ISBE SNP Update

Wednesday, Sept. 3, 2025

What's New? *www.isbe.net/nutrition*

- **ISBE SNP Updates**
  - **Fall semester:** Aug. 6, **Sept. 3**, Oct. 1, Nov. 5
  - **Spring semester:** Feb. 4, March 4, April 1, May 6
    - Register for them all today; click here.
  - Earn annual training requirements
  - Recordings on the SNP Training and Professional Standards webpage

What's New?

- Participate in the Midwest Great Apple Crunch on Oct. 9!
- FOOD RECALL: Deep Brand Frozen Retail and Mail Order Products
- FOOD RECALL: Sabrositos Hondurenos Meat Products Shipped to Retail Locations and Restaurants
- FDA Issues Advisory on Great Value Brand Frozen Raw Shrimp

- **Recalls and Public Health Alerts**
  - Monitor What's New? for the latest affecting Illinois

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What's New?

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CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

- Celebrate Farm to CACFP Week Oct. 12-18!
- Sign Up for ISBE's Upcoming CACFP Refresher Trainings
- National CACFP Association Plans Farm to CACFP Boot Camp
- Read the Latest Issue of the Mealtime Minutes Newsletter

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

- Getting Started With Menu Planning: Using Scratch and Speed Scratch Recipes
- "Serve It Safely Food Handler Training" Offered on Sept. 11 and Nov. 4
- Sign Up for Oct. 7 "Food Allergies in School Nutrition" Training
- Watch the Direct Certification and HEA Recorded Webinars for SY 25-26
- Check out Our In-Person Trainings for upcoming Verification workshops
- ISBE Posts Rates of Reimbursement Chart for FY 26
- SFAs Tentatively Selected for SY 2025-26 Administrative Review
- Sept. 4 Webinar Will Cover Requirements for Operating CEP
- Download Menu Board and Signage Resources for SY 25-26!
- SY 25-26 Household Eligibility Documents Available
- Register for School Year 2025-26 ISBE SNP Update Webinars
- Read the Latest Issue of The Outlook Newsletter

What's New? *www.isbe.net/nutrition*

- **Serve It Safely Food Handler Training**
  - 2-4:30 p.m. Sept. 11
  - 2-4:30 p.m. Nov. 4

- **Food Allergies in School Nutrition**
  - 3-5 p.m. Oct. 7

Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

ABCs
of school nutrition

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What's New? *www.isbe.net/nutrition*

- **Reimbursement Rates**

  – [USDA Released Reimbursement Rates for SY 25-26](#)

  – **[ISBE Chart Posted](#)** ➡️

School-Based Child Nutrition Programs Rates of Reimbursement
Effective July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

National School Lunch Program

	Less Than 60%	Less Than 60% + 9 Cents**	60% or More*	60% or More* + 9 Cents**
Paid	$0.44	$0.53	$0.46	$0.55
Reduced-Price	$4.20	$4.29	$4.22	$4.31
Free	$4.60	$4.69	$4.62	$4.71

The maximum price a sponsor can charge for a student reduced-price lunch is $.40.
* The higher rate of reimbursement for lunch (60% or more) applies if 60% or more of the lunches served by an SFA during the second preceding school year were served free or at a reduced price.
** Additional 9 cents requires a one-time menu certification

School Breakfast Program

		Non-Severe Need	Severe Need *
	Paid	$0.40	$0.40
	Reduced-Price	$2.16	$2.64
	Free	$2.46	$2.94

The maximum price a sponsor can charge for a student reduced-price breakfast is $.30.
* The higher rate of reimbursement for breakfast (Severe-Need) applies if 40% or more of the lunches served at the site in the second preceding school year were served free or at a reduced price.

Special Milk Program

	All Milk	Paid Milk	Free Milk
Pricing Program Without Free Option and Nonpricing Programs	$0.2675		
Pricing Program With Free Option		$0.2675	Average cost per ½ pint milk

After-School Snacks in After-School Care Programs

	Paid	$0.11
	Reduced-Price	$0.63
	Free	$1.26

The maximum price a sponsor can charge for a student reduced-price after-school snack is $.15.

Food Distribution Program
Planned Assistance Level (PAL) for NSLP = $0.45 (per lunch rate of $0.3050 PLUS the 12% provision dollars and the $20M breakfast dollars for NSLP)

Illinois Free Breakfast and Lunch Programs
$0.04 per each free breakfast and/or lunch

A la Carte Equivalency Factor - for use in FSMC/Vendor contracts
Federal free lunch reimbursement (more than 60% + 9 cents) plus PAL plus Illinois free lunch reimbursement
SY 2025-26 Contract – $5.03
SY 2026-27 Contract - $5.20

(Aug. 15, 2025)

What's New? *www.isbe.net/nutrition*

- **Determining Meal Benefit Eligibility**

  – Recorded Direct Certification and Certification of HEAs webinars for SY 25-26 available on the SNP Training and Professional Standards webpage

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What's New? *www.isbe.net/nutrition*

- **Administrative Reviews**
  - [SFAs Tentatively Selected for SY 25-26 Administrative Review](#)
  - [USDA Risk Assessment Tool recorded training](#)

What's New? *www.isbe.net/nutrition*

- **CEP Webinar**

  — 10-11:30 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 4

  The Basics of Operating as a Community Eligibility Provision Approved District or Schools in Illinois

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What's New? *www.isbe.net/nutrition*

- **National Farm to Cafeteria Conference**
  - Dec. 1-4 in Albuquerque, N.M.
  - Visit the National Farm to School Network webpage for more information.

