



Verification of Food Service Applications – SY 2024

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Approval vs. Verification

- Application approval - approving an application as submitted – face value
- Verification - verifying income with additional income documentation





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





Families may not cooperate because;

- No longer qualify
- Level of their education creates a disability or embarrassment
- Language issues






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 verification





Who is not required to complete verification,

- School participating on Special Provisions: CEP & Provision II non base year.
- Schools in Milk only program
- RCCI's with no day students





Even if your District is not required to complete Verification

Section 3 Direct Cert





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, one per family
 - Taken from error prone apps.
- Alt One: Random
 - 3% all approved applications, completely random, one per family
- Alt Two: Focused
 - 1% approved income applications
 - .5% approved Food Stamp applications





Error Prone Application Verification

Is the required method:

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

Alternate methods are allowed with permission



Error Prone Income

Monthly Family of 3	Yearly Family of 3	
2,594	31,118	
2,694	32,318	FREE
2,794	33,518	
3,733	44,791	
3,833	45,991	REDUCED

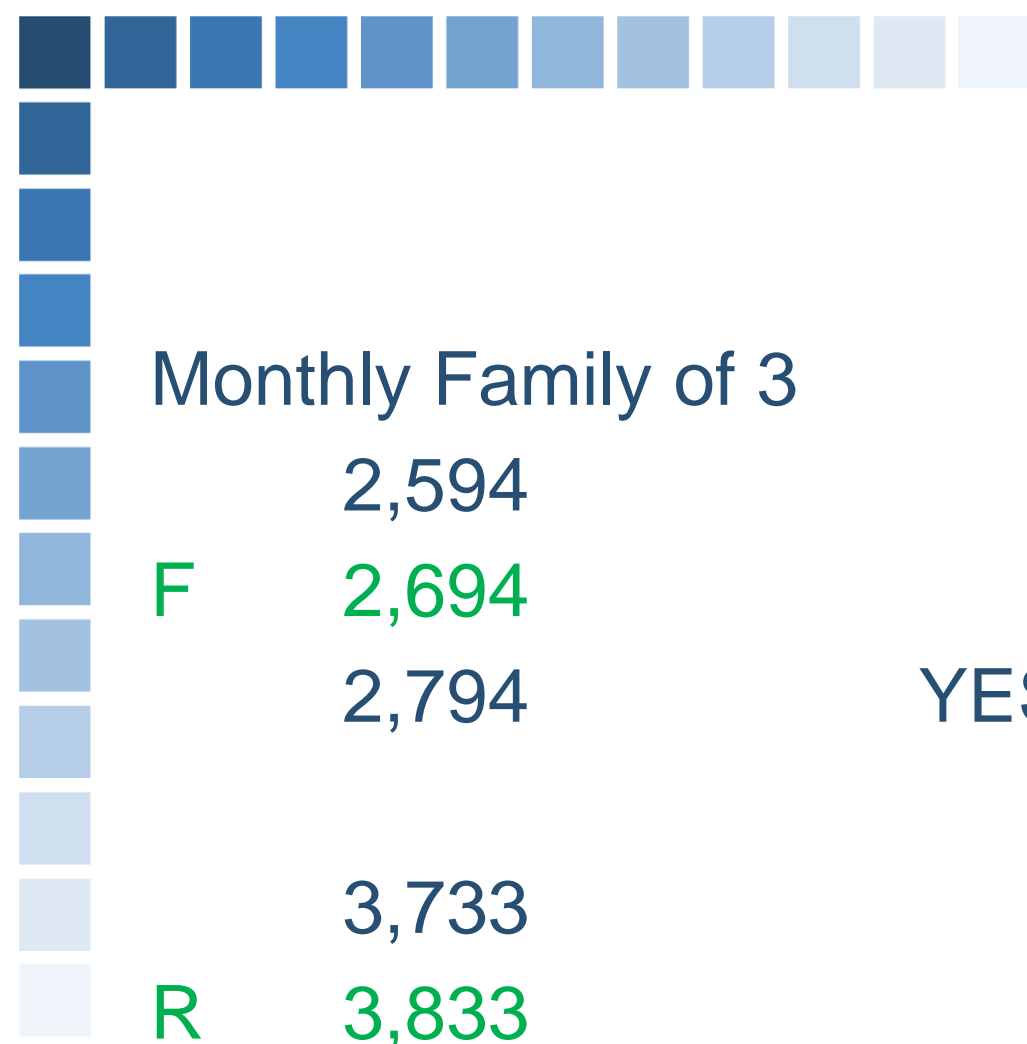




Error Prone Application?

- Family size = 3
- Income is \$2,701 monthly
- Is this an error prone application?





Monthly Family of 3

2,594

F 2,694

2,794

3,733

R 3,833

YES: 2,701 - Reduced





Error Prone Application?

- Family size = 3
- Weekly Income is \$891
- Is this an error prone application?





- Weekly Income = \$891

- $625 \times 52 = 46,332$





Annual Family of 3

31,118

FREE

32,318

33,518

44,791

REDUCED

45,991

46,332 – NO, Denied

The difference is only \$341, it is a denied application





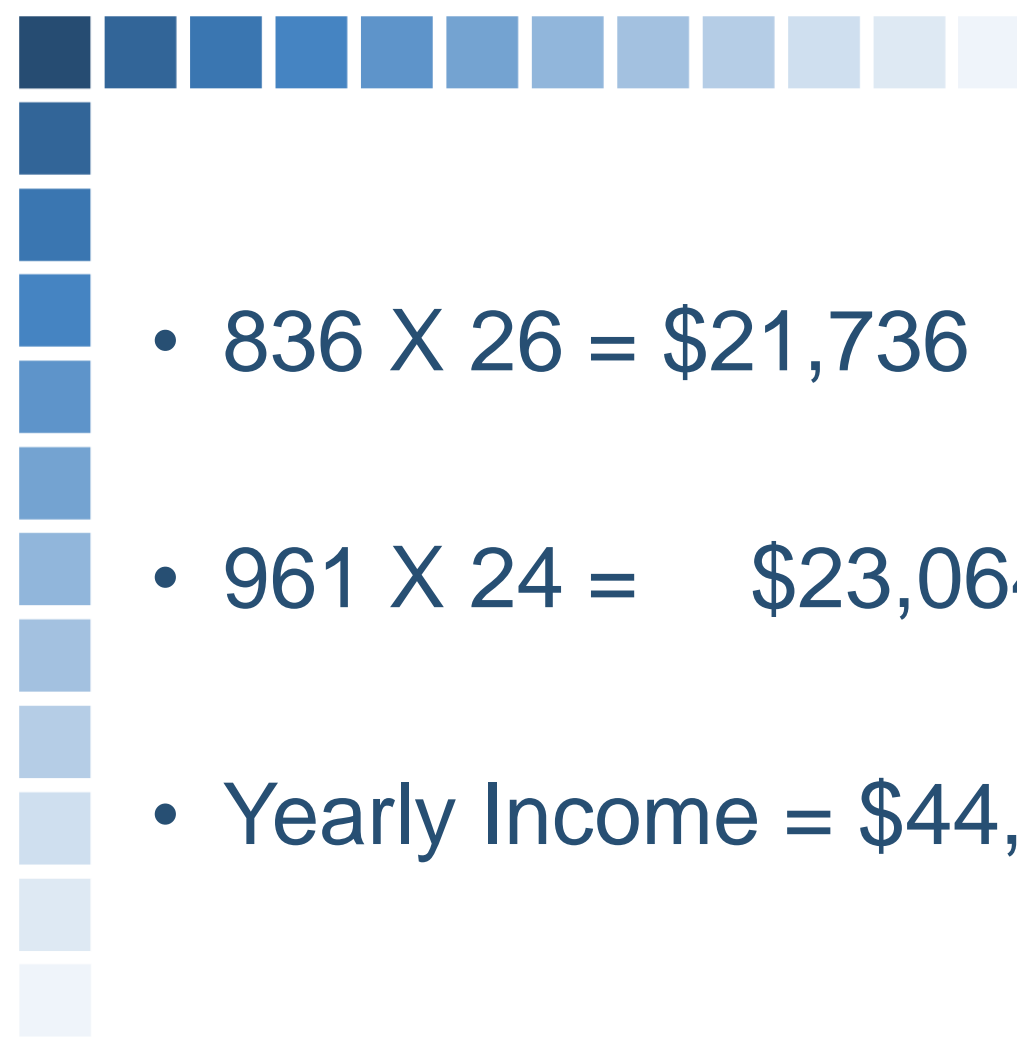
Error Prone Application?

