

MAINE DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION

Verification of Food Service Applications

Presented by: David Hartley



Approval vs. Verification

- Application approval - approving an application as submitted – face value
- Verification - verifying income with additional income documentation
 - Pay stub
 - Tax return
 - Notice from employer

Who is not required to complete verification?

- RCCI's, no day students
- Schools in milk only program
- Schools/Districts under Provision I, II or III non base year, CEP


Who does not complete Verification?

- Special Provisions
 - Community Eligibility Provision – no applications.
 - Provision II - Non-base year.
- The annual CNPweb Sponsor Information Sheet select:

Type of Verification

Verification is required for all SFAs participating in the National School Lunch Program.

34. Basic Alternate 3% Alternate 1% Plus No Verification Required



Verification

If you are not required to complete the verification process and selected “Verification Not Required” on the previous screen, you will not have the option on the “Forms” tab to select Verification:

Sponsor Summary

Acton Public Sc

Checklist	Applications	Forms	Activities	Claims	Payments	Users
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York Co

Form Name	Revision	Status	Date Approved	
FFVP Acton Elementary School (3)		FFVP App can not currently be entered for 2025.		
October Survey		Survey to be filled on last working day of October 2024.		+
Annual Financial Report		Report to be filed after final claims entered for 2025.		+
Community Eligibility Provision Notification		Missing		+

Introduction

- Verify applications for free and reduced-price meals.
- This session is for conducting the verification process with little problems.
- The process should help your individual schools keep or increase free and reduced eligibility numbers.

Families may not cooperate because;

- no longer qualify
 - level of their education creates a disability or embarrassment
 - Language issues.
-
- Some cases the local school is able to help families directly with the verification process

What is a School District?

- A School District is related to school boards
- An RSU/MSAD has one school board therefore one district
- An AOS/Union may have several school boards therefore several districts

Types of Verification

- Standard or Error Prone – Required
 - 3% all approved applications
 - Taken from error prone apps.
- Alt One: Random
 - 3% all approved applications, completely random
- Alt Two: Focused
 - 1% approved income applications
 - .5% approved Food Stamp applications

Error Prone Application Verification

- Are those that indicate monthly income within \$100 (or annual income within \$1,200) of the income eligibility limits for free or reduced-price school meals
- Weekly, Bi-weekly, Bi –Monthly are not used to determine this.

Error Prone Income

Monthly Family of 3	Yearly Family of 3	
2,698.00	32,366.00	
2,798.00	33,566.00	FREE
2,898.00	34,766.00	
3,881.00	46,567.00	
3,981.00	47,767.00	REDUCED

Error Prone Application?

- Family size = 3
- Income is \$3,881.00 monthly
- Is this an error prone application?
- Reduced, Yes: Qualifier is 3,981.00

Error Prone Application?

- **Monthly Family of 3**

2,698.00

F 2,798.00

2,898.00

YES Reduced: \$3,881.00

3,881.00

R 3,981.00

Error Prone Application?

- Family size = 3
- Weekly income is \$928.00
- Is this an error prone application?
- Weekly Income limit, family of 3 is \$919.00
- **No – Denied application.**

Error Prone Application?

- Family size = 3
- Every 2 weeks income is \$735
- Twice Monthly income is \$800

Error Prone Application?

- Every 2 weeks: $735.00 * 26 = 21,398.00$
- Twice a month: $800.00 * 24 = 25,272.00$
- TOTAL: 46,670.00

DO NOT CONVERT TO MONTHLY INCOME!

Error Prone Application?

- Monthly Family of 3

F 33,566.00

32,766.00

46,567.00

R 47,767.00

Yearly Income = 46,670.00

Reduced, Yes Error Prone.

Standard, Error Prone

- Only Select 3% of ALL the Approved Applications

- DO NOT OVER VERIFY

Sample Size

- Only count approved applications.
- Only count one application per family.
- Do not count applications for families that are also on the Direct Cert list.
 - These are not approved applications

Selecting the samples

- Error Prone

- 3% of ALL free and reduced approved applications

- First select from error prone income approved applications

- If not enough EP, random selection from all.

Selecting the samples

- Standard

- 3% of ALL free and reduced approved applications

- Both income and categorical.

- Only ONE per household

Selecting the samples

- 135 applications

- $135 \times 3\% = 4.05 = 5$

- Always round UP



- NEVER round down.



Selecting the samples

- If you have 10 error prone applications randomly select 5.
- If you do not enough error prone applications available, pull from remaining stack. You need 5, however you only have 4 EP, the last one is completely random from all approved applications, could be income or categorical.

Confirmation Official

For each selected application, a school district official other than the Approving Official MUST conduct a confirmation review of the initial eligibility determination and correct any mistakes before attempting to verify the application.

This is the Confirmation Official
Confirming Official Signs Application

Confirming Official is different from the Approving Official and the Hearing Official.

