

## **How to Complete the Annual Participation and Policy Packet to Participate in USDA FNS Programs**

### ***Steps for the District Preparer/Food Service Director***

Before this process can be completed, the Legal Agent must accept the Agreement. This is not done annually. It is completed one time, unless there is a change to the Agreement. (See section *How to Approve the Agreement Between Maine DOE and the LEA to Operate the USDA FNS Programs, Steps for the Legal Agent*)

**Step 1.** District preparer / Food Service Director logs into NEO: <https://neo.maine.gov/DOE/neo/core/>

**Step 2.** Go to **Nutrition/Reimbursement/Annual Participation** and complete the following:

- **Annual Policy Data/Statement** Complete information and 'Submit'.

Tips:

- *Contact phone number* – for the Superintendent or Headmaster/Administrator for a private school
- *Approving Official* - the person responsible for collecting, evaluating, and processing free and reduced-price meal benefit applications.
- *Hearing Official* – a person, not connected to the application approval or verification process, who implements the hearing process should there be an appeal.
- *Purchasing foods from outside the district* – is asking if food/meals is purchased from another district
- *Application Approval* – if meal benefit applications are processed and approved manually, select Manual, or if benefits are determined by a computer software program, select System
- *Application Confirmation Official* – a determining official, *other than* the Approving Official, who reviews each approved application selected for verification to validate the initial determination. If a computer software program conducts the verification, list the name of the program you use for verification.
- *Verification Official* – the person conducting the verification process. May be the same person as the Approving Official.

- **Anonymity and Accountability**

Complete information and 'Submit'.

Tips:

- *Lunch* - Select the code for the anonymity and accountability system used at each site listed.
- *Breakfast* - Select the code for the anonymity and accountability system used at each site listed.
- *Milk* (Special Milk Program) - Select the code for the anonymity and accountability system used each site listed.
- *Start Time* – Enter the time of day school normally begins
- *End Time* – Enter the time of day school normally ends
- *ASP Start* – Enter the time of day the After School Program begins
- *ASP End* – Enter the time of day the After School Program ends
- *Start Date* – Enter the date that the After School Program starts
- *Offered/Served* – Select 'True' for an Offer vs. Serve site. Select 'False' for a site that does not use Offer vs. Serve.



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- *System* – Enter the type of system used for accountability at the point of service (i.e. Manual, name of electronic system, ...)

- **Application Data**

Complete information and 'Submit'.

Tips:

- *Breakfast Charges* – enter the price charged for breakfast for each of the categories.
- *Lunch Charges* - enter the price charged for lunch for each of the categories.
- *Milk Charges* – Only complete if participating in the Special Milk Program
- *ASP Charges* – Only complete if you participate in the After School Snack Program and you charge for Full and Reduced Price students.

- **Attestation**

Read the document and click the 'Accept' button.

- **Parent letter**

Upload the letter distributed to families to notify them of the Free and Reduced-price Meal Application process. For multiple letters, scan them together as one document and then upload.

- **Supplemental Attachments**

Upload the completed Price Equity Tool, approved documentation and any other requested documents.

- **USDA contact**

Complete the requested information and 'Submit'.

Tip:

- Make sure the information entered is correct. This information is used when there is urgent information to share.

**Step 3.** Notify Legal Agent that the Annual Participation Policy Packet is ready for their approval.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.