Family size = 3

Every 2 weeks income is \$836

Twice Monthly income is \$961





- $836 \times 26 = \$21,736$

- $961 \times 24 = \$23,064$

- Yearly Income = \$44,800





Annual Family of 3

31,118

FREE

32,318

33,518

44,791

REDUCED

45,991

Yes, yearly is 44,800, difference of \$1,191



To determine the number of applications to verify use CNPweb:

- Sponsor Summary screen
- Select “Forms”
- Select “Verification Summary

Sponsor Summary

Acton Public Schools

York County

Form Name	Revision	Status	Date Approved	Action
FFVP Acton Elementary School (3)		FFVP App can not currently be entered for 2024.		
October Survey		Survey to be filled on last working day of October 2023.		
Annual Financial Report		Report to be filed after final claims entered for 2024.		<input data-bbox="1843 972 1870 992" type="button" value="+"/>
Verification Summary		Complete as soon as possible on or after October 1, 2023 to determine verification sampling options and the number of applications to verify.		<input data-bbox="1843 1011 1870 1031" type="button" value="+"/>
Verification Results		Verification is to be finalized and reported to MDOE by November 15, 2023. Verification is due in 49 days. Verification Summary must be complete before the results can be entered.		



1. Verification Method: **Basic (Error-Prone)**

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:			<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Count TOTAL free eligible students and applications approved based on a case number for any of the following programs:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP),• Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)• Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)• Foster				
4. Income Eligibility:	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Count TOTAL free & eligible students in the following categories:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduced price eligible students• Free eligible students or• Applications approved based on household size and income.				
5. Totals:	0	0	0	0



To submit Verification Summary


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



Entering the data on the previous screen will tell you how many applications must be verified:

Still on the 'Forms' tab

Select "Verification Results"

Sponsor Summary

Acton Public Schools

Checklist

Applications

Forms

Activities

Claims

Payments

Users

York County

Form Name	Revision	Status	Date Approved	Action
FFVP Acton Elementary School (3)	FFVP App can not currently be entered for 2023.			
October Survey	0	Approved	11/16/2022	
> Annual Financial Report	1	Approved	8/31/2023	
Verification Summary		Complete	11/9/2022	
Verification Results		Complete	11/18/2022	

Results Summary

Verification Type: **Basic**

Required Entered Remaining

Applications **Pull from error prone applications first** 3 0 3

Results Listing

+ Add New





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.





Selecting the samples

- Error Prone

- 3% of ALL free and reduced approved applications, one per family.
- First select from error prone applications
- If not enough EP, select from all.





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 categorical.



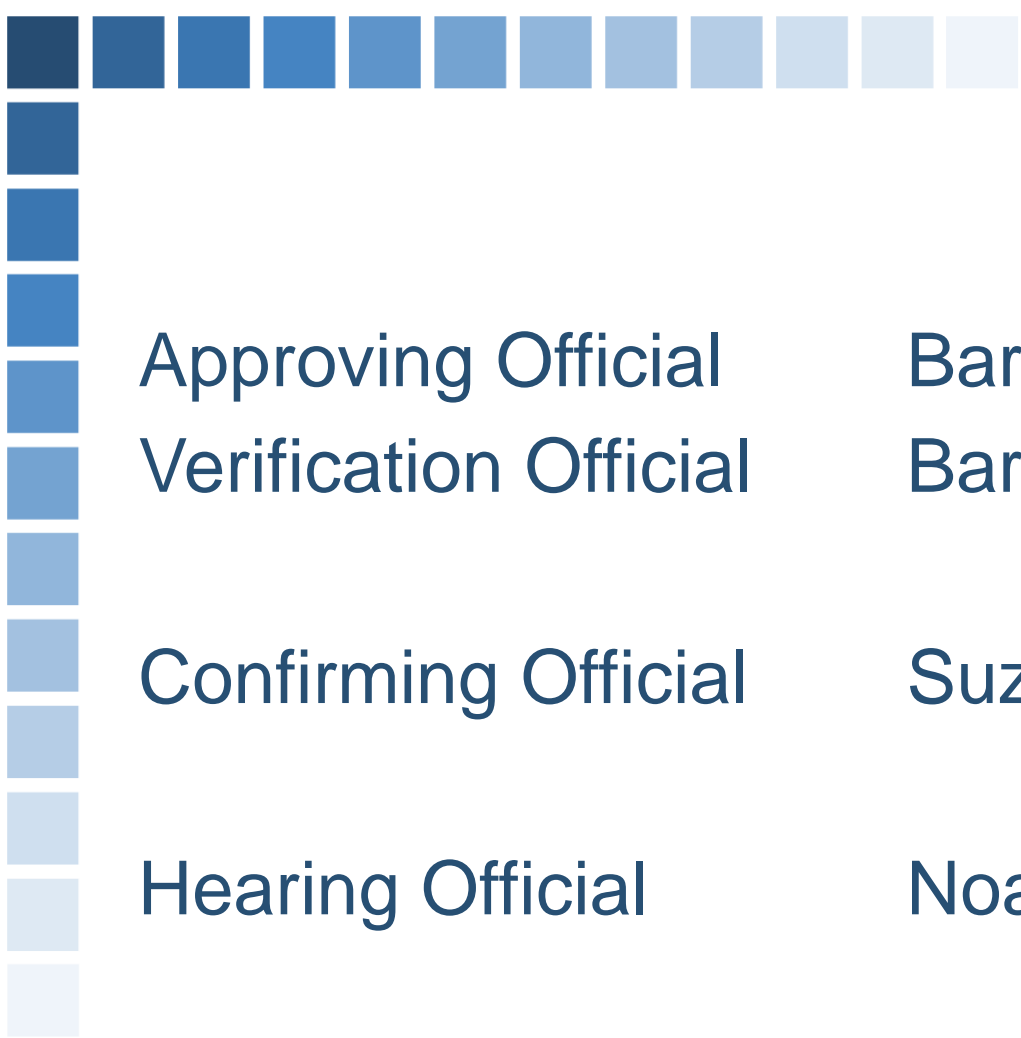


Confirmation Official

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





Approving Official

Barney Rubble

Verification Official

Barney Rubble

Confirming Official

Suzy Smith

Hearing Official

Noah Praterous





Unless:

- This does not apply to districts that use electronic approval systems.
- However, 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.

