

## Illinois Public School obligations

By law, schools **cannot discriminate** against students who are **unable to pay school fees**.

Schools are required to waive school fees for **low-income students** or **students experiencing homelessness**. A “waiver” means that student will **not be charged to use school facilities or participate in school activities**. Schools must provide a way to apply for a school fee waiver.

## What can be waived?

- Textbook and instructional materials
- Field trips during school hours or required after school hours
- School property fees such as towels, lab equipment, lockers
- Uniform fees
- Equipment or supply fees for sports or fine arts
- Graduation fees including cap and gown
- School records
- School health services
- Driver’s education

See 23 Ill. Adm. Code § 1.245

## What cannot be waived?

- Lost or damaged textbooks
- Lost or damaged school property
- Library fines
- School class rings
- Covers for diploma
- School pictures
- Yearbooks
- Tickets to social events such as prom or sports games
- Optional travel by a school club outside of school hours

See 23 Ill. Adm. Code § 1.245

## Are you eligible for a school fee waiver?

Your public school student qualifies for a school fee waiver if you:

- Are experiencing homelessness
- Are a **low-income** household, at or below 130% of the Federal Poverty Level (see chart below for definition)
- Receive SNAP or TANF benefits
- Are a migrant or a runaway
- Have a child in Head Start
- Have a child eligible for School Free Breakfast & Lunch Program based on income
- Are experiencing a significant loss of income due to extenuating circumstances

## What is considered low-income?

The United States Department of Agriculture has issued the following income guidelines for the period July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022.

Household Size	130% Federal Poverty Guideline				
	Annual	Monthly	Twice Per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	16,744	1,396	698	644	322
2	22,646	1,888	944	871	436
3	28,548	2,379	1,190	1,098	549
4	34,450	2,871	1,436	1,325	663
5	40,352	3,363	1,682	1,552	776
6	46,254	3,855	1,928	1,779	890
7	52,156	4,347	2,174	2,006	1,003
8	58,058	4,839	2,420	2,233	1,117
For each additional family member, add:	5,902	492	246	227	114

## How to apply for a school fee waiver

- If your student attends a Chicago Public School, use the CPS fee waiver form found at [bit.ly/FeeWaiverForm](https://bit.ly/FeeWaiverForm) and return it directly to your school.
- If the student does not attend a Chicago Public School, request a School Fee Waiver Application directly from the school.

Schools must notify you within **30 days** if the fee waiver application was denied. Schools must also provide information on how you can appeal the decision.

Please note that documents verifying income, such as paystubs, may be requested by the school.