Verification Officials

- Approving Official Sam Spade
- Verification Official Sam Spade

- Confirming Official Janet Evanovich

- Hearing Official Alfred Hitchcock

Unless:

- This does not apply to districts that use electronic approval systems.
- How ever a good idea to make sure all the data was entered correctly.

Can a District use an Alternate Method

If your Non-Response Rate is less than 20%, in the previous school year, and you wish to use an alternate method the district must receive approval from the State Agency.

Include the method you plan to use:

Email: david.hartley@maine.gov

Alternate Methods

- Alternate One: Completely Random, random sample of all approved applications. Do not pick certain ones
- Alternate Two:
 - ✓ 1% of income approved applications, selecting Error Prone first
and
 - ✓ 0.5% of Categorically approved applications

Example

Alternate One Selection

- 145 applications

- $3\% = 4.35 = 5$

- $145 / 5 = 29$

- pull every 30th until you have 5

Alternate Two

Depending on the number of applications needed, this could reduce the number of applications required to be verified.

Email david.hartley@maine.gov to get permission to use either Alternate One or Two.

Verification Procedure

- Contact the parents for documentation
 - Household Notification of Verification
 - Verification Information Update
 - Privacy Act Statement –FULL Statement
 - Verification Documents

SUGGESTED:

- 10 CALENDER DAYS-stick to the timeline.

Record Keeping

- Keep copies of ALL correspondence between the families and you.
- Keep notes of any phone conversations.
- Must send a final letter closing the process.

- Must maintain copies of each individual letter/notice sent, not a copy of the master letter.

Household Notification of Verification

YOU MUST INCLUDE A NO COST TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR THE HOUSEHOLD TO CALL SHOULD THEY HAVE QUESTIONS.

Verification Notification and Tracking Forms

Child Nutrition Web Page

Student Eligibility and Applications

Verification

Sample notices, training information

Sample Household Notification:

- WE MUST CHECK YOUR APPLICATION

-

- You must send the information we need or contact [Name] by [Date] for our records.

-

- **Please note: Although all children in the state of Maine are able to receive school meals for AT NO CHARGE throughout the 2021-22 school year and there is no family income eligibility requirement to receive meals for free or at a reduced price, the verification process is still required by USDA.

-

- School: School Name Date:

-

- Dear Parent or Guardian:

-

- We are checking your Meal Benefit Application. Federal rules typically require that we do this to make sure only eligible children get free or reduced-priced meals. Although meals are free for all students, regardless of income eligibility, we must verify the information sent in is accurate. You must send us information to prove that Name(s) of child(ren) is/are eligible.

Verification Documents

UNEMPLOYMENT, DISABILITY, OR WORKER'S COMP: Notice of eligibility from State employment security office, check stub, or letter from the Worker's Compensation's office.

WELFARE PAYMENTS: Benefit letter from the Maine TANF office.

CHILD SUPPORT OR ALIMONY: Court decree, agreement, or copies of checks received.

OTHER INCOME (SUCH AS RENTAL INCOME): Information that shows the amount of income received, how often it is received, and the date received.

NO INCOME: A brief note explaining how you provide food, clothing , and housing for your household, and when you expect an income.

MILITARY HOUSING PRIVATIZATION INITIATIVE: Letter or rental contract showing that your housing is part of the Military Privatized Housing Initiative.

TIMEFRAME OF ACCEPTABLE INCOME DOCUMENTATION: Please submit proof of one month's income; you could use the month prior to application, the month you applied, or any month after that.

If you have questions or need help, please call **[name]** at **[phone number]**. The call is free. **[Toll free or reverse charge explanation]**. You may also e-mail us at **[e-mail address]**.

Sincerely,

[signature]

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(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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Complaints of discrimination must be filed at the office of the Maine Human Rights Commission, 51 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0051. If you wish to file a discrimination complaint electronically, visit the Human Rights Commission website at <https://www.maine.gov/mhrc/file/instructions> and complete an intake questionnaire. Maine is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Evaluate Information Submitted

- Review information submitted and:
 - Make a determination if all information needed is present.
 - Request more information from parents.

- If no response make at least one additional contact attempt before denying benefits.
 - Written notice
 - Email
 - Phone call
 - Keep copies, notes.

Determining Pay Periods

- When reviewing the pay stub be sure to determine the correct pay schedule:
 - Look for stub to state what pay period is
 - Look at check dates, if every two weeks, multiply by 26.
 - If unable to determine pay periods, call and ask.
 - Keep notes.
- Be sure to use the correct math based on the correct pay period.

Evaluate Information Submitted

- if food stamp number check direct certification list
 - If you have selected a categorically application double check the DC list, do an individual student name search
- check income monthly and/or yearly
- Self Employed - check schedule:
 - Profit or Loss From Business - C line 30
 - Profit or Loss From Farming - F line 34.