To request approval, include the method you plan to use:

Email: david.hartley@maine.gov





Alternate Methods

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





Application Selection Example

Alternate One Selection

- 145 applications
- $3\% = 4.35 = 5$
- $145 / 5 = 29$
- pull every 29th application 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.





Procedure

Let's get started

- 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.
- Not just a copy of the master letter, but copies of each individual letter sent addressed to that family.
- Must send a final letter closing the process.





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 & Applications
 - Verification
 - Verification Notification and Tracking Forms

Laws & Rules has Civil Rights Statements





Household Notification:

WE MUST CHECK YOUR APPLICATION

You must send the information we need, or contact [name] by [date], or your child(ren) will stop getting free or reduced price meals.

School: _____ Date: _____

Dear _____:

We are checking your Free and Reduced Price School Meals Application. Federal rules require that we do this to make sure only eligible children get free or reduced price meals. You must send us information to prove that **[name(s) of child(ren)][is/are]** eligible.

If possible, send copies, not original papers. If you do send originals, they will be sent back to you only if you ask.

1. IF YOU WERE RECEIVING BENEFITS FROM MAINE SNAP OR MAINE TANF WHEN YOU APPLIED FOR FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEALS, OR AT ANY TIME SINCE THEN, SEND US A COPY OF ONE OF THESE:

- **[MAINE SNAP OR MAINE TANF Certification Notice that shows dates of certification.**
- Letter from MAINE SNAP OR MAINE TANF office that shows dates of certification.
- Do not send your EBT card.

2. IF YOU GET THIS LETTER FOR A HOMELESS, MIGRANT, OR RUNAWAY CHILD, PLEASE CONTACT **[school, homeless liaison, or migrant coordinator]** FOR HELP.





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]





Non-Discrimination Statement

Federal Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible State or local Agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, *USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form* which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

(1) mail:

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

(2) fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email:

program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

(Federal statement updated 5/18/2022)





State Non-Discrimination Statement

State Non-Discrimination Statement

The Maine Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental disability, genetic information, religion, ancestry or national origin.

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.
 - Document second attempt.



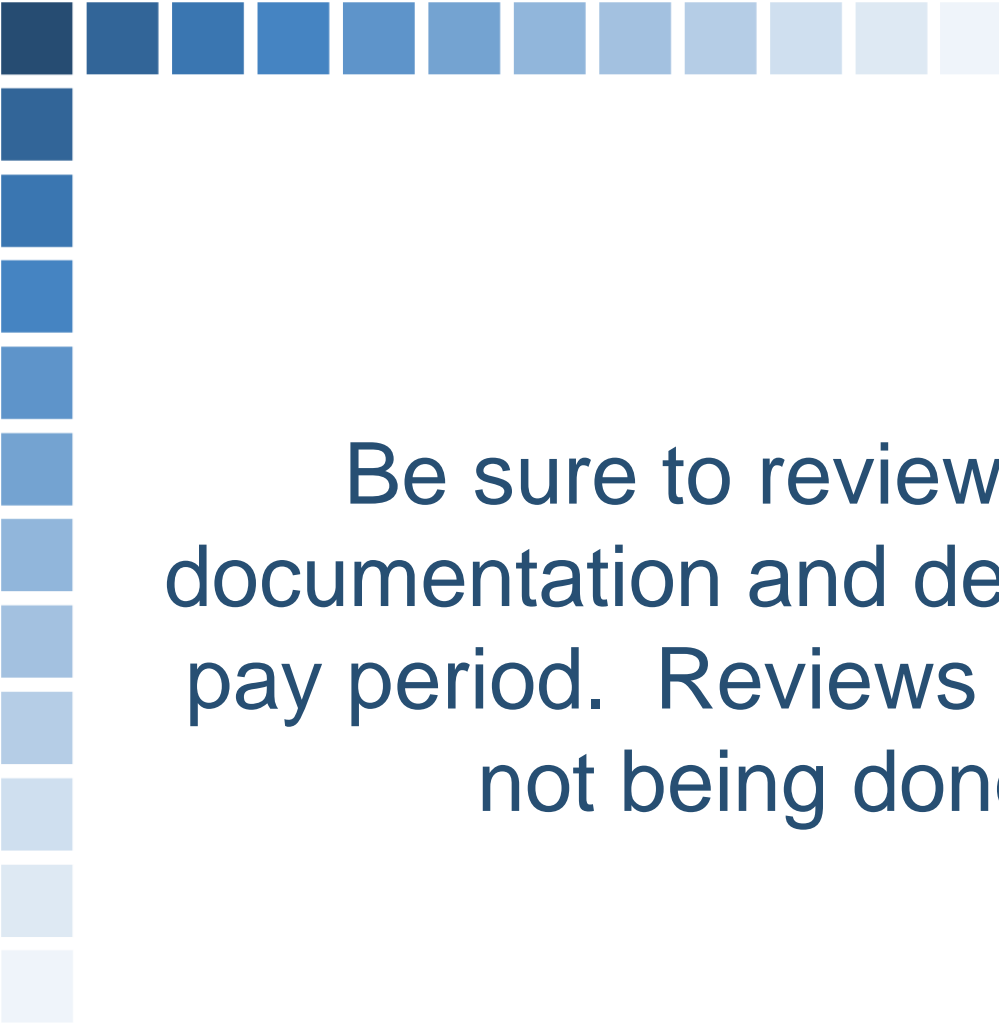


Determining Pay Periods

When reviewing the pay stub be sure to determine the correct pay schedule:

- Look at stub to determine what pay period is
- Look at check dates, if every two weeks, multiply by 26 if necessary
- If unable to determine pay periods, call and ask.
 - Document phone call





Be sure to review the submitted documentation and determine the correct pay period. Reviews have shown this is not being done correctly.





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 deadline, a few days, keep notes.
- **FOLLOW THE TIMELINE GIVEN!**





Evaluate Information Submitted

- if food stamp number check direct certification list
- check income monthly and/or yearly
- check schedule:
 - Profit or Loss From Business - C line 29
 - Profit or Loss From Farming - F line 34.