What's New? *www.isbe.net/nutrition*

- **Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom**
  - *Lessons and Curricular Materials*
  - *Teacher Grants*
    - **Book Grant:** Deadline Oct. 17
    - **Project Grant:** Deadline Oct. 17

https://www.agintheclassroom.org/

What's New? *www.isbe.net/nutrition*

- **Midwest Great Apple Crunch**
  - **When:** Oct. 9
  - Register to participate!
  - Try a new recipe with apples!

What's New? *www.isbe.net/nutrition*

- **Culinary Institute of Child Nutrition**
  - **"Getting Started With Menu Planning Using Scratch and Speed-Scratch Recipes"**
    - 2-3 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 4
    - Click here to register!

What's New? *www.isbe.net/nutrition*

- **Additional Food Distribution Funds Available**
  - PAL balances in ICS updated
  - Spend your PAL funds by **Sept. 10**
  - Spending Options: USDA Foods, DOD Fresh, Diversions to Processors
  - Email fdp@isbe.net or call (217) 782-2491

What's New? *www.isbe.net/nutrition*

- **USDA Foods Delivery Costs**
  - **REBATE:** 100% of the costs paid July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025
  - Checks will be issued by Lanter Distributing
  - Deposit check in the non-profit school food service account

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What's New? *www.isbe.net/nutrition*

- **The Outlook**
  - Read the September 2025 issue!
  - Keep your WINS contacts up-to-date.
    - Most messages sent to Authorized Rep., Sponsor Contact, Claim Contact, Food Service Director, and Wellness Coordinator
  - Others can sign up at www.isbe.net/subscribe
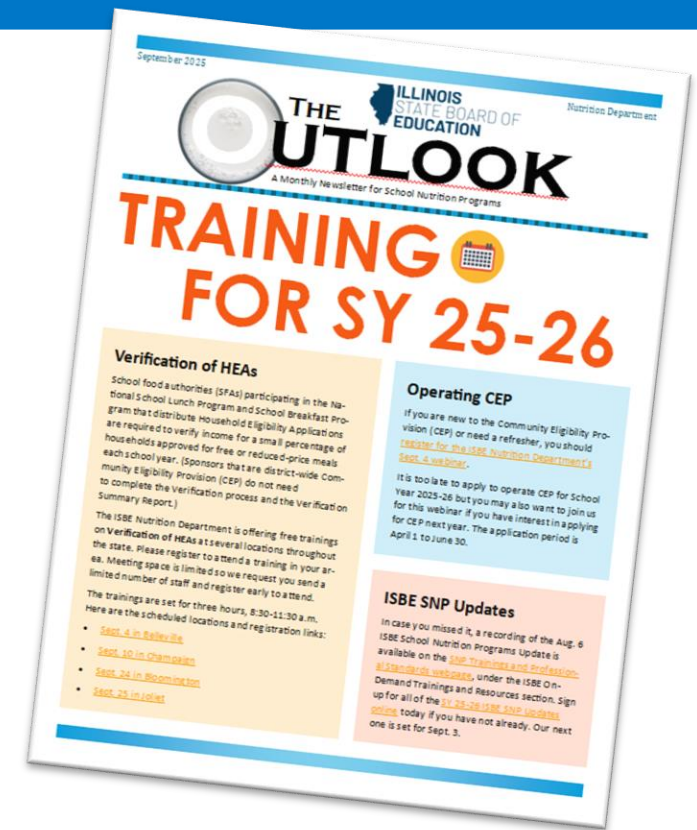
What's New? *www.isbe.net/nutrition*

- **Plant-Based School Lunch Option Reminder**
  - **Public Act 102-0761** (Effective date: Aug. 1, 2023
  - Sample Plant-Based Lunch Request Form
  - Additional Resources: *https://www.isbe.net/Pages/School-Nutrition-Special-Dietary.aspx*

Professional Standards

SNP Training and Professional Standards Webpage

NUTRITION

SNP TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

The Illinois State Board of Education Nutrition Department presents a variety of training options to support school nutrition professionals in ensuring they have the knowledge, skills, and resources they need to successfully operate the National School Lunch Program and other School Nutrition Programs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's required professional standards consist of annual training requirements, as well as hiring standards.

Visit our What's New? section to view and register for upcoming trainings and webinars and to link to recent recordings from the ISBE Nutrition Department and our training partners.

- **ABCs of School Nutrition:** The ISBE Nutrition Department partners with the University of Illinois Extension to provide resources and training to support school nutrition programs in Illinois. View recorded trainings and watch for upcoming in-person trainings and live webinars.
- **Institute of Child Nutrition:** ICN is a federally funded national center dedicated to applied research, education and training, and technical assistance for Child Nutrition Programs. Register for upcoming live trainings and access recorded trainings and other resources.
- **USDA Professional Standards Training Database:** This database allows school nutrition professionals to search for training that meets their learning needs in one easy-to-use website. Trainings are available in a variety of formats and most trainings are free.

