

ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

Alternate One or Two: See ‘Verification Process Type.’

Application: Applications for free and reduced price meals collect income information identified by source and household member, except for households which may be categorically eligible because they receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or commodities through the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), hereinafter referred to as “categorically eligible households”. Households, which provide direct certification, are exempt from verification and should not be included in counts to determine number to be verified. The process of collection/approving applications is called certification.

Assistance Programs including SNAP, TANF, FDPIR: Receipt of benefits by any household member conveys categorical or automatic eligibility for free school meals to all children in the household. The eligibility determination is made through either 1) an application with a case number from the family, or 2) through ‘direct certification’ for assistance programs.

Attendance Centers (also called ‘sites’ on the OCTOBER SURVEY): The units of grades approved for operation by SD Department of Education or as licensed by appropriate agency such as Dept. of Social Services or Dept. of Human Services. For example: A building may house grades K-12, so therefore is defined as having three attendance centers. 1) Elementary, 2) Junior High or Middle School, and 3) High School.

Standard Verification: See ‘Verification Process Type.’

BIA/BIE: Bureau of Indian Affairs/ Bureau of Indian Education, US Office of the Interior.

CANS: Child and Adult Nutrition Services, a unit in the SD Department of Education.

Categorically Eligible Children: Those children automatically eligible for free meal benefits because they, or any household member, receive Assistance Program benefits, or are designated as members of “Other Source Categorically Eligible Programs”. In households that have been approved for participation in a federal program with same or similar income guidelines may demonstrate eligibility for free meals by recording their case number on the application in lieu of recording family members and income. Approved programs for categorical eligibility include Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR).

Certification: The process of approving application for free and reduced price meals (meal benefits). After certification, applications are either denied or approved/certified.

Child means—(a) a student of high school grade or under as determined by the State educational agency, who is enrolled in an educational unit of high school grade or under as described in paragraphs (a) and (b) of the definition of “School,” including students who are mentally or physically disabled as defined by the State and who are participating in a school program established for the mentally or physically disabled; or (b) a person under 21 chronological years of age who is enrolled in an institution or center as described in paragraph (c) of the definition of “School;” or (c) For purposes of reimbursement for meal supplements served in afterschool care programs, an individual enrolled in an afterschool care program operated by an eligible school who is 12 years of age or under, or in the case of children of migrant workers and children with disabilities, not more than 15 years of age.

Completion Date: All verification activity must be completed by November 15 of each school year.

Confirmation Review (or Preliminary Review): The process through which, prior to conducting any other verification activity, each application selected for verification is reviewed for accuracy by an individual who did not make the initial eligibility determination.

Direct Certification: Means determining children eligible for free meal benefits based on documentation obtained directly from state agencies, a local agency or other authorized individual; examples include an emailed excel list from Cheriee Watterson at CANS, or letter or form received from SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR that is used to ‘certify’ free-meal eligibility. The communication exchange should be between the agency and the school. Once an agency helps confirm that Assistance Benefits are received by the household, no further ‘verification’ of that information is required.

A simplified process of determining which students are eligible for free meals in which the determining agency for SNAP/TANF/FDPIR supplies a letter or certificate of eligibility to the families or to the school stating that the children on the letter or certificate are in households that receive said benefits.

Direct Verification: Using records from public agencies to verify income and/or program participation, and must be conducted prior to contacting the household for documentation. (See USDA Eligibility Manual for School Meals, Part 9).

Eligibility Category: Free, Reduce-Price or Paid. This is the category of benefits the local agency can claim reimbursement for; regardless of whether or not the agency gives all students free meals.

Error Prone (formerly 'Focused Sample'): Applications within \$100 per month of the applicable Income Eligibility Income Guideline. (or within \$1200 of annual income cutoff); selected first for verification.

SNAP, TANF, and FDPIR Assistance Programs: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations.

Local Education Agency (LEA) or Local Agency (LA): Those responsible for the application, certification, and verification activities of the NSLP and SBP; also called the School District. Also called the School Food Authority (SFA). Local Agency is a more generic state term covering all programs.

Notification: Households with applications selected for verification must be given written notice. Prototype letters are included in NSLP Memo 51.5.

NSLP: National School Lunch Program.

Other Source Categorically Eligible Programs: Children who are documented as homeless, runaway, migrant, a foster child, or enrolled in a federally-funded Head Start, Even Start or comparable state-funded Head Start program or pre-kindergarten program are eligible for free meals.