Self Employed

	Forms	Verification
Self employed, Line C:	-\$14,250.00	\$ 0.00
Spouse annual income:	<u>\$34,250.00</u>	<u>\$34,250.00</u>
TOTAL Income:	<u>\$20,000.00</u>	<u>\$34,250.00</u>





Forms

- Letter to Parents
- Request more information
- We have checked your application-closing
- Self Denial

Remember to keep copies of ALL
correspondence with the family





Completing Process

- 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.



WE HAVE CHECKED YOUR APPLICATION

School: School Name

Date: Date

Dear Parent or Guardian:

We checked the information you sent us to prove that Name(s) of child(ren) are eligible for free or reduced-price meals and have decided that:

- Your child(ren)'s eligibility has not changed.
- Starting Date, your child(ren)'s eligibility for meals will be changed **from reduced-price to free** because your income is within the free meal eligibility limits. Your child(ren) will receive meals at no cost.
- Starting Date, your child(ren)'s eligibility for meals will be changed from **free to reduced-price** because your income is over the limit. Reduced price meals cost \$ for lunch and \$ for breakfast.
- Starting Date, **your child(ren) is/are no longer eligible** for free or reduced-price meals for the following reason(s):
 - Records show that no one in your household received Maine SNAP or Maine TANF benefits.
 - Records show that the child(ren) is/are not homeless, runaway, or migrant.
 - Your income is over the limit for free or reduced-price meals.
 - You did not provide: _____
 - You did not respond to our request.

Meal cost \$ for lunch and \$ for breakfast. If your household income goes down or your household size goes up, you may apply again. If you were previously denied benefits because no one in the household received Maine SNAP or Maine TANF benefits, you may reapply based on income eligibility. If you did not provide proof of current eligibility, you will be asked to do so if you reapply.





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 29
 - Schedule F, Line 34
 - Negative = zero
- Federal Programs
- Military Housing

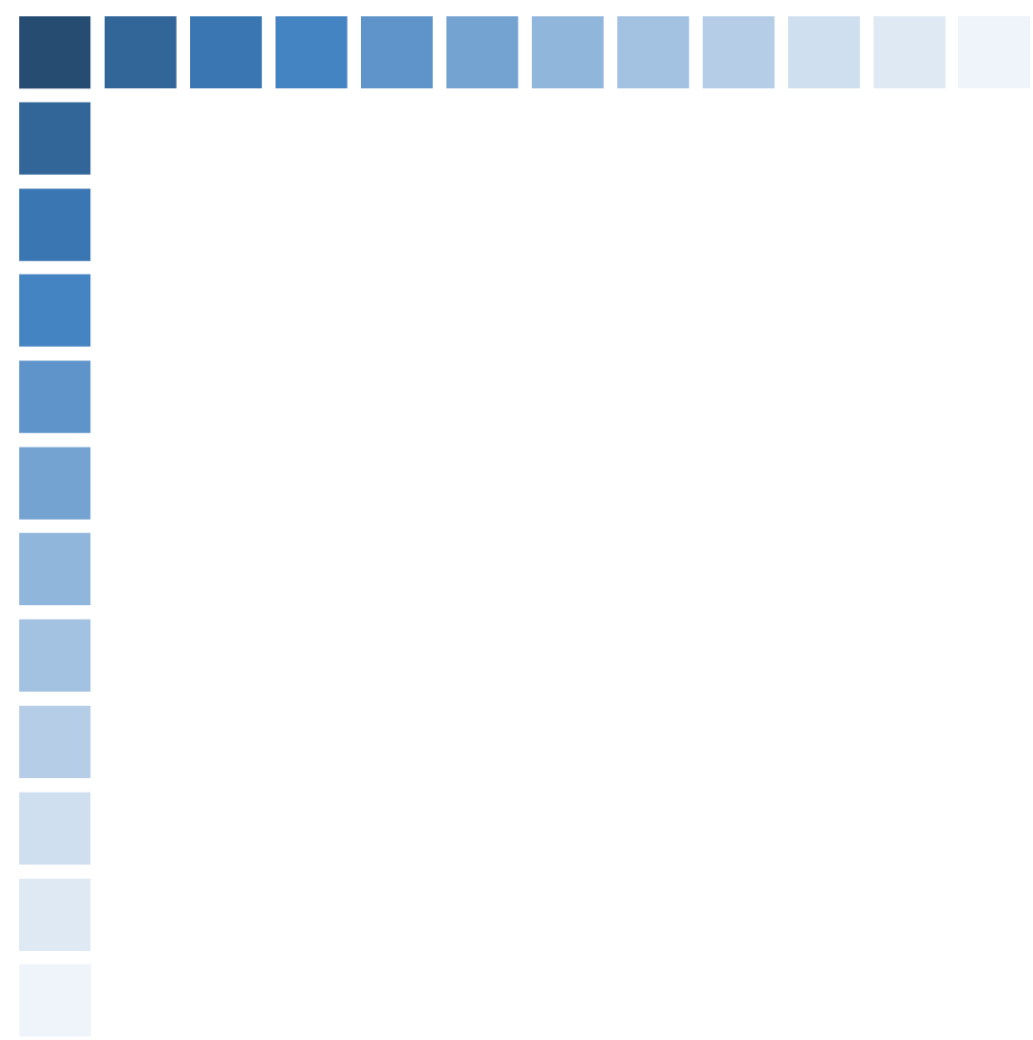




Excluded Federal Programs

- 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







Record Keeping

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





Where to Get More Information to Complete Verification

- Eligibility Guidance from USDA
- <http://www.maine.gov/doe/nutrition/resources/documents/EligibilityManualJuly2015.pdf>
- Maine Department of Education Food Service Division 624-6842



- 
- 
- Form **MUST** be submitted online CNPweb by

NOVEMBER 20.

- This form is **ONLY** accepted through CNPweb



Verification in CNPweb

- Sponsor Summary
- Forms
- Verification Summary

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 as soon as possible on or after October 1, 2021 to determine verification sampling options and the number of applications to verify.		+
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 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:**

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

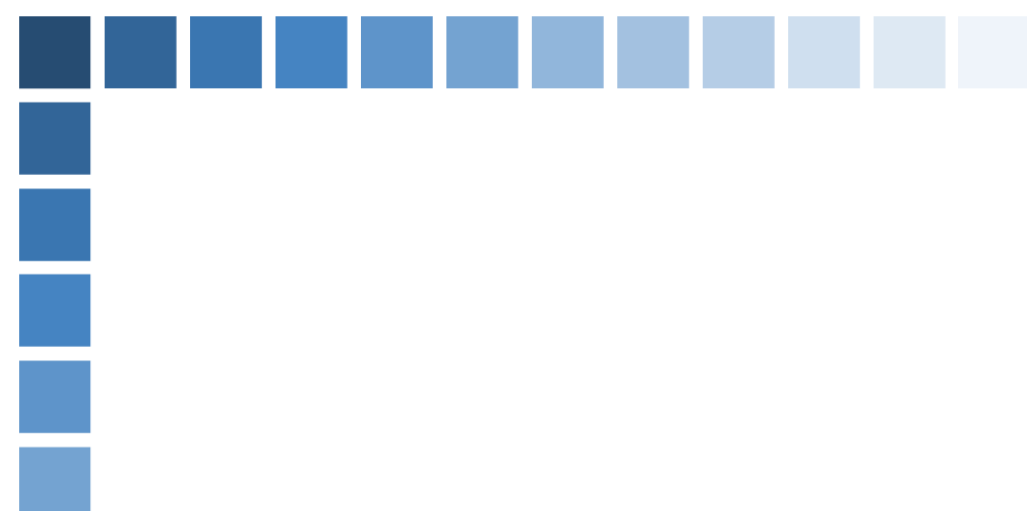
4. **Income Eligibility:**

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:**





Sponsor Summary

Falmouth Public Schools (174)

