

FOOD SERVICE BILLING AND COLLECTION

Tyler County Schools provide breakfast, lunch, supper, and snacks to children daily. Adult employees are also offered the privilege of participating in this program. The Food Service Department provides a computerized billing system at all schools whereby the students and adults may charge meals daily or make prepayments at the schools. Bills are calculated and sent home monthly from each school. Upon receipt of the students' or adults' bills, payments for meals, either cash or check, will be sent to the school. This policy represents the guidelines for administering the collection of food service accounts.

Tyler County Schools comply with all federal and state regulations while providing healthy meals to children.

In accordance with Federal Law and United States Department of Agriculture policy, Tyler County Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, and or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. Tyler County Schools is an equal opportunity provider.

BILLING PROCEDURE:

- Lunch bill will be calculated and sent home by the 5th of each month by each of the school secretaries.
- Lunch payment is to be paid in full to the school 10 days after receiving the child/children's lunch bill.
- All lunch bills will be considered past due if not paid in full by the 20th of each month following the billing.
- A second lunch bill will be mailed when the bill becomes past due.
- A letter will be sent to parent/guardian(s) when the bill is 30 days old.
- The letter will request full payment within 15 days of receipt. The account becomes delinquent if that full payment is not received within 15 days.
- Unpaid account becomes delinquent after 45 days.
- All delinquent accounts may automatically lose the privilege of charging for their meals. Parents may be notified by mail that the charge privileges have been suspended. The letter will include a list of alternatives for lunch, such as parents sending cash daily, paying the bill in full, or sending a bag lunch. Sending a child to school without money for a meal or a bag lunch may be interpreted as child neglect by the authorities.
- At the time when the account becomes delinquent, the school principal may stop charging privileges.
- Delinquent Accounts – Parent/Guardian(s) will be notified by certified mail the collection of delinquent accounts will be pursued immediately through a Collection Agency or Magistrate Court.

The Tyler County Board of Education has the authority to track and collect all debts; however, circumstances may arise which would justify termination of a debt. All costs associated with the collection of an account will become the liability of the debtor.

UNCOLLECTIBLE DEBTS DUE FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM:

I. Criteria For Writing Off Debts Determined To Be Uncollectible

A debt is determined uncollectible when the Food Service Program cannot recover the debt through enforced collection and there is no realistic expectation for a future collection. A diligent effort using the collection strategies described in this instruction will be undertaken before the determination that the debt is uncollectible. When the Food Service Program determines that a debt is uncollectible, it will terminate active collection and write-off the debt when one or more of the following criteria apply:

The Debt Cannot Be Substantiated: This means that the Food Service Program does not have or cannot produce the evidence or witnesses necessary to validate a claim and has not been able to obtain the voluntary repayment of the debt.

- The Cost of Pursuing Collection is Unreasonable: This means that the Food Service Program should not recover a debt when collection exceeds the amount of the debt unless a significant enforcement principle was at stake, such as program fraud. The Food Service Program should always consider the costs associated with the collection strategy before deciding on further collection action.
- The Debtor Cannot Be Located: The Food Service Program is unable to locate the debtor after exercising all reasonable attempts to do so.
- The Statute of Limitations Has Expired: This means that the chances of recovering the debt do not justify retaining the debt as a receivable because the statute of limitations has expired.

PENALTIES

All communication addressing financial matters shall be directed to parents/guardians. WV counties are prohibited from penalizing students due to unpaid and/or outstanding meal debt. Students shall not be denied a meal or served an alternate meal as a result of an unpaid meal debt. Schools are prohibited from identifying or stigmatizing g students with meal debt or require them to complete chores or work in exchange for meals.

NON-SUFFICIENT FUNDS CHECK PROCEDURE:

A check returned to the Food Service Department for non-sufficient funds will be handled in a specific manner, as specified in the Tyler County Schools' Administrative Procedures Manual.

YEAR END ACCOUNT BALANCE:

If a student has a credit balance at the end of the school year, a check will be issued if the balance due is requested by the last day of school. All accounts not claimed will revert to the Food Service Program.

Specific Billing Procedures are delineated in the Tyler County Schools' Administrative Procedures Manual.

REFERENCE: State Board Policy 4320: Policies of Operation Manual for Child Nutrition Programs
USDA Civil Rights Nondiscrimination Statement
State Board Policy 4321.1: Standards for School Nutrition

DATE: 10/16/17, 1/20/15, 6/18/12, 7/20/09, 3/19/07, 3/4/02