

Cumberland County Schools Meal Charge Administrative Procedure

Effective Date: July 1, 2026

As provided in SP 46-2016, all school food authorities (SFAs) operating the federal school meal programs (National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program) must have a written and communicated meal charge administrative procedure in place no later than July 1, 2017. All SFAs must have an administrative procedure in place for children participating at the reduced price or paid meal rate who either do not have money in their account or in hand to cover the cost of the meal at the time of service. SFAs are required to communicate that administrative procedure to families and school and/or district-level staff members as appropriate. SFAs should ensure the administrative procedure is communicated on an annual basis.

Families will have access to the meal charge administrative procedure via packets that are given to each student at the start of each school year. Families of transfer students (during the year) will receive a copy of the district-wide charge administrative procedure with the online enrollment packet.

Local Charge Administrative Procedure – Student Fees & Fines (Policy Reference: 6.709)

Cumberland County School Nutrition believes in the importance of providing healthy nutritious meals for our students. Just as with any services, there is an expense involved with every meal that we provide. We are required to set standards and procedures to address any possible cafeteria charge.

General

Students are able and encouraged to get 1 breakfast and 1 lunch daily at no charge due to all schools participating in the Community Eligibility Provision.

Students who want a 2nd breakfast or lunch will have to buy it as a la cart items and a la cart items are never allowed to be charged.

Charge Limits and Household Notification

All students will be given a verbal reminder regarding low balances, so they know when they need additional monies to purchase EXTRA items outside of the normal reimbursable breakfast and lunch.

Alternate meals

No alternate meals will be given. Meals are never changed or withheld as punishment.

Delinquent Debt

Delinquent debt is defined as overdue unpaid meal charges that are considered collectible, with efforts being made to collect them. The debt may remain on the accounting documents until it is either collected or determined to be uncollectable. The debt may be carried over at the end of the school year (beyond June 30). Before the SFA requests payment of the outstanding debt, the household's debt will be delinquent until it is deemed by the Director of Schools that it be classified as bad debt. Collection attempts will continue if the debt is deemed delinquent as a joint effort of the School Cafeteria Manager, the School Office Administrative Staff, the Cumberland County School Nutrition Office, and the Director of Schools' Office. **Furthermore, all unpaid charge accounts could be turned over to the BOE Attorney, and collections. The ONLY unpaid charge accounts would be those of school staff members.**

Bad Debt

- Bad debt is determined to be uncollectable when further collection efforts for delinquent debt are deemed useless or too costly. Delinquent debt will be considered as bad debt as deemed by the Director of Schools.
- Bad debts (debts which have been determined to be uncollectable), including losses (whether actual or estimated) arising from uncollectable accounts and other claims, are unallowable. Related collection costs, and related legal costs, arising from such debts after they have been determined to be uncollectable are also unallowable (section 200.426 of subpart E).
- Bad debt must be written off as an operating loss as deemed by the Director of Schools; the nonprofit school food service account (NSFSA) resources may not be used to cover the costs related to the bad debt. These funds may come from the school district's general fund, school or community organizations, or any other non-federal sources.
- Once delinquent meal charges are converted to bad debt, records relating to those charges must be maintained according to record retention requirements in 7 CFR 210.9(b)(17) and 7 CFR 210.15(b).

Additional Resources

Families may find assistance with applying for free or reduced-price school meals by contacting Kathy Hamby, School Nutrition District Supervisor at khamby@ccschools.k12tn.net or 931-484-6722.