Our In-Person Trainings ⌄

ISBE On-Demand Trainings & Resources ⌄

Professional Standards For All School Nutrition Programs Employees ⌄

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Professional Standards

www.isbe.net/nutrition →

www.isbe.net/Pages/snp-training.aspx

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ISBE On-Demand Trainings & Resources

- **Administrative Review Process**
  - USDA Risk Assessment Tool
- **WINS Annual Application Instructions**
- **Meal Patterns and Nutrition Standards**
  - Meal Patterns Consistent With the Dietary Guidelines (Recorded January 2025)
    - Presentation
- **Local Wellness Policy Trainings**
  - Local Wellness Policy Content Requirements
    - Presentation
  - Local Wellness Policies: Completing the Triennial Assessment
    - Presentation
- **ISBE School Nutrition Programs Updates**
  - August 2025
    - Presentation
- **Administrative Trainings**
  - Summer EBT and Illinois Schools – Summer 2025
    - Presentation
  - SY 25-26 CEP for Illinois Schools - Overview and Application Process Webinar
    - Presentation
  - Certification of Household Eligibility Applications (August 2025)
    - Presentation
  - Direct Certification (August 2025)

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

- After-School Care Program
- Breakfast After the Bell Grant Program
- Illinois Free Lunch and Breakfast Program
- National School Lunch Program
- Recipe for Success Toolkit
- School Breakfast Program
- School Nutrition Programs Meal Pattern and Nutrition Standards
- Seamless Summer Option
- SNP Training and Professional Standards
- SNP: New Applicants
- Special Milk Program

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# Professional Standards *www.isbe.net/Pages/snp-training.aspx*

Our In-Person Trainings

- **2025 Direct Certification and Household Eligibility Application Workshops:** ISBE Nutrition Department staff will host free, half-day trainings in Grayslake (May 7), Collinsville (May 8), Normal (Aug. 13), and Naperville (Aug. 14). Register online by clicking here.
- **2025 Summer Learning Institutes:** ISBE Nutrition Department staff is partnering with the University of Illinois Extension to present Summer Learning Institutes across the state in July and August. Find a location near you on the ABCs of School Nutrition events webpage.
- **2025 Verification Process and Reporting Trainings:** ISBE Nutrition Department staff will present trainings on the Verification process and the Verification Summary Report in multiple locations in September 2025. All trainings are scheduled for 8:30-11:30 a.m. Click the city and date to register:
    - Sept. 16 in Belleville
    - Sept. 10 in Champaign
    - Sept. 24 in Bloomington
    - Sept. 25 in Joliet
- **June 16-17: 2025 ISBE School Nutrition Training**
    - Session Descriptions
    - **Presentations**
        - Accommodations

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Professional Standands

Resources:

- [Guide to Professional Standards](#)
- [SNP Administrative Handbook Section J](#)
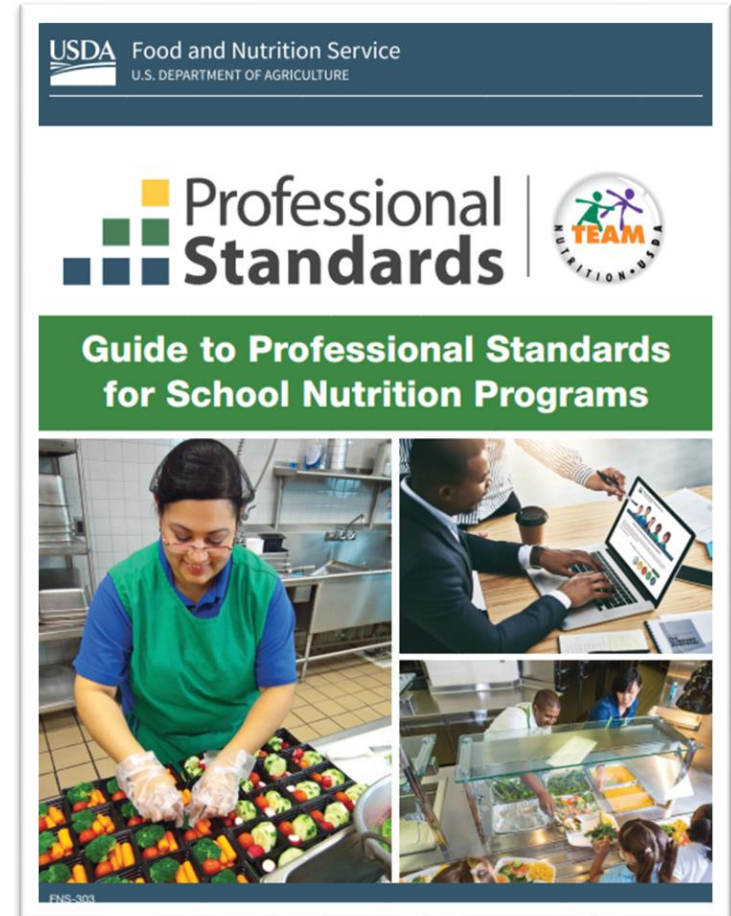
Professional Standards

Training Standards for School Nutrition Program Professionals (All LEA Sizes)

Job Category	Annual Training Requirements[1]
All Directors	At least **12** hours of annual continuing education/training. This required continuing education/ training is in addition to the food safety training required in the first year of employment.
All Managers	At least **10** hours of annual continuing education/training.
All Other Staff (Work at least 20 hours or more per week)	At least **6** hours of annual continuing education/training.
Part-Time Staff (Work <20 hours per week)	At least **4** hours of annual continuing education/training, regardless of the number of part-time hours worked.

[1] Annual training requirements apply to the 12 months between July 1 and June 30.
NOTE: If hired January 1 or later, an employee must only complete half of the required training hours.