Cumberland County

Checklist

Applications

Forms

Activities

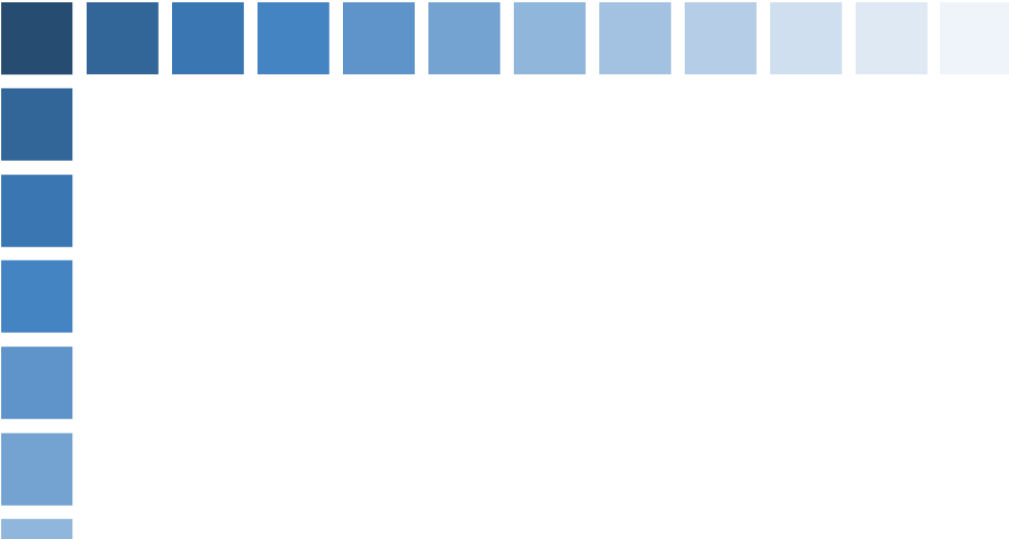
Claims

Payments

Users

Form Name	Revision	Status	Date Approved	Action
FFVP Falmouth Elementary School (179)		FFVP App can not currently be entered for 2024.		
FFVP Falmouth Middle School (178)		FFVP App can not currently be entered for 2024.		
October Survey		Survey to be filled on last working day of October 2023.		
Annual Financial Report		Report to be filed after final claims entered for 2024.		+
Verification Summary		Complete	9/21/2023	👁️ ✎️ 🗑️
Verification Results		Verification is to be finalized and reported to MDOE by November 15, 2023. Verification is due in 55 days. Verification Summary must be complete before the results can be entered.		+





Results Summary

Verification Type: **Basic**

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

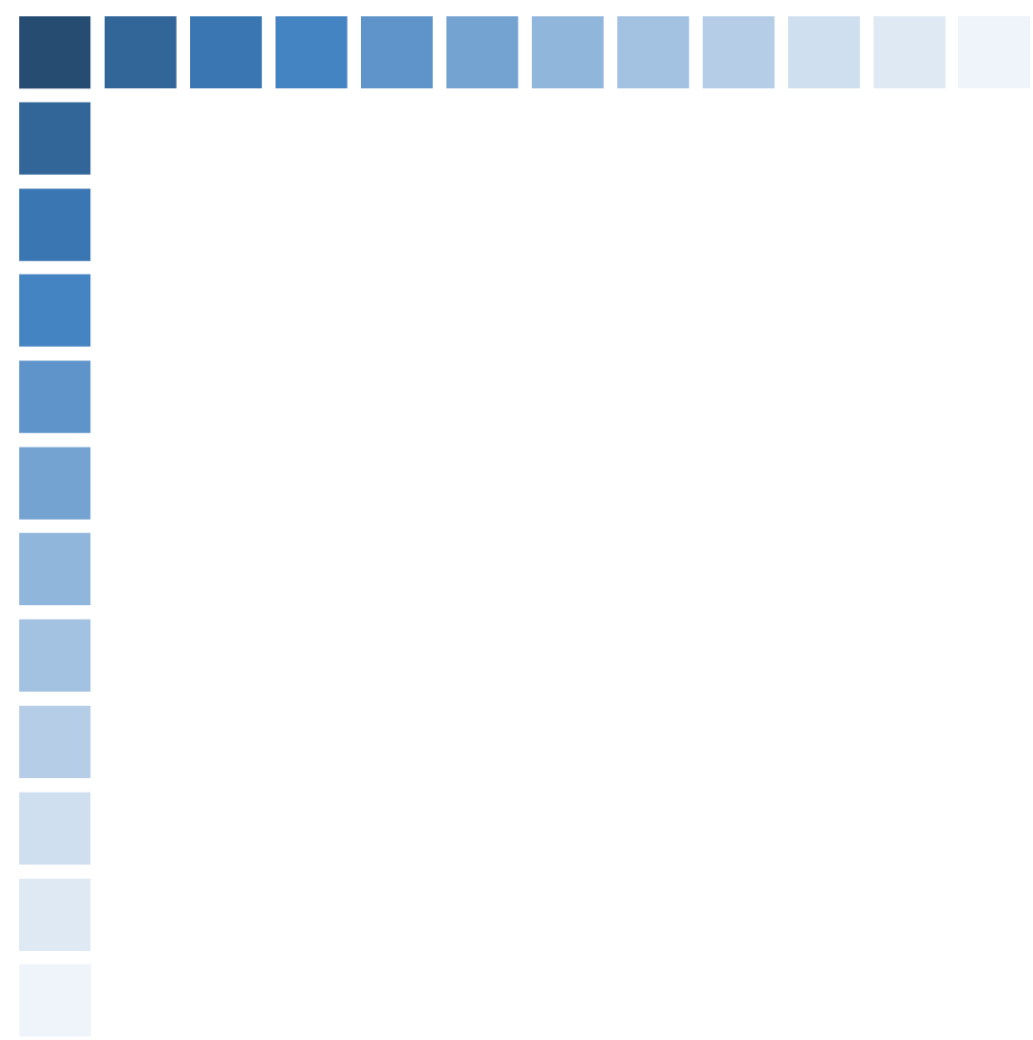
Results Listing

[+ 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](#)





You cannot certify until required # of applications are verified

Results Summary

Verification Type: **Basic**

	Required	Entered	Remaining
Applications **Pull from error prone applications first**	3	2	1

Results Listing

App Id	Head of Household	Students on Apps	Original Benefits	Verified Benefits	Verification Date	Verification for Cause?	Direct Verification	Action
1	jones	2	Free	No Response	10/1/2020	No		
2	williby	1	Reduced Price	No Response	10/1/2020	No		



Certify Results

Once completed a final screen with all the results you will need to “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

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





If you have questions

email address: david.hartley@maine.gov

Phone Number: 624-6878

Any reviewer can answer questions about
the process.