Preliminary Review: see "Confirmation Review."

Provision 2 or 3: A special provision that reduces paperwork for local agencies that operate a non-pricing (does not charge for meals) program and that have a high percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

RCCI: Residential Child Care Institutions are agencies that are licensed by the appropriate government agency or are a government agency and whose primary function is the care of children.

Reduced Verification Process: A process of selecting fewer applications for verification than the standard or basic processes. LEAs that meet eligibility criteria may choose to utilize one of the alternate verification methods.

Sample Date: Final verification sample size is based on approved applications on file as of October 1 of each school year. Schools are encouraged to begin earlier based on projections done by school officials.

Sample Method: See Verification Process Type.

Sample Pool: The total number of applications approved as of October 1.

Sample Size: The number of applications subject to verification; the minimum and maximum sample size is 3% total.

SBP: School Breakfast Program.

School: (a) An educational unit of high school grade or under, recognized as part of the educational system in the State and operating under public or nonprofit private ownership in a single building or complex of buildings; (b) any public or nonprofit private classes of preprimary grade when they are conducted in the aforementioned schools; or (c) any public or nonprofit private residential child care institution, or distinct part of such institution, which operates principally for the care of children, and, if private, is licensed to provide residential child care services under the appropriate licensing code by the State or a subordinate level of government, *except for* residential summer camps which participate in the Summer Food Service Program for Children, Job Corps centers funded by the Department of Labor, and private foster homes. The term “residential child care institutions” includes, but is not limited to: homes for the mentally, emotionally or physically impaired, and unmarried mothers and their infants; group homes; halfway houses; orphanages; temporary shelters for abused children and for runaway children; long-term care facilities for chronically ill children; and juvenile detention centers. A long-term care facility is a hospital, skilled nursing facility, intermediate care facility, or distinct part thereof, which is intended for the care of children confined for 30 days or more.

SFA or School Food Authority: Local agencies administering the school meal programs; the governing body that is responsible for the administration of one or more schools and has the legal authority to operate the school meal programs in those schools (see also LEA).

Student: An individual eligible to participate in NSLP or SBP according to definitions included in the agreement.

USDA: United States Department of Agriculture.

Verification: Verification is confirmation of eligibility for free and reduced-price meals under the NSLP and SBP. Verification is only required when eligibility is determined through application process, not through ‘direct certification’ conducted with an ‘Assistance Program’ or other agencies serving homeless, runaway, etc. students. Verification MUST include either 1) confirmation of income eligibility or 2) confirmation that the household members receive benefits from an ‘Assistance Program’ or is “Other Source Categorically Eligible”. It is a process of proving that a sample of the applications approved for free and reduced price meals is correct. Verification is to be completed each year that applications for student meal benefits are obtained.

Verification for Cause: The local education agency (LEA) has an obligation to verify all approved applications that may be questionable; that is verification 'for cause' (see "USDA Eligibility Manual for School Meals, Aug 2013, Part 8D). Such verification efforts cannot delay the approval of applications. If an application is complete and indicates that the child is eligible for free or reduced price benefits, the application must be approved. Only after the determination of eligibility has been made can the LEA begin the verification process.

Verification Sample Size: The number of applications that must be selected to meet the verification requirement for the Local Education Agency (LEA). This is a small percentage of all approved applications on file as of October 1. (See Verification Process Types).

Each School Food Authority must select one of the three following methods to meet the verification requirement. The Basic sample method is encouraged as it focuses on applications close to the income guideline cutoffs. If a SFA meets criteria for the Reduced Verification Process, it can choose to either the Alternate-Random sample or the Alternate-Focused sample method.

Verification Process Type – Standard: You must verify 3% of all approved applications on file as of October 1. Once the sample size is determined, error prone applications are the first selected; error prone applications are those with income within \$100 monthly or \$1200 annually of the appropriate income eligibility guideline.

Verification Process Type – Alternate One: A verification process in which applications based on income as well as those categorically eligible are eligible for verification. A random sample selection method is used and at least three percent (3%) are selected from this sample.

Verification Process Type – Alternate Two: A verification process in which applications based on income that may be error prone are set aside. One percent (1%) of the total applications is selected from this group. In addition, one-half percent (1/2% or .005) is selected from the applications that were categorically eligible.