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Professional Standards

What documentation do I need from a training?

Supporting documentation for all completed trainings such as agendas and certificates should be maintained. The SFA is required to track annual training. Records should include staff name, date hired, title and staffing level, training topic, date/time, and length of training. The USDA Training Tracker Tool is available for use.

Did you know?
If hired Jan. 1 or later, an employee is required to complete only half of the required training hours for that school year.

If you attend the same workshop each year, may this count?

Yes, it is likely that new issues and questions arise year to year.

May excess training hours be applied over multiple school years?

Yes. Excess annual training hours may be applied to the school year directly preceding or directly following the date of the training.

Resources

- **Individual Employee Annual Tracking Requirement Tracker**
  https://www.isbe.net/Documents/SNP-Employee-Training-Tracker.pdf
- **SNP Training and Professional Standards Webpage**
  https://www.isbe.net/Pages/snp-training.aspx
- **Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs**
  https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/professional-standards/guide

TRAINING HOURS

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

May you select any topic you want?

Training must focus on the day-to-day management and operation of the school nutrition programs. Training must be job-specific and intended to help employees perform their duties well.

EDUCATION

Professional Standards

Civil Rights Training

- Complete your annual Civil Rights training for all new and existing staff that work with applicants and/or recipients of the meal programs.

https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/5544971705266440451

ISBE Civil Rights webpage

Professional Standards

Recordkeeping Requirements

- Documentation of annual training requirements is part of the Administrative Review.

- Records that list the employee name, employer/school, training title, topic/objectives, training source, dates and total training hours would be appropriate to demonstrate compliance with annual training requirements.

- USDA Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool

- Keep records 3 years plus the current school year.

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Verification Process
and
Verification Summary Report

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
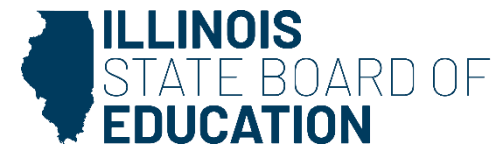
Verification In Person Trainings

When: September 4, 2025-Rescheduled to September 16th

When: September 10, 2025, 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM
Where: ROE 9 (Champaign)
Registration: September 10, 2023

When: September 16, 2025, 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM
Where: ROE 50 (Belleville)
Registration: September 16, 2025

When: September 24, 2025, 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM
Where: ROE 17 (Bloomington)
Registration: September 24, 2025

When: September 25, 2025, 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM
Where: ROE 56 (Joliet)
Registration: September 25, 2025

Best Practice

Registration required, please limit to one staff person per district.

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Who Conducts Verification?

USDA requirement for all Local Education Authorities (LEA) who approve meal benefits by using Household Eligibility Applications (HEA)

LEAs participating district wide in Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) do not collect HEAs, so these sponsors are exempt from the verification process and reporting annually
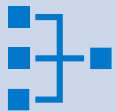
LEAs participating partially in CEP must do verification for the HEAs collected in non-CEP schools.

Verification Terminology

Verification= USDA requires 3% of approved HEAs collected July 1- Oct 1 each school year be confirmed as accurately approved/certified by LEAs for meal benefits.

Verification Process= contacting households to collect documentation supporting the approved HEA. Process needs to be completed by Nov 15. (November 17, 2025)

Verification Summary Report= LEAs submit to ISBE this report annually in WINS after completing the verification process. Report step 1 available Oct 1 and steps 2-5 link available Nov 1. Due date Dec 15

Direct Verification= Verification process is complete for households found in ISBE direct verification files during the verification process. Direct verification should be checked prior to contacting households to collect documentation.

