

# OSPI CNS School Meal Programs Reference Sheet

## Verification

Verification is the confirmation of current eligibility for free and reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). Verification is **only** required when eligibility has been approved through the application process (not directly certified students).

## Requirements

- ✓ LEAs must annually verify eligibility of children from a sample of household applications approved for free and reduced-price meal benefits.
- ✓ LEAs must complete the annual Verification process by November 15 each year.
- ✓ The Verification Summary Report must be submitted annually to OSPI Child Nutrition Services (CNS) by February 1 each year.

## Process

### Step 1. Count sorted applications on **October 1**.

- Count the number of applications in each category.
- Sort applications into 'free' and 'reduced-price'.

### Step 2. Determine sampling method (based on previous years non-response rate)

- LEAs with  $\geq 20\%$  non-response rate must use the 3% Focused Method
- LEAs with  $< 20\%$  non-response rate can choose
  - 3% Random Method,
  - 3% Focused Method, or the
  - 1%+ ½% Focused Method

### Step 3. Select applications and conduct Second Party Confirmation Review (to determine accuracy of the initial approval of eligibility)

- Confirmation Review must be conducted by someone other than the Approving Official
- LEAs with an automated application system may apply for a waiver of the confirmation review



## Confirmation Review

Application is	Confirmed as	What to do next
Free	Free	Continue with Verification process.
Reduced	Reduced	Continue with Verification process.
Reduced	Free	Increase benefit immediately. Notify household. Continue with Verification process.
Free	Reduced	Do not change. Continue with Verification process.
Free or Reduced	Paid	Notify household. Do not verify. Select another application.

### Step 4. Begin Verification of applications

- Notify Household(s) (with 10 day response due date)
- Send 2<sup>nd</sup> notice to non-responding households (includes 10 day response due date and notice of termination of benefits for failure to respond)

### Step 5. Review submitted household documents

### Step 6. Determine results of Verification and apply action as necessary

- Send notice of Adverse Action to households as applicable

### Step 7. Complete electronic Verification Summary Report and submit to OSPI

This includes count of number of students approved as free or reduced price eligible based on household size and income on **last operating day of October.**

## Resources

- OSPI CNS [Free and Reduced Price Information and Verification](#)
- [USDA Eligibility Manual for School Meals](#)

## Acronym Reference

- CNS - Child Nutrition Services
- LEA – Local Education Agency
- NSLP – National School Lunch Program
- OSPI - Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- SBP – School Breakfast Program