Completing the Ethnic and Racial Data Form

On May 17, 2021 USDA released Memo: CACFP 11-2021, SFSP 07-2021. This memorandum states visual observation and identification by Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP) institutions and facilities and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors is no longer an allowable practice for program operators to use during the collection of race or ethnicity data.

Sponsors operating SFSP are still required to collect racial and ethnic data. Instead of using visual observation, the following are options to use to collect racial and ethnic data.

1. If the sponsor uses free/reduced meal benefit applications, the racial and ethnic data collected on these forms can be used. All racial/ethnic application data obtained for the most recent operating year, can be used to estimate the breakdown of race/ethnicity on the racial/ethnic data form.
2. Use the National Center for Education Statistics website to estimate race/ethnicity on the area the site operates. Data can be found here: <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/edge/TableViewer/acsProfile/2019>

Filter by school district, children, demographic data. Use the overall statistics to complete the form.

The sponsor should complete this form for each site under its sponsorship each year. Sponsors of residential camps must collect this information for each camp session. For all other sites, the sponsor must count the participating children at least once during the site’s operation.

To provide flexibility and ensure data quality, separate categories shall be used when collecting and reporting race and ethnicity. Ethnicity shall be collected first. Respondents shall be offered the option of selecting one or more racial designations.

Children must not be asked to identify their own race and ethnicity.

All line items on this page must be answered numerically (no percentages). Do not use words such as “All” or “None”.

The sponsor must retain racial and ethnic data for three years, plus the current year, and must safeguard this information to prevent its use for discriminatory purposes. Access to program records containing racial and ethnic data should be kept confidential and limited to authorized personnel.