Verification for Cause= requires LEAs to verify any questionable application including, on a case-by-case basis, when the LEA is aware of additional income or persons in the household. This is in addition to the 3% requirement. May be conducted at anytime during the school year.
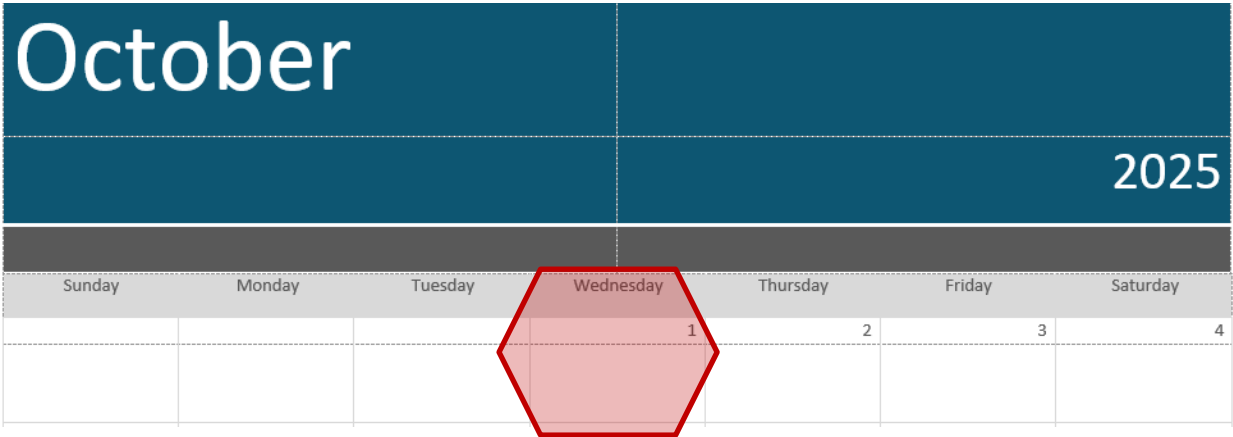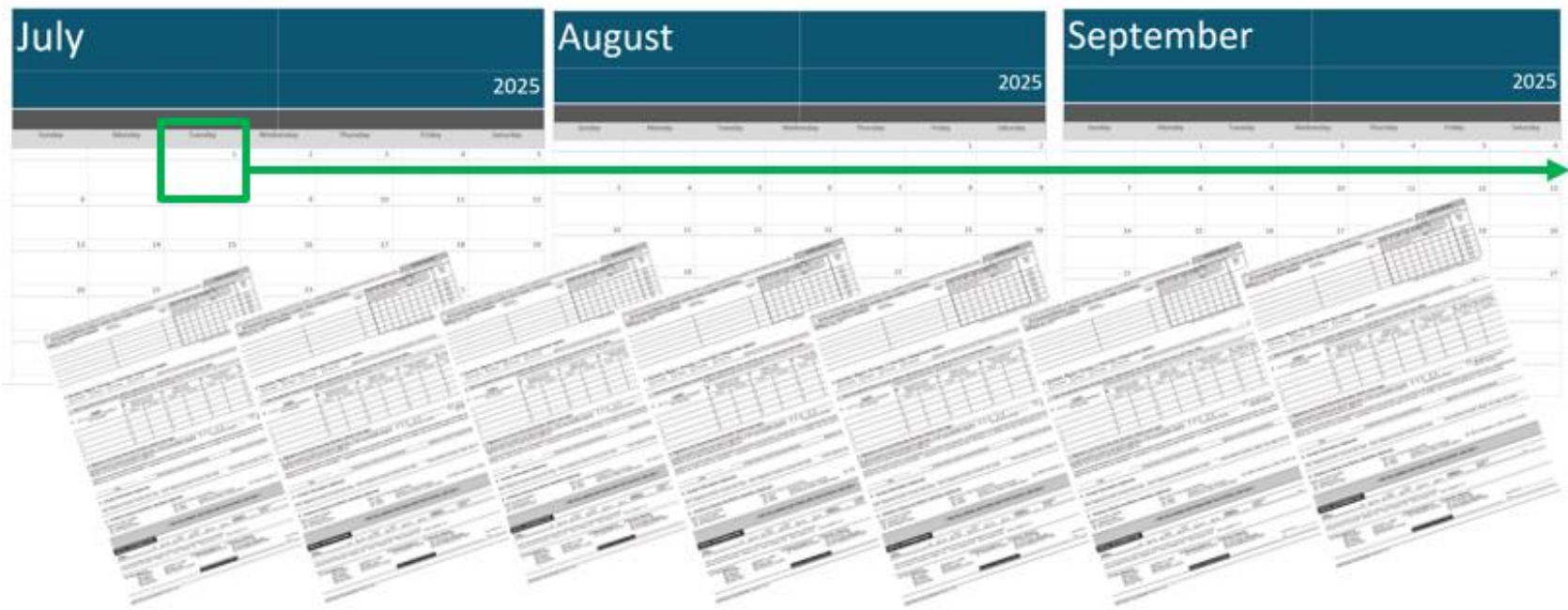
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Verification Process

Step 1
- Determine application Count as of **Oct 1st**

Step 2
- Submit verification summary report step 1, beginning **Oct 1** in WINS

Step 3
- Select 3% to verify and conduct confirmation review, before contacting households

Step 4
- Notify households of selection, collect, and review household documents

Step 5
- Notify household of verification results by **Nov 15 (Nov 17, 2025)**

Step 6
- Submit verification results on summary report steps 2-5 by **Dec 15**

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Household Eligibility Applications

Household Eligibility Applications

Note: Medicaid numbers may not be approved for benefits on HEAs.

Use Direct Certification System
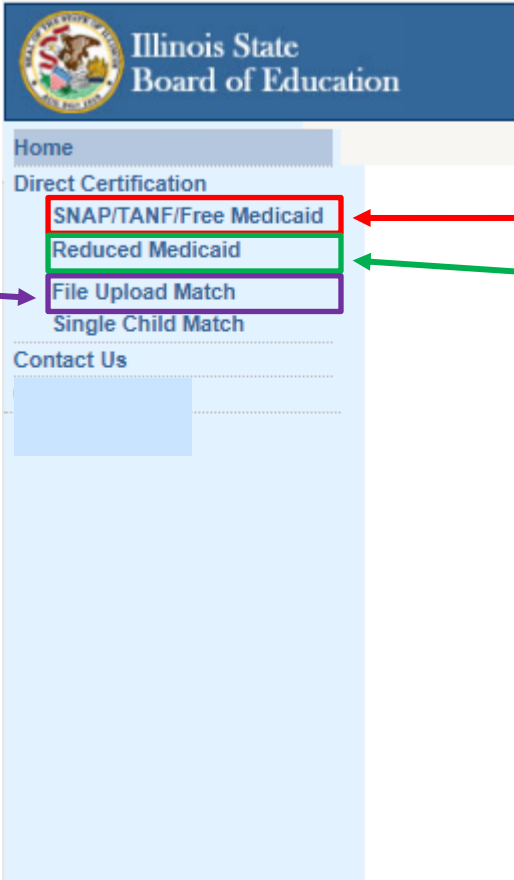
July 1, 2025 Annual File/Monthly File

File Upload Match

July 1, 2025 Annual File/Monthly File

Free benefits

Reduced Benefits

Direct Certification File Upload Match

Direct Certification
SNAP/TANF/Free Medicaid
Reduced Medicaid
File Upload Match
Single Child Match
Contact Us
Change RCDT

Annual Direct
Certification Files
July

Monthly Direct
Certification Files
August
September
October

Download File

Each public school district LEA will have a download file named Annual. This file is created one time per year (early July) by ISBE to compare students enrolled in the Student Information System (SIS) with the current SNAP/TANF/MEDICAID/FOSTER file. Public school districts are encouraged to update student eligibility using the Annual file first.