Web Address: Student Eligibility page

Information:

<https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/nutrition/studenteligibility>

- Verification Tab
- Resources Tab



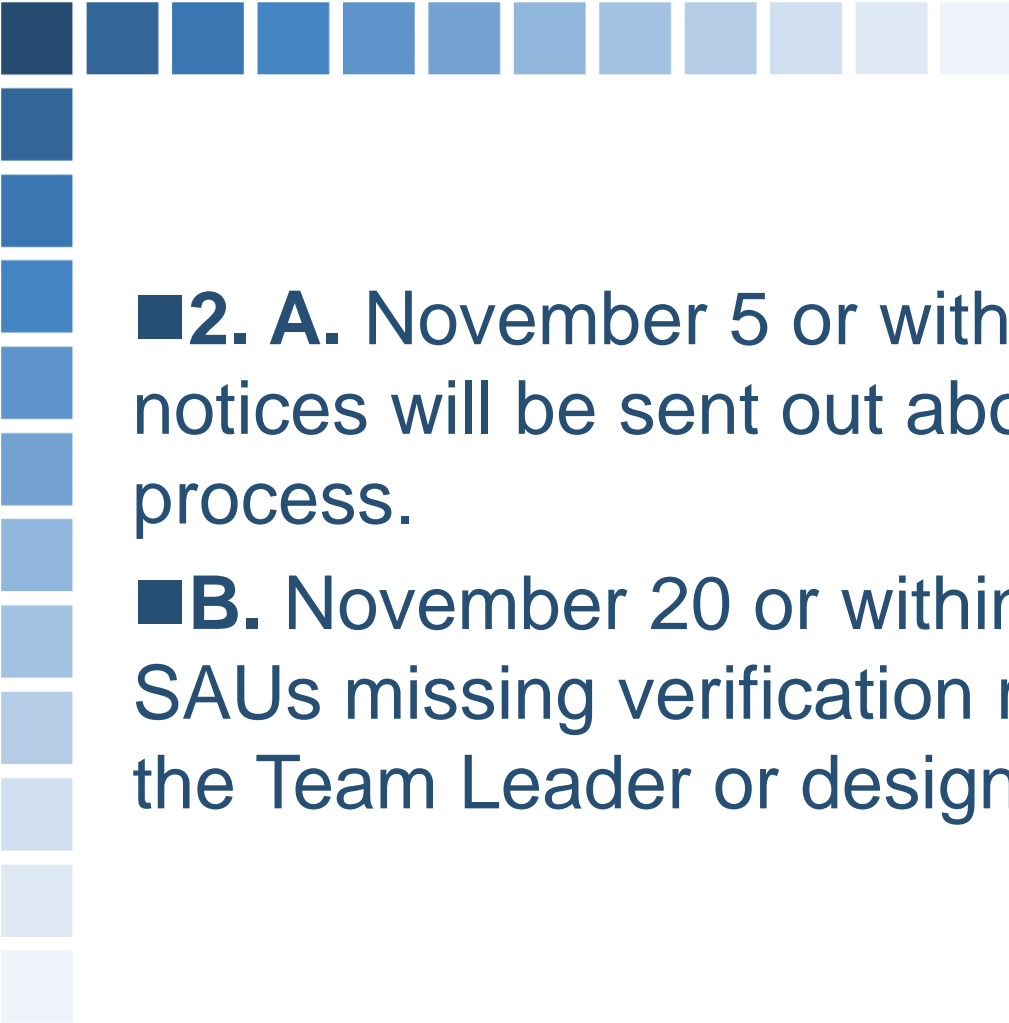


VERIFICATION PROCEDURE FOR MISSING OR LATE REPORTS

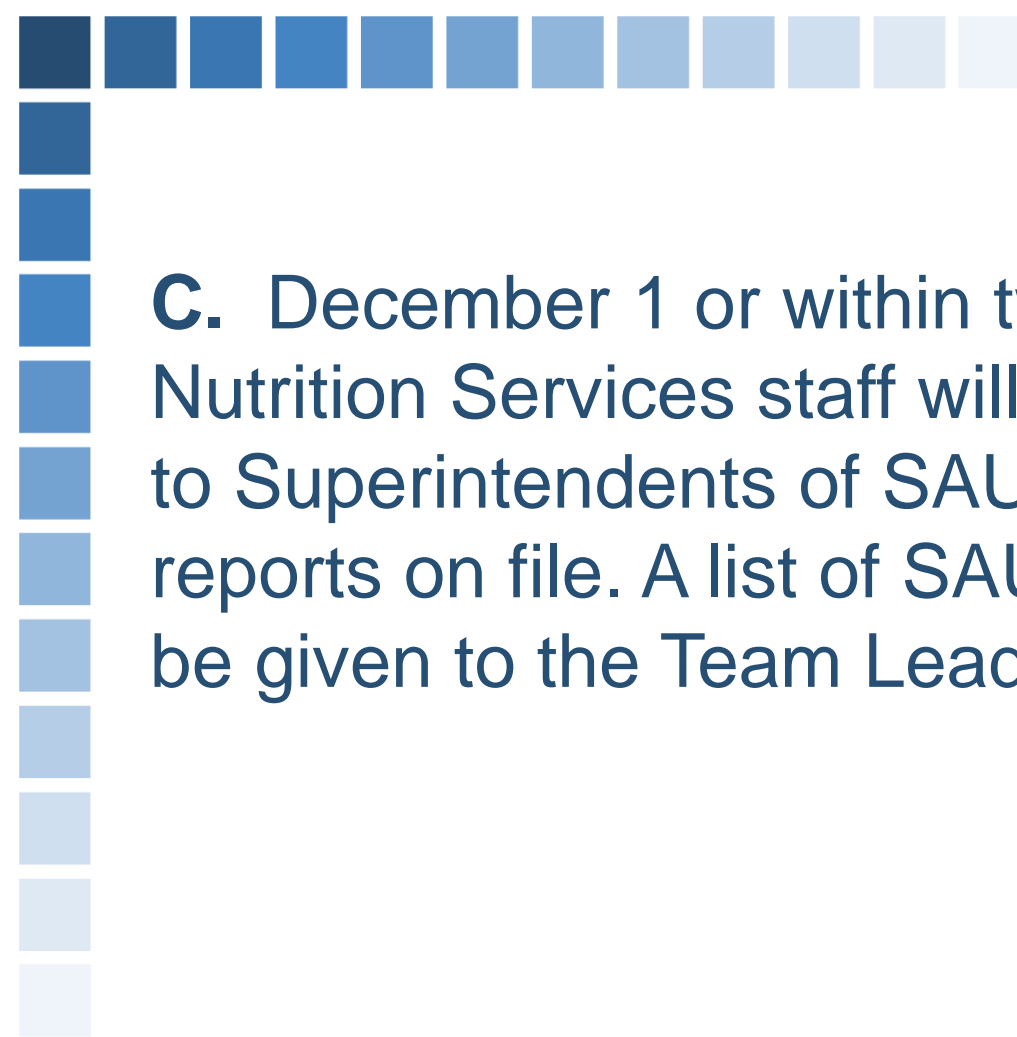
PURPOSE: To provide a consistent plan for handling missing or late verification reports submitted to the State Agency.

