

Business and Non-Instructional Operations

Auxiliary Services

Verification Requirements

The Watertown Unified School District establishes the following guidelines relating to the verification of free and reduced applications as established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Background

Verification is:

- A. Confirmation of eligibility for free and reduced price benefits under the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs and free milk under the Wisconsin School Day Milk Program.
- B. Verification process must be started on or after October 1st. Verification completion deadline is November 15th.

Verification Procedures

- A. Number of applications that must be verified:
 1. A minimum of three percent or 3,000 (whichever is less) or the total number of approved applications on file by October 1st.
- B. Applications can be selected by:
 1. Error-prone profiling
 - a. Applications are selected which have a high probability of containing errors. It is the most effective method of sampling.
 2. Random Selection
 - a. Every application has an equal chance of being selected but technique makes no provision to focus on applications likely to have problems.
 3. Other Methods
 - a. The school district may use its own sampling procedure but must ensure nondiscrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability.
- C. Notification of households selected for verification:
 1. Households must be notified if selected for verification. Notification must include specific information:
 - a. Types of acceptable information;
 - b. Proof of benefits under the Assistance Programs;
 - c. Failure to provide information/cooperation will result in termination of benefits; and,
 - d. Name of school official to be contacted for assistance.
 2. Suggest timeframe (10 days) be included by which households should respond.
- D. Confirmation of a household's income:
 1. Written Evidence
 - a. Primary method to be used;
 - b. Verify most recent month available, or average income level;
 - c. Examine copy of documents or signed statements from income sources;
 - d. An official letter or notice of eligibility for children who are receiving benefits from an Assistance Program;
 - e. Household documents participation.

2. Other Methods — used when written evidence is not sufficient.
 - a. Collateral Contact
 1. Verbal confirmation of household’s circumstances by person outside of household;
 2. Household must be notified if collateral contact is needed;
 3. Selected by or approved by the household.
 - b. School Conference
 1. Face—to-face interview with household member and review of income information.
3. Agency Records
 - a. May be used instead of, or in conjunction with, written evidence to confirm household’s income;
 - b. Information may be available from other government agencies to confirm household income;
 - c. State/local laws may limit information sharing. Local check should be made.
- E. Benefits may be terminated when:
 1. Household is unable to confirm current eligibility;
 2. Household refuses to cooperate; or,
 3. Household has right to appeal termination.

Recordkeeping

- A. Records that need to be kept by a School Food Authority:
 1. Summary of verification efforts;
 2. Total number of applications on file on October 1st;
 3. Percentage or number of applications verified; and,
 4. List of Households (names) verified.
- B. Records which may be useful in case of an appeal/review:
 1. Application selection procedures;
 2. Dates notices were sent;
 3. Notes on any contacts made/or required follow-up attempt to contact the household;
 4. Results of verification;
 5. Reasons for any denial or change of eligibility; and,
 6. Signature of verification official.

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