A Monthly file is created for all public schools the first of the month for each month thereafter (September – June). The August file will compare to the previous school year SIS records. The September- June Monthly file will compare to the current school year SIS records. A zero record match may result from either no new matches or a district not having a current school year SIS record. Each Monthly file is NOT a cumulative file, and must be used in conjunction with the Annual Report.
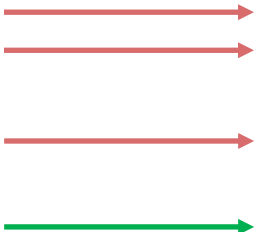
If any LEA uploads a file with student information to match to the SNAP/TANF database, the download file(s) will be named Sponsor File with the appropriate date.

For each file, the LEA must maintain the documentation from the Printed Report. The option to Download the data is available to ease transfer of data into another computer program.
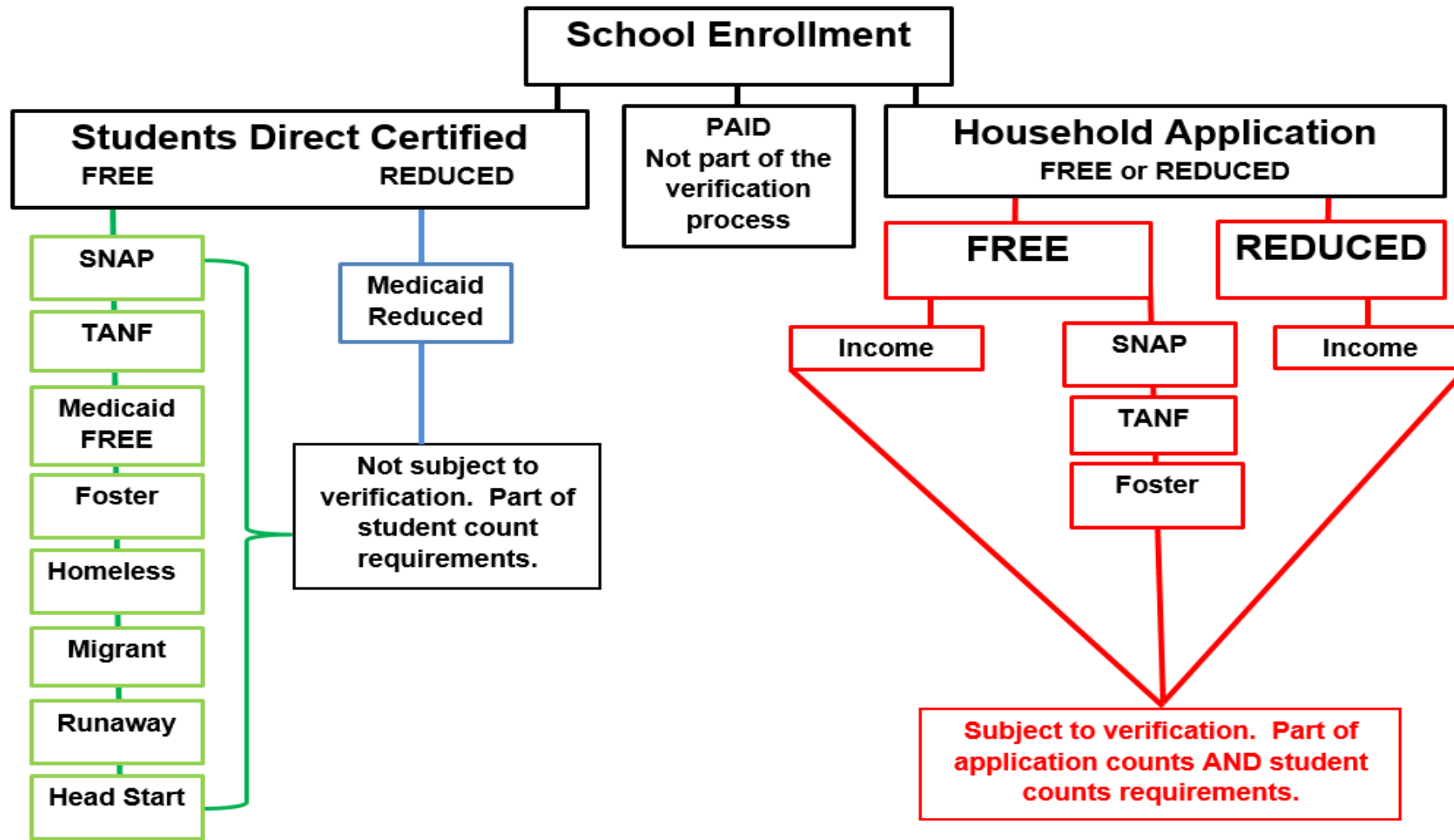
Students found in this manner are directly certified for free meal benefits. Direct Certification benefits are extending to other household members when the status is SNAP, TANF, or income Eligible MEDICAID. There is no extension of benefits for Foster eligibility status.

