



<p><b>Prohibited/ Discouraged*</b> Actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Withholding a diploma, transcripts or grades for unpaid fees or fines, CO state regulation (CRS 22-32-110 amended by <a href="#">HB17-1301</a> 08/2017)</li> <li>• Enlisting volunteers, parents or guardians of other students, to request payment from a family with unpaid meal charges (<a href="#">SP 16-2016</a>)</li> <li>• Suggesting or requiring students to work off their unpaid meal charges</li> <li>• Publicly shaming a student that is unable to pay for the regular reimbursable meal (such as grabbing a student’s tray from their hands and throwing in the trash and/or serving an unappealing alternative meal)</li> <li>• Announcing or publicizing the names of students with unpaid meal charges</li> <li>• Requiring students with unpaid meal charges to use a different serving line to receive an alternate meal</li> <li>• Using hand stamps, stickers, or other physical markers to identify students with unpaid meal charges</li> <li>• Sending clearly marked notices home with students who have unpaid meal charges</li> </ul>
<p><b>Required</b> Actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing only appropriate officials, who have knowledge of USDA’s confidentiality requirements and have a need to access a student’s account balance or eligibility information, the ability to request payment from families with unpaid meal charges (unless the family has given consent otherwise)</li> <li>• If a student has money to purchase a full or reduced price meal at the time of the meal service, the student must be provided a meal             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The student’s money may not be used to repay previously unpaid charges if the student intended to use the money to purchase that day’s meal</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Encouraged</b> Actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with families to develop a payment plan to pay back unpaid meal charges</li> <li>• Communicating privately with individual families about their students unpaid meal charges</li> <li>• Serving students with unpaid meal charges the regular reimbursable meal (or a low-cost, reimbursable alternate meal) in the same serving line</li> <li>• Communicating payment reminders directly to adults in the family over the phone or via email</li> <li>• Sending discrete reminders in a plain, white envelope, or sending reminders with other communication materials sent to all families</li> <li>• Ensuring the alternate meal (if opting to provide one) is a healthy meal and does not single out students with unpaid meal charges</li> </ul>

*\*As outlined in 7 CFR 245.8, many of the discouraged actions are prohibited when applied specifically to students eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals*

## Where can I learn more?

### Resource information

- [Unpaid Meal Charges](#) – CDE School Nutrition Unit
- [Overcoming the Unpaid Meal Challenge](#) - USDA