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



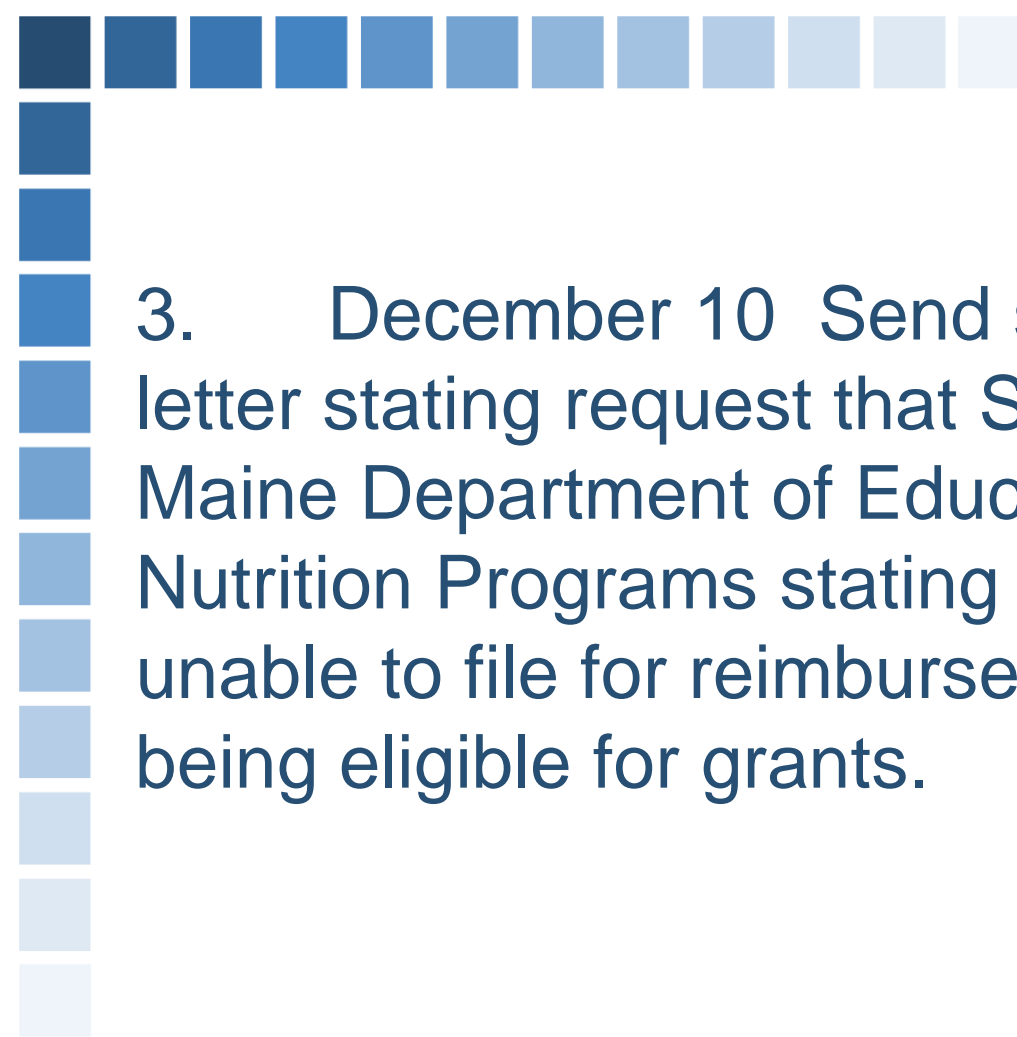
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- **2. A.** November 5 or within two days, reminder notices will be sent out about the verification process.
 - **B.** November 20 or within two days, list of SAUs missing verification reports submitted to the Team Leader or designee.





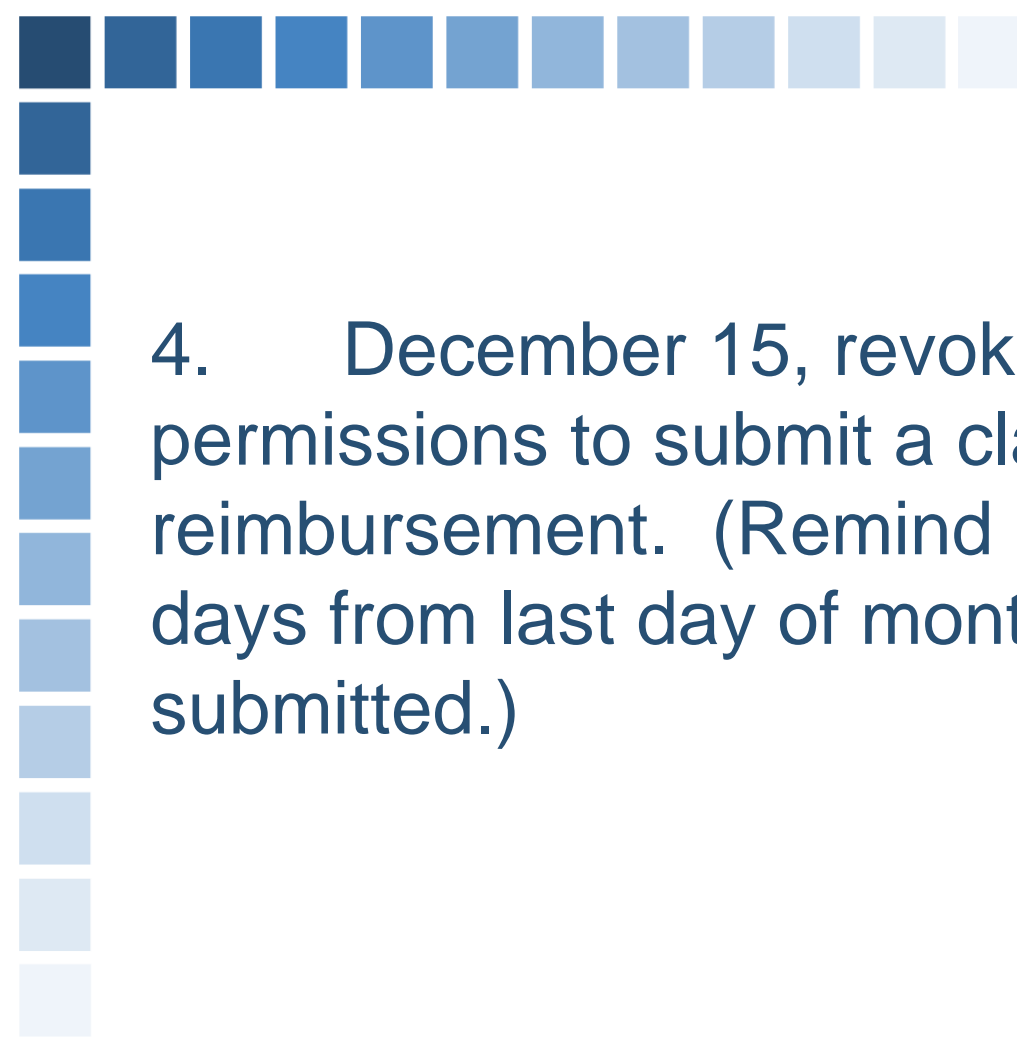
C. December 1 or within two days, Child Nutrition Services staff will send reminder letters to Superintendents of SAUs without verification reports on file. A list of SAUs receiving letters will be given to the Team Leader or designee.





