Economic Status

Economically disadvantaged students are students who are eligible for free/reduced meal status. A student can be identified as eligible for free/reduced meal status by

* + Direct Certification from DHHS
  + Application for Free/Reduced meals
  + Alternate Economic Status Form

**Direct Certification**

* Available in the NEO Nutrition Module to Superintendents and Food Service Directors.
* Highly confidential; access is restricted to only Superintendents and Food Service Directors.
* NEO validates that students who qualify for Direct Certification are indicated on EPS Reports.

**Free and Reduced Meal Applications**

* Used primarily for Child Nutrition purposes.
* Can also be used to identify student economic status for EPS reporting

**Alternate Economic Status Form Use**

* **ONLY used for EPS Funding reporting**
* Entered into State Synergy by Data Staff in SAUs – Nutrition Staff should NOT be using these forms.
* For SY 2023/24 students who qualify as economically disadvantaged via the Alternate Economic Status Form can be entered into State Synergy as either **Reduced or Free** status via Economic Status Uploads or manual entry on the Economic Status screen.
* Retain records at the SAU of students identified using the Alternate Economic Status Form.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Traditional Meal Operations** | **Special Provision II**  **BASE YEAR** | **Special Provision II**  **NON-BASE YEAR** | **Community Eligibility Provision** |
| Collect Free/Reduced Meal Applications - used for both School Nutrition and EPS Reporting purposes.  ***Also:***  Collect the Alternate Economic Status Form – **ONLY for EPS Reporting** | Collect Free/Reduced Meal Applications - used for both School Nutrition and EPS Reporting purposes.  ***Also:***  Collect the Alternate Economic Status Form – **ONLY for EPS Reporting** | Collect the Alternate Economic Status Form – **ONLY for EPS Reporting** | Collect the Alternate Economic Status Form – **ONLY for EPS Reporting** |