do children qualify for free milk?

- When local school officials offer free milk under the program to low-income children, any child from a family that meets income guidelines for free meals is eligible.
- Each child's family must apply annually for free milk eligibility.

Questions? Contact your Field Specialist.