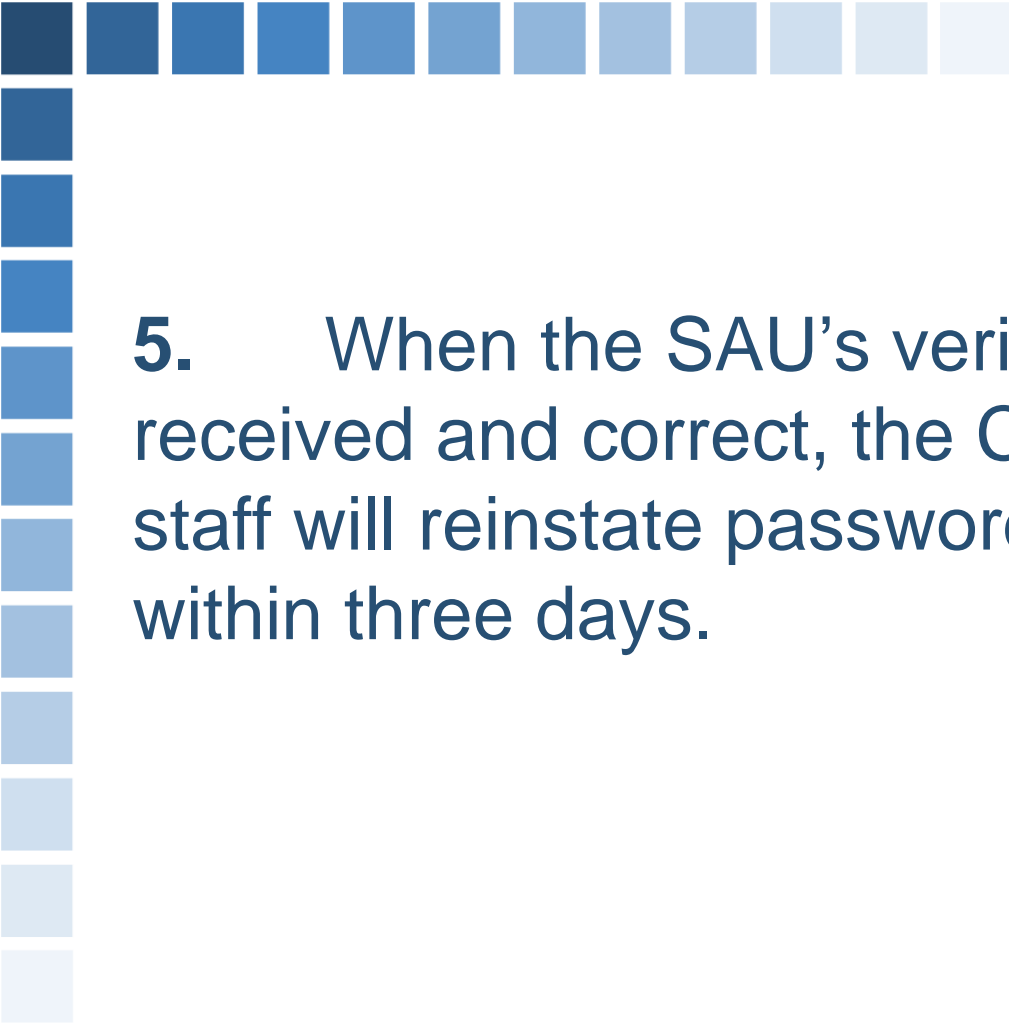
3. December 10 Send second reminder letter stating request that School District contact Maine Department of Education Food and Nutrition Programs stating possible actions – unable to file for reimbursement, chance at not being eligible for grants.






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.)





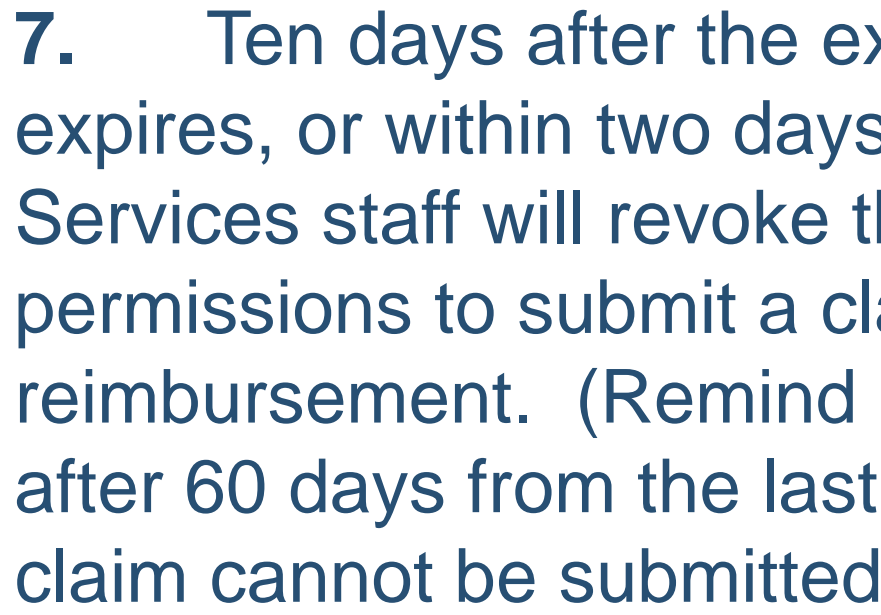
5. When the SAU's verification report is received and correct, the Child Nutrition Office staff will reinstate passwords and permissions within three days.





6. If a SAU is unable to meet the Federal required deadline, the Superintendent must contact the Department of Education, Child Nutrition Services via U.S. mail or electronically and request a waiver for an extension including the following: reason, estimated completion date and actions to be taken to meet deadline next school year. **Waivers will not be granted past 12/15 without NERO-FNS approval.**





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.)



QUESTIONS ???