Self Employed

- For Verification purposes, self employed line:
 - Profit or Loss From Business - C line 30
 - Profit or Loss From Farming - F line 34.
- If the lines above show a negative number for this purpose this becomes ZERO.
 - Salaried pay: annually = \$48,531.00
 - Self Employed/Farming shows **-25.894.00**, this becomes zero
- Total Income is 48,531.00

NO Response

- If no response make at least one additional contact attempt before denying benefits.
- The second attempt can be a phone call, give a specific date, a few days,
 - Keep notes.
- FOLLOW THE TIMELINE GIVEN!

Forms

Letter to Parents Selectedc

Self Denial

Letter to Parents Results

Letter to Parents More Information

Internal Use: Household Control Form

Results

- Notify the family of the decision.
- If the category changed the family must be given the opportunity to appeal the decision. (included with notification).
- The change becomes effective in 10 calendar days if benefit is lost, if benefit is gained, effective immediately.

Once a family is selected for verification, they are selected for the year

If they do not respond and reapply, they will need to submit documentation for verification with the new application

They are NOT reapproved waiting for documentation

What Is Income

- Before any deductions such as income taxes, social security taxes, insurance benefits, charitable contributions and bonds.
- Cash received on a recurring basis.
- In-kind benefits are not cash payments therefore not income.

Common Questions

- Seasonal employment
- Temporary lay off
- Child support payments
- Self Employment
 - Schedule C, Line 30
 - Schedule F, Line 34

 - Negative = zero

- Various Federal Programs, Military housing

Excluded Federal Programs

- Vista, Rsvp, foster grandparents and others under Domestic Volunteer Service Act
- SCORE and ACE
- Job Training Partnership Act
- land trust payments to certain Indian tribes

Eligibility Manual for School Meals

The Completion

- Completion deadline is November 15th.
- Documentation of dates and communication is very important.
- Copies of all correspondence must be kept for each family.

Final results reported in CNPweb

Record Keeping

- Keep all records for three years plus the current year
 - Special Provisions II keep for seven years
- Document everything
- Records are confidential
- Do not mail to DOE Food Service office

Where to Get More Information

- Eligibility Guidance from USDA
 - Maine Child Nutrition web page
 - Student Eligibility & Applications
 - Resources

- Verification Information
 - Maine Child Nutrition web page
 - Student Eligibility & Applications
 - Verification

Submission of Results

- Form **MUST** be submitted online by
- **NOVEMBER 20.**
- This form is **ONLY** accepted through CNPweb

Verification in CNPweb

- Sponsor Summary
- Forms
- Verification Summary

Sponsor Summary

Acton Public Schools (2)

Form Name	Revision	Status	Date Approved	Action
October Survey		Survey to be filled on last working day of October 2021.		
Annual Financial Report		Report to be filed after final claims entered for 2022.		<input data-bbox="1580 767 1615 794" type="button" value="+"/>
Verification Summary		Complete as soon as possible on or after October 1, 2021 to determine verification sampling options and the number of applications to verify.		<input data-bbox="1580 816 1615 844" type="button" value="+"/>
Verification Results		Verification is to be finalized and reported to MDOE by November 15, 2021. Verification is due in 73 days. Verification Summary must be complete before the results can be entered.		

CNPweb Pre-Verification Counts

Pre-Verification Counts

The Verification sample pool is based on all approved applications on file on October 1st This does not include any carryover applications from the previous school year or withdrawn current year applications. The sample pool should contain only active, approved applications as of **October 1st**.

2. **Total Number of Error-Prone Applications:**

Applications within \$100 per month of the applicable Income Eligibility Guidelines.

by Certification Type	Reduced-Price Approved		Free Approved	
	Students	Applications	Students	Applications
3. Categorical Eligibility: <u>Applications Approved with a SNAP/TANF, Medicaid #</u>			<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>

Count TOTAL free eligible students and applications approved based on a case number for any of the following programs:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP),
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
- Foster

4. **Income Eligibility:**

Count TOTAL free & eligible students in the following categories:

- Reduced price eligible students
- Free eligible students or
- Applications approved based on household size and income.

5. **Totals:**

Applications to Students

- CNP web will not allow you to report more applications than students.
- Next

Post Confirmation

The information entered on this form has been successfully saved to the database.

This **Verification Summary** is in a status of **Approved**.

To exit this form and return to the listing click on the Exit Page button.



Save Your Data

- Certification – check box
- Save:

Certification

6. Check here to Submit this form to the State for Approval

By signing this report, I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the report is true, complete, and accurate and the expenditures, disbursements and cash receipts are for the purposes and objectives set forth in the terms and conditions of the federal award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent information or the omission of any material fact, may subject me to criminal, civil or administrative penalties for fraud, false statements, false claims, or otherwise.

Created By:

Date Modified:

 Save

 Exit

How many applications need verified

Form Name	Revision	Status	Date Approved	Action
FFVP East Range II CSD School (1048)	0	Denied		
October Survey		Survey to be filled on last working day of October 2024.		
Annual Financial Report		Report to be filed after final claims entered for 2025.		
Verification Summary		Complete	8/19/2024	
Verification Results		Verification is to be finalized and reported to MDOE by November 15, 2024. Verification is due in 88 days. Verification Summary must be complete before the results can be entered.		

- Determine number of applications to verify



One

Results Summary

Verification Type: **Basic**

	Required	Entered	Remaining
Applications **Pull from error prone applications first**	1	0	1

Results Listing

[+ Add New](#)

App Id	Head of Household	Students on Apps	Original Benefits	Verified Benefits	Verification Date	Verification for Cause?	Direct Verification	Action
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[✕ Exit](#)

Results

Results Summary

Verification Type: **Basic**

	Required	Entered	Remaining
Applications **Pull from error prone applications first**	1	0	1

Results Entry

Application ID:

Head of Household:

Number of Student on Application:

Original Benefits:

Verified Benefits on November 15th:

Verification Completion Date:

Verified for Cause? Yes No

Verified via **Direct Verification**?

Save

Save & Next

Cancel

Certify Results

Results Summary

Verification Type: **Basic**

	Required	Entered	Remaining
Applications **Pull from error prone applications first**	1	1	0

Check here when all verifications have been entered and click on the **Certify Results** button to complete this process.

Certify Results

Must check box before clicking on Certify Results to complete the process.

Results Listing

+ Add New

App Id	Head of Household	Students on Apps	Original Benefits	Verified Benefits	Verification Date	Verification for Cause?	Direct Verification	Action
1	smith	1	Free	No Response	10/10/2021	No		 







Done

Sponsor Summary

Acton Public Schools (2)

Checklist	Applications	Forms	Activities	Claims	Payments	Users
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York County

Form Name	Revision	Status	Date Approved	Action
October Survey	Survey to be filled on last working day of October 2021.			
Annual Financial Report	Report to be filed after final claims entered for 2022.			
Verification Summary		Complete	9/3/2021	  
Verification Results		Complete	9/3/2021	 

Results for the Auditor

- To have a report showing the process completed for the auditors
- Use Verification Results screen
- Click on the eye:



Verification Results

Complete

9/3/2021



- Print Screen

VERIFICATION PROCEDURE FOR MISSING OR LATE REPORTS

PURPOSE: To provide a consistent plan for handling missing or late verification reports submitted to the State Agency.

- 1. Maine Department of Education Food and Nutrition Programs offer training – during September

VERIFICATION PROCEDURE FOR MISSING OR LATE REPORTS

- **2. A.** November 5 or within two days, reminder notices will be sent out about the verification process.

- **B.** November 20 or within two days, list of SAUs missing verification reports submitted to the Team Leader or designee.

VERIFICATION PROCEDURE FOR MISSING OR LATE REPORTS

- **C.** December 1 or within two days, Child Nutrition Services staff will send reminder letters to Superintendents of SAUs without verification reports on file. A list of SAUs receiving letters will be given to the Team Leader or designee.

VERIFICATION PROCEDURE FOR MISSING OR LATE REPORTS

- 3. December 10 Send second reminder letter stating request that School District contact Maine Department of Education Food and Nutrition Programs stating possible actions – unable to file for reimbursement, chance at not being eligible for grants.

VERIFICATION PROCEDURE FOR MISSING OR LATE REPORTS

- 4. December 15, revoke claim form approval permissions to submit a claim for reimbursement. (Remind School District after 60 days from last day of month a claim cannot be submitted.)

VERIFICATION PROCEDURE FOR MISSING OR LATE REPORTS

- **5.** When the SAU's verification report is received and correct, the Child Nutrition Office staff will reinstate passwords and permissions within three days.

VERIFICATION PROCEDURE FOR MISSING OR LATE REPORTS

- **6.** If a SAU is unable to meet the Federal required deadline, the Superintendent must contact the Department of Education, Child Nutrition Services via email; david.hartley@maine.gov to request a waiver for an extension including the following:
 - Why is it late
 - Estimated completion date
 - Actions to be taken to meet deadline going forward
- **Waivers will not be granted past 12/15 without NERO-FNS approval.**

VERIFICATION PROCEDURE FOR MISSING OR LATE REPORTS

- **7.** Ten days after the extension requested expires, or within two days, Child Nutrition Services staff will revoke the SAU's approval permissions to submit a claim for reimbursement. (Remind School SAUs that after 60 days from the last day of the month, a claim cannot be submitted.)

VERIFICATION PROCEDURE FOR MISSING OR LATE REPORTS

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Persons with disabilities, who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail directly or by email. If you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

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