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POLICY UPDATE



03.15.2017 Reporting Annual Income on School Meal Applications

USDA clarified guidance on the permissibility of including annual income reporting frequencies on free and reduced price school meals applications. Annual income reporting is allowed on the applications because it may be the best way to capture income that occurs at infrequent intervals, such as weekly paychecks, monthly child support, seasonal work, agriculture work, or self-employment. Reporting some income sources as annual amounts on the free and reduced meal application may provide the local educational agency (LEA) with the most accurate measure of a household's current income and may reduce improper program payments tied to applicant error. The memo also revises the existing Administrative Review requirements for state agencies as they relate to applications on which annualized income is reported in whole or in part. State agencies and LEAs are no longer required to issue pre-certification reviews or confirm annual incomes with the sources, as previously called for in past versions of the *Eligibility Manual for School Meals* and the *Administrative Review Manual*. [View the USDA memo for more information.](#)

03.16.2017 Community Eligibility Provision: Annual Notification and Publication Requirements

USDA released a memo detailing guidance on the annual Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) notification and publication requirements. State agencies are required to annually notify local education agencies (LEAs) of district-wide eligibility for CEP and LEAs must annually submit school-level eligibility data to the state agency. By May 1, state agencies must publish lists of eligible and near-eligible LEAs and schools on their state agency websites and submit the lists to the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) for publishing. The memo goes on to provide detailed information to assist state agencies with fulfilling the CEP notification and publication requirements, and encourages state agencies to use the [USDA-developed reporting template](#). [View the full USDA memo for more information.](#)

03.17.2017 Reporting Guidance for Results of the Administrative Reviews Conducted in School Year 2015-2016

New reporting guidance for the state agencies that conducted reviews utilizing the Administrative Review process for SY 2015-16 are provided. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is requesting from state agencies who utilized the Administrative Review process two complete sets of SY 2015-16 Administrative Review forms, tools and workbooks for two school food authorities (SFAs). The memo lists requirements necessary of the SFAs whose reviews are selected for submission. State agencies that used the Coordinated Review Effort in SY 2015-16 will be contacted with information on reporting and FNS-640 has been revised and can no longer be used to report on the Coordinated Review Effort. [Review the full USDA memo.](#)

04.06.2017 Local School Wellness Policy: Guidance Q&As

The USDA [released a memo](#) outlining local school wellness policy guidance in a Q&A format. Local education agencies (LEA) that participate in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program are required to implement a local school wellness policy that promotes the health of students and addresses the problem of childhood obesity. Local school wellness policy regulations were finalized on July 29, 2016 by the USDA Food and Nutrition

Questions or comments?

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Service (FNS), and revised LEA policies must be in place by June 30, 2017. The memorandum's Q&As outline regulations and guidance and are broken up into several categories: general, programs included, food and beverage marketing, triennial assessment, administrative review, public notification, goals, wellness leadership and involvement and technical support. More information about the wellness policy can be found at the USDA FNS's [local school wellness policy resource center](#).

04.10.2017 Child Nutrition Programs: Income Eligibility Guidelines

This [notice](#) announces the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS) annual adjustments to the Income Eligibility Guidelines used to determine eligibility for free and reduced price meals and free milk for the period from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. Annual adjustments are made every year, as required by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, to account for changes in the Consumer Price Index. The guidelines are used by participants in the National School Lunch Program (and Commodity School Program), School Breakfast Program, Special Milk Program for Children, Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Food Service Program. The [notice](#) contains a chart displaying the Income Eligibility Guidelines, as well as explanations for how the income calculations were defined and made.

04.12.2017 Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request-Child Nutrition Database

This [collection](#) is the voluntary submission of nutrient data from the child nutrition food industry to update and expand the Child Nutrition (CN) Database in support of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act. The CN Database is updated annually with brand name or manufactured foods commonly used in school food service. The paper form (FNS-710, CN Database Qualification Report) and [online web tool](#) were revised to add two nutrients, vitamin D and potassium, and to remove an obsolete ingredient list. The form was also edited to update terminology and instructions. The new spreadsheet version was developed to facilitate submission of bulk data. The burden should not be affected by these changes. Comments on this voluntary request for information can be submitted through www.regulations.gov or emailed to Natalie Partridge at natalie.partridge@fns.usda.gov with "CN Database Comments" in the subject line.

04.18.2017 FNS-640: Administrative Review Report Form and Instructions

The USDA [released a memo](#) that outlined the redesign of the FNS-640 as well as its instructions, system updates and upcoming activities. The redeveloped FNS-640 was approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on September 12, 2016, but State agency testing is not complete. Several State agencies will participate in a pilot to test the functionality of the form and the instructions, and will then participate in a panel to share their experiences and best practices during the FNS-640 pre-conference workshop at the SNA Annual Conference in July. Along with [the memo](#) itself, the [FNS-640 Administrative Review Report spreadsheet](#), [FNS-640A Instructions](#), and [FNS-640B Instructions](#) are also provided. The new FNS-640 is scheduled to be available in the Food Program Reporting System (FPRS) by January 2018, and the first report, reflecting Administrative Reviews conducted in School Year 2016-2017, will be due in March 2018. State agencies with questions should contact their respective FNS Regional Office.

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