SNAP/TANF/Free Medicaid Monthly/Annual Match Files

File Type	Approximate Number of Records	Match Date	Access Date	Download	Print
Sponsor File	650	10/01/2024	10/01/2024	💾	🔍
Monthly	104	10/01/2024	10/01/2024	💾	🔍
Monthly	14	09/01/2024	09/03/2024	💾	🔍
Sponsor File	663	08/12/2024	08/12/2024	💾	🔍
Monthly	5	08/01/2024	08/01/2024	💾	🔍
Sponsor File	685	07/19/2024	07/19/2024	💾	🔍
Annual	762	07/01/2024	07/01/2024	💾	🔍

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Direct Certification File Upload Match

Direct Certification Files
October
- Monthly File
- File Upload Match

Download File

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Sponsor File		685	07/19/2024	07/19/2024		
Annual		762	07/01/2024	07/01/2024		

Directly Certified vs Household Application

Extension of Benefits

Household Eligibility Application
Extends to all students in the same household

SNAP

TANF

Extension of Benefits

Direct Certification

Extends to all students in the same household

- SNAP
- TANF
- Free or Reduced Medicaid

Extension of Benefits

No Extension of Benefits

Foster — Homeless — Runaway
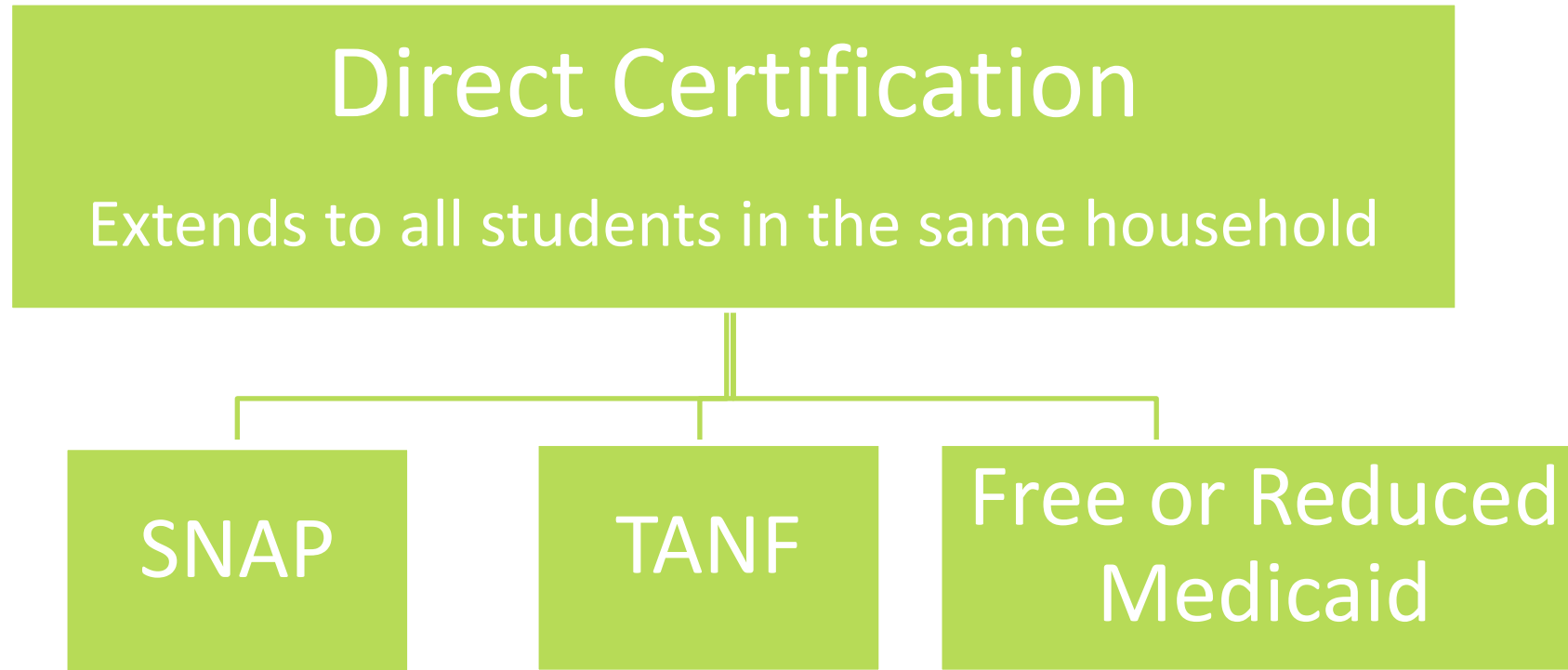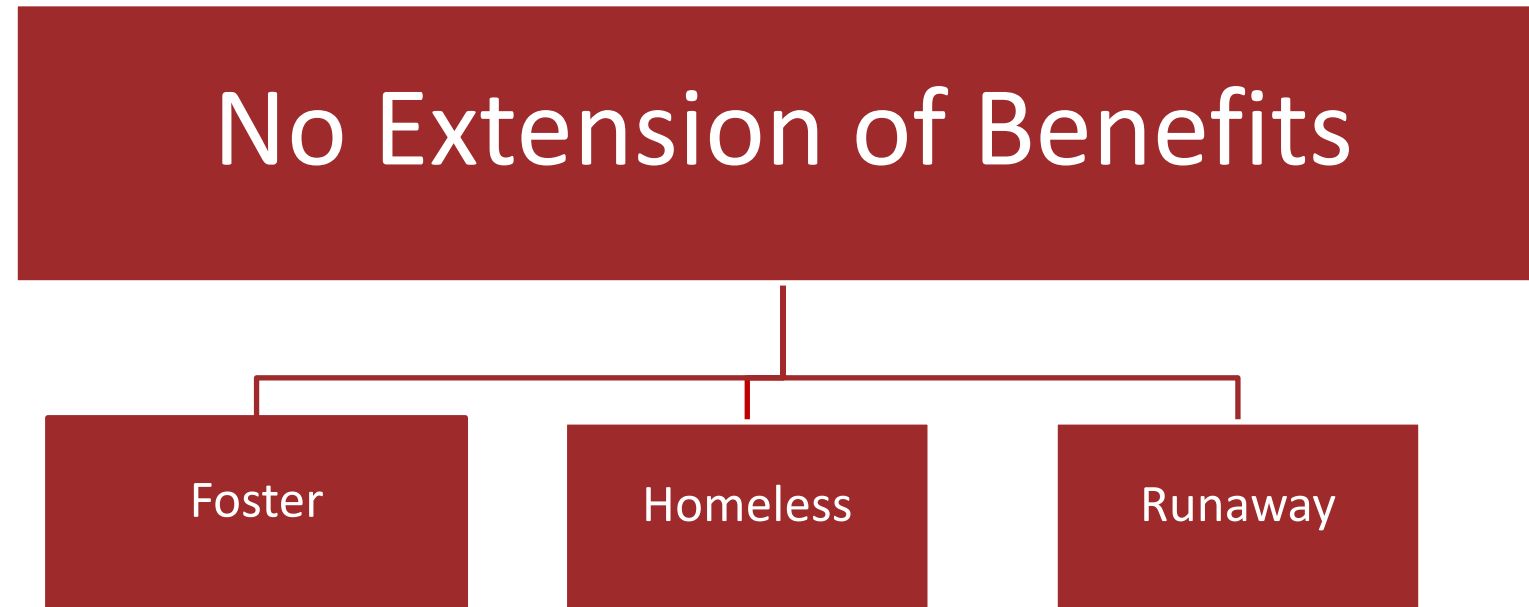
Optional- Data Collection Form

