

**WAC 250-84-030 Eligible applicant.** (1) Washington students may apply who are:

(a) Enrolled in the seventh or eighth grade, or in ninth grade (under limited circumstances defined in RCW 28B.118.010), in a public school, private school as approved by chapter 28A.195 RCW or home school as defined by chapter 28A.200 RCW; and

(b) Meet the income eligibility as defined in subsection (2) of this section.

A student in the ninth grade is eligible to sign up for the program, if that student qualifies for free or reduced-price lunches and was previously ineligible during the seventh or eighth grade while a student in Washington.

(2) Seventh, eighth, or ninth (if previously ineligible as defined above) grade students are eligible to apply if one of these requirements are met:

(a) Family income falls within the monthly or annual standards set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for eligibility for participation in the free or reduced price lunch program (FRPL); or

(b) The student's family receives temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) benefits; or

(c) Student is a foster youth.

To determine eligibility in unusual circumstances, or for assistance in defining household size, foster youth status, and other criteria, the office will consult with district or school staff who oversee FRPL, other agencies as needed, students and families as needed, and will refer to the USDA FRPL guidelines.

If a student qualifies in the application year, the information is not required to be updated throughout the middle and high school years. However, income will be verified using the information from the FAFSA or an alternative application provided by the office upon college enrollment. See WAC 250-84-060, eligibility for receipt of scholarship.

(3) Eligible applications are considered complete when:

(a) The signed pledge and signature page has been received by the office by the deadline, as determined by the office.

(i) Students who are dependents and meet requirements outlined in RCW 28B.118.010 are automatically enrolled in partnership with the department of children, youth, and families.

(ii) The deadline for the initial application is June 30th of the student's eighth grade year, and students who qualify to apply in the ninth grade year have until June 30th of their ninth grade year to begin an application. Students have until August 31st at the end of their eighth grade or ninth grade, for those eligible to apply during ninth grade, to complete their application.

(iii) Exceptions to the deadline will be made on a case-by-case basis by the office.

(iv) A special exception to the deadlines in (a)(ii) of this subsection is made for students required to sign a pledge to establish eligibility during eighth or ninth grade in the 2019-20 school year, during which a statewide school closure was ordered under the state of emergency declared in response to the coronavirus pandemic. For these students only, the deadline to begin an application will be extended until November 30, 2020, and students have until that date to complete their application.

(b) All sections of the application including eligibility are filled and the pledge is signed.

(c) The pledge must include the following criteria:

(i) Graduate from high school with at least a C average or as referenced in RCW 28B.118.010.

(ii) No felony convictions.

(d) The section of the application that indicates eligibility must be completed.

(e) The pledge must be signed by a parent or legal guardian to attest the information is true and accurate.

The office shall establish a process through which the office may work with a school counselor or administrator to witness a student's pledge if the parent or guardian's signature is not obtained after multiple, documented unsuccessful attempts. These attempts will be documented in the student's file.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.118.060. WSR 20-12-051, § 250-84-030, filed 5/29/20, effective 6/29/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.76.670. WSR 10-17-080, § 250-84-030, filed 8/16/10, effective 9/16/10.]