

## Definitions

**Appeal Rights** are given to those who have been denied benefits. When the letter of adverse action is sent, a copy of the appeal procedures should accompany the letter. The household must appeal within 10 calendar days to the designated Hearing Official for the SFA.

**Collateral Contact** is a person outside of the household who is knowledgeable about the household's circumstances and can give confirmation of a household's income or Food Stamp/SNAP or FANF status or other categorical eligibility such as Head Start. Collateral contacts include employers, social service agencies, migrant worker's agencies and religious or civic organizations. The Verifying Official should request a collateral contact only in cases when the household has not been able to provide adequate written evidence. The Verifying Official approves who the Collateral Contact is.

### **Competed Verification is:**

1. When the LEA receives from the household the required social security numbers (income applications only) and there is either adequate written evidence or collateral contact corroboration of income or categorical eligibility.
2. When the household submits the required social security numbers (income applications only) and there is either adequate written evidence or collateral contact corroboration of income which indicates that the children should receive either a greater or lesser level of benefits. Verification is complete when the notice of adverse action is sent, or household is notified that its benefits will be increased.
3. When the household indicates verbally or in writing, that it no longer wishes to receive free or reduced-price benefits. Verification is complete when the notice of adverse action is sent.
4. When it is determined that a child is not part of a household currently certified to receive Food Stamps/SNAP or FANF. Verification is considered complete when the notice of adverse action is sent.

**Confirming Reviewer** is the identified person who, prior to any other verification activity, makes the determination as to the accuracy of the initial determination. This person may NOT be the Determining Official.

- LEA's who have demonstrated through CRE reviews the accuracy of their electronic systems do not have to have a confirming reviewer. The LEA must contact the State agency to determine if their system qualifies them for this waiver.
- Any LEA that conducts a confirmation review of all applications at the time of determination is not required to conduct confirmation reviews. The LEA must contact the State agency to determine what documentation qualifies them for this waiver.

**Direct Verification** is using records from public agencies to verify applicable income and/or program participation. (EX. when you fax over the FS/SNAP numbers to DHHS)

**Error Prone** means applications within \$100 per month of the applicable Income Guideline. Error Prone replaces the term "Focused Sample". Error Prone is now the Standard Sample Size Method unless school can prove improvement of denied applications ( >less than 20% denied gives schools a choice of alternate methods).

**Follow-up Reviewer** is the individual identified that must make at least one follow-up attempt to contact the household when the household does not adequately respond to the request for verification.

**Higher Benefit Results** when verification results in higher benefits the change is effective immediately and must be implemented **no later than 3 operation days** later. Parents should be notified through whatever channels the LEA uses to notify the household of approval for benefits.

**Lower or Lost Benefit Results** when households have been identified as losing benefits or reduced benefits, the household **must be given 10 calendar days'** written advance notice of the change.

**Random Sampling** means each application has an equal chance of being selected. A statistically valid random sample is not required. The LEA (Local Educational Agency) must determine a selection interval by dividing the number of applications by the required sample size.

**Reapplying Households** are when households who have been denied or lowered benefits reapply during the same school year. The household is required to submit income documentation or proof of participation in Food Stamps/SNAP or FANF at the time of reapplication. These are not new applications.

**Sample Pool** means the total number applications approved as of October 1.

**Sample Size** means the number of applications subject to verification as defined on page 101 of the Eligibility Manual for School Meals.

**Standard Sample Size** is the sample size that is the lesser of:

- Three (3) percent of all applications approved by the LEA for the school year as of Oct. 1 of the year, selected from error prone applications OR
- 3,000 error prone applications approved by the LEA for the school year as of October 1 of the school year.

**Verification** is confirmation of eligibility for free and reduced-price meals under the NSLP and SBP. Verification is only required when eligibility is determined through the application process, not through direct certification. Verification must include either confirmation of income eligibility or confirmation that the child is a member of a household receiving assistance under the Food Stamp Program/SNAP or FANF program. Verification may include confirmation of any other information required on the application.

**Verification for Cause** means the obligation a LEA has to verify all questionable applications. Such verification efforts cannot delay the approval of applications. If the application is completed correctly, only then may the application be verified for cause.

**Zero Income Household** is a household that indicates zero income of their applications and has been chosen for verification purposes. The LEA must request an explanation of how living expenses are met and may request additional written documentation or collateral contacts.