Meal Application Materials – Web-based and Scanned

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are encouraged to make electronic applications available and accept applications electronically. LEAs may also use scanned applications. Both formats must meet program requirements and web-based applications must comply with security requirements.

LEAs are highly encouraged to consult with district legal counsel about signatures, security and applicable state laws before contracting for a web-based meal application system.

Requirements:

LEAs must ensure web-based and scanned meal applications meet all USDA requirements and accurately approve/deny free and reduced price meal benefits.

Web-based Applications:

✓ Data must be secured and protected against loss, disclosure, and misuse.

✓ Must be able to provide legal binding electronic signatures.
  - Level 2 authentication meets program requirements.

✓ The system should include a statement explaining how to obtain a paper application a household should need one.

Web-based and Scanned Applications:

✓ The application must contain the information required on the USDA prototype meal application.

✓ Must include a question or data field to indicate a child's migrant or homeless status.

✓ May ask for a student identification number or a child's birthdate.
  - The application is considered complete without this information.
  - The electronic system must advance without the information if it is not provided.

Standard Meal Application Requirements

LEAs must include:

✓ Use of Information Statement-

- *"I certify (promise) that all information on this application is true and that all income is reported. I understand that this information is given in connection with the receipt of federal funds and that school officials may verify (check) the information. I am aware that if I purposely give false information, my children may lose meal benefits, and I may be prosecuted under applicable State and Federal laws."*

✓ Children's Racial and Ethnic Identities section.

✓ Indication of *No Income* statement.

✓ Option for providing a case number for Basic Food, TANF, or FDPIR, as well as foster child.

✓ Full Non-discrimination statement.

✓ Field for reporting total number of household members

- Web-based application requires household to confirm a total computed by the application.

✓ A section requesting only the last four digits of Social Security Number from households applying for household size and income only.

✓ Should communicate to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) households how they may request language assistance if they need assistance completing the form.

✓ May allow for consent to share information for reduced fees for other programs.

Households in Washington State may use a case number to apply for meal benefits for the following programs:
- Basic Food (Washington's version of the Federal program Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Food Distribution Programs on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

These programs vary from state to state and you must ensure the electronic system does not approve benefits for non-Washington state programs.

Reference:

- [SP 10-2007 Update on Electronic Transactions in the Child Nutrition Programs](#)
- [SP 19-2017 Reporting Annual Income on School Meal Applications](#)
- [SP 04-2017 Model Functional Requirements for State and Local Technology Systems](#)
- [SP 34-2016 Revised Prototype Free and Reduced Price Application Materials for SY 2016-17](#)

Resources:

- [Eligibility Manual for School Meals](#)

Acronym Reference	
-CNS	Child Nutrition Services
-NSLP	National School Lunch Program
-LEA	Local Education Agency
-LEP	Limited English Proficiency
-OSPI	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
-SP	School Programs
-USDA	United States Department of Agriculture