Verification Summary Report Data Collection Form: Step 1

By answering the following questions, you will be collecting the data that is required for Step 1, Questions 1-5.

Data collection: Answer the following questions as of **Oct. 1** using districtwide data.

Step 1 Application Counts: Section for reporting **paper/electronic applications only**. Do not include student count from each application.
Prior to reporting Household Eligibility Application(s) count, search for students listed on all application(s) in the Direct Certification system and **remove any applications from this count that were found to be directly certified.** Report only applications for household with student(s) that could not be directly certified.

Step 1: Application Count

Question 1:
How many applications were approved based on one of the following in Sections 1 or 2 of HEA:

Applications that household(s) provided a SNAP or TANF case number   _____ application(s)

Application(s) for approved for foster child   _____ application(s)

Total applications ☐ **application(s)**
Enter application total on Step 1, Question 1

Question 2:
Applications approved for FREE meal benefits based on income data (Section 3) ☐ application(s)
Enter application total on Step 1, Question 2

Question 3:
Applications approved for REDUCED meal benefits based on income data (Section 3) ☐ application(s)

Question 4: Will auto calculate total number of applications listed on Questions 1-3 ☐

Question 5: Enter the number of error prone applications received ☐ application(s)

Data Collection Form

Best Practice

Verification Summary Report-VSR

NSLP Verification Summary Report- Link appears October 1st

Focus of Verification: Error-Prone

- The first priority of the applications selected for the verification process are the *error-prone* FREE and REDUCED-PRICE <u>income</u> applications.

  – To determine if an income application is error-prone, use the current income eligibility guidelines along with the error-prone guidelines.

  NOTE: Even though error-prone applications are the first priority, income applications not error-prone, SNAP/TANF, and foster child applications, not found as Directly Certified, should be randomly selected if the number of error-prone applications do not complete the 3% sample.

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Verification Sample Collection

Error Prone Applications

➢ When sample is less than the number of error prone applications, randomly select from error prone applications

➢ If a sample size is greater than the number of error prone applications, use all error prone applications and randomly select remaining from remaining applications in pool.

No Error Prone Applications

➢ If there are no error prone applications, select the sample at random from the application pool.

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Error-Prone Guidelines

Approved income applications that are:

– <u>Above or below</u>
  - FREE income guidelines;

  OR

– <u>Below</u>
  - REDUCED-PRICE income guidelines

Amount by pay frequency:

- $23.07/Week

- $46.15/Every two weeks

- $50/Twice per month

- $100/Month

- $1200/Annually

Error-Prone Guidelines

Verification Resources

- **ISBE Verification Website**
  - Data collection form
  - Sample letters
  - Submission timelines
  - Recorded training

- **USDA Verification Toolkit**
  - Sample letters
  - Outreach materials

Verification Process

Timeline July 1st to December 15th

START ACCEPTING & PROCESSING APPLICATIONS

REVIEW DIRECT CERTIFICATION MONