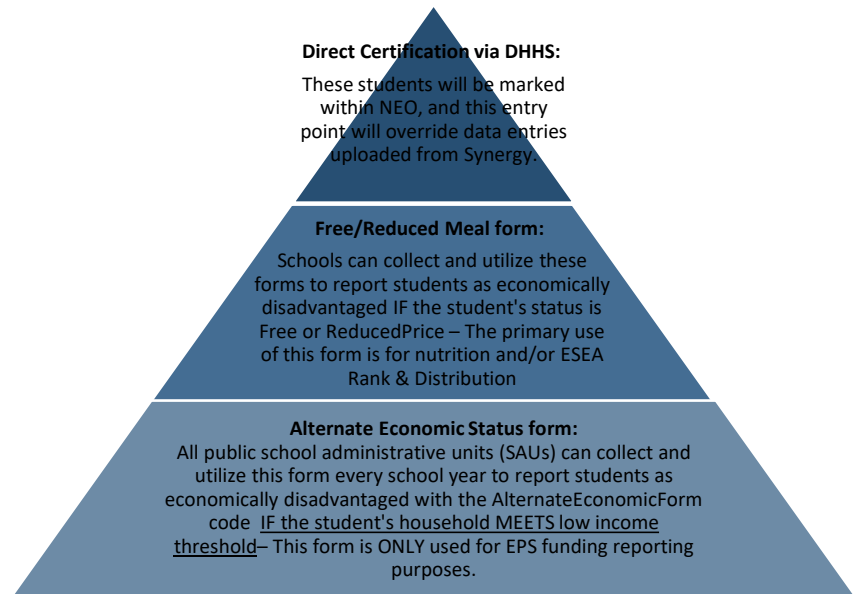


Economic Status

Economically disadvantaged students, for the purpose of EPS funding, 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 matches students who qualify for Direct Certification to EPS Reports
 - The Direct Certification List is required to be reviewed by Superintendents or Food Service Directors at least three times per school year, more frequent review is recommended. IF a student does not have a State Student ID number assigned in the Direct Certification list AND they have an active enrollment with the SAU, eligibility will not be matched to EPS reports. Contact MEDMS.Support@maine.gov to report the mismatch.

Free and Reduced Meal Applications

- Used primarily for Child Nutrition purposes.
- Can also be used to identify student economic status for EPS reporting
- Report students based on income qualifications; FullPrice, ReducedPrice, or Free

Alternate Economic Status Form Use

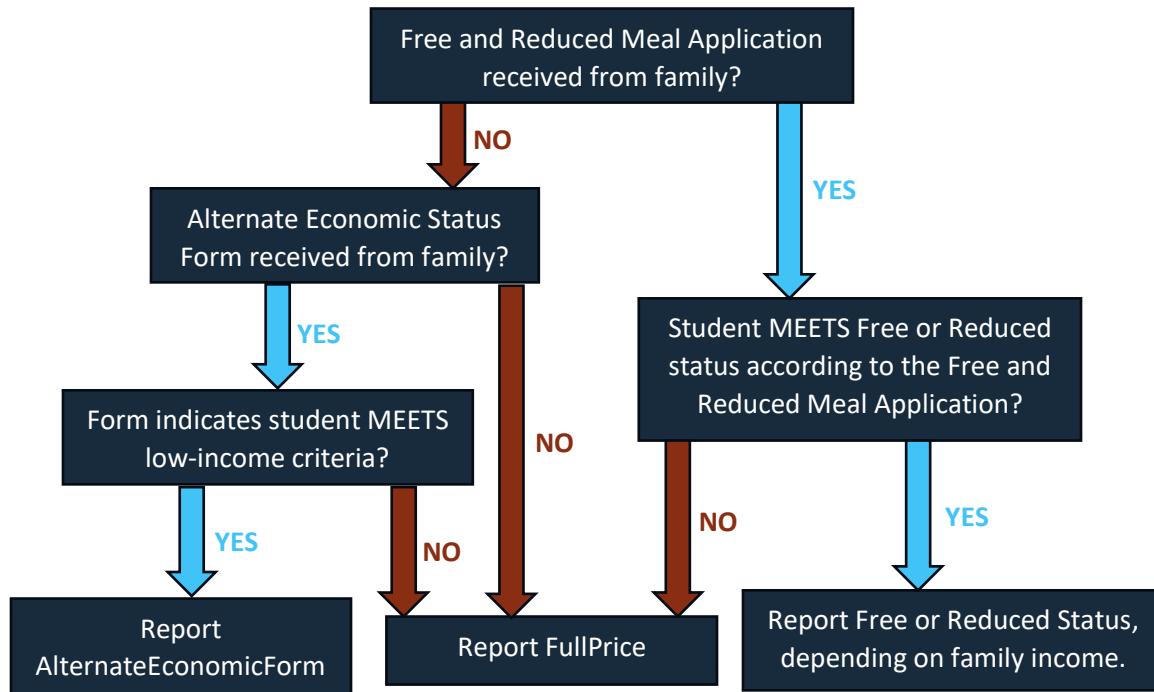
- **ONLY used for EPS Funding reporting**
- Reported by Data Staff in SAUs – Nutrition Staff should NOT be using these forms.
- Students who MEET low household income threshold via the Alternate Economic Status Form can be reported with **AlternateEconomicForm** to indicate economic disadvantage.
- If a student **does NOT meet** low household income threshold, report **FullPrice**
- Retain records at the SAU of students identified using the Alternate Economic Status Form.

Recommended form distribution for different school lunch programs:

Note: EPS economic status must be collected ANNUALLY regardless of nutrition program participation type.

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

Reporting Guidance when both forms are sent to families:



*If both the Free/Reduced Meal Application AND the Alternate Economic Status Form are returned and completed by the same student, the data on the Free/Reduced Meal Application would be reported.