

Commissioner's Memo
9/28/2021

National School Lunch Program Verification Collection Report

Memo Information

Memo Number **CNU-22-008**

Memo Date 9/28/2021

Memo Type Regulatory

Unit Child Nutrition

Regulatory Authority Public Law 110-246; Public Law 111-296; 7 CFR 245

Response Required YES

Attention Superintendents; Child Nutrition Directors/Managers

Primary Contact Information

Name Donna Ratliff

Phone Number 501-324-9502

Email donna.ratliff@ade.arkansas.gov

Memo Text

ATTENTION: SUPERINTENDENT, CHILD NUTRITION DIRECTORS, VERIFICATION CONTACTS

All Arkansas public school districts receiving federal funds from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the administration of district child nutrition meal programs are required to submit an annual school district FNS-742 Verification Collection Report to the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Child Nutrition Unit (CNU). CNU is required to submit the statewide data compiled from the districts verification collection reports to USDA.

Guidelines for completing the Verification process may be found in section 6 of the "Eligibility Manual for School Meals":

https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/admin/Files/20210202111707_Eligibility_Manual.pdf

A "Step by Step Guide to Verification" is available under the "Important Information" tab on the CNU webpage:

<https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Offices/child-nutrition-unit/important-information/steps-to-verification>

Standard Sampling (Formerly Called Error Prone Sampling)

Districts must perform Standard Sampling for one or more of the following reasons:

1. 2020-2021 Non-response rate of verified applications or
2. Errors were discovered in the district's verification process
3. Administrative Review findings involving the district's verification process
4. Districts chose to perform the Standard (Default) Verification Method or failed to apply for an Alternate method

Alternate Sampling (Alternate I and Alternate II)

Districts were notified by DESE Commissioner's Memo CNU-22-007 "Child Nutrition Application for Alternate I or Alternate II Verification Sample Size" that they had to apply and be approved by CNU to perform an "Alternate" verification sampling method. The application deadline to apply was September 17, 2021. Districts were notified by email of approval to use an alternate sample size and appear on the Alternate I or Alternate II Verification Sampling lists.

The district is required to use the Standard Sampling method if the district did not apply by the deadline and did not receive written approval for the Alternate Sampling methods.

The districts listed on the attached "Required Standard List" will not be approved to perform an Alternate verification sampling method.

Verification Sampling Methods:

The attached Excel spreadsheet has four tabs:

- "Required Standard"
- "Standard by Default"
- "Alternate I"
- "Alternate II"

Districts are to open the tabs in the Excel spreadsheet and locate the district's LEA and district name to determine which Verification Sampling Method to complete for school year 2021-2022.

Special Provisions:

All districts must complete and submit the FNS-742 Verification Collection Report.

Provision 2 districts operating a non-base year and Community Eligibility districts will not appear on the "Verification Sampling Methods" spreadsheets. The districts do not collect free and reduced meal applications and are not required to perform verification.

The deadline for submitting the district's FNS-742 Verification Collection Report to DESE CNU is Wednesday, December 15, 2021. Please see 2021 Verification Timeline attached to this memo.

How to Complete Verification

Follow the step-by-step guide to the verification process, go to the Child Nutrition webpage at <https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Offices/child-nutrition-unit/important-information/steps-to-verification>, click the "Important Information" tab, and scroll to #1. "Verification".

Each district must report to DESE, CNU the summary of verification results by using the attached excel FNS-742 Verification Collection Report. The form should be downloaded from the Child Nutrition webpage and renamed using the district's local education agency (LEA) number.

Each district must submit one report for the entire district. In order to complete the FNS-742 Verification Collection Report, a school district will need the following:

- Total number of applications and students approved for free meals based on a SNAP case number
- Total number of applications and students approved for free meals based on household size and income
- Total number of applications and students approved for reduced-priced meals
- Total number of students directly certified
- Total number of students who appear on a categorical free list (Homeless, Migrant, Direct Certification, Foster)
- Results of verification by application – Verification Tracker Form

The FNS-742 Verification Collection Report contains three pages (tabs) in the Excel workbook:

- Instructions for completing the FNS-742 Verification Collection Report
- FNS-742 Verification Collection Report
- Application Data Sheet with Instructions

REMINDERS AND BEST PRACTICES:

- Refer the Child Nutrition webpage, "Important Information" tab for step-by-step instructions on completion of the verification process.
- Refer to section 6 in the 2017 Eligibility Manual for School Meals
- Check and Re-Check number of applications to verify. Remember to always round up.
- Do not pull extra applications "just in case" for verification
- Complete verification tracker for all applications verified, including verification for cause
- Print completed FNS-742 Verification Collection Report
- Save completed FNS-742 Verification Collection Report to desktop
- Submit FNS-742 in Excel format – not as a PDF

Email completed FNS-742 Verification Collection Report to ade.chnutverify@ade.arkansas.gov. The district will receive a bounce back email that the report has been received. **STOP! PRINT this email for audit purposes. This is your receipt that the report has been submitted on time.** When the district receives the automatic reply, no additional action is required on behalf of the district. The district will be notified by phone or email if there is a problem or if additional information is needed to complete the FNS-742 Verification Collection Report. There will NOT be additional automatic replies for subsequent emails due to revisions.

The body of the email MUST include:

- District Name
- District LEA Number

- Name of verification contact person
- Phone number of verification contact person
- Completed DESE Verification Collection Report (Excel Format)

KEY VERIFICATION DATES:

November 15, 2021 – Deadline for completion of all verification activities

December 15, 2021 – Deadline to report verification activities to DESE, CNU

using the FNS-742 form.

Email to: ade.chnutverify@ade.arkansas.gov

For assistance with completing the FNS-742 Verification Collection Report or any verification activity, call the school district's assigned child nutrition area specialist or Donna Ratliff at (501) 324-9502.

Verification Sampling Methods

2021 Verification Timeline

FNS-742 Verification Collection Report

2021 Verification Tracker

Attachments

- [2021-2022_Approved_Sampling_Method_123223.xlsx](#)
- [FNS-742_-_blank_123234.xlsx](#)
- [VERIFICATION_TRACKER_FORM_123247.pdf](#)
- [Verification_Timelines_2021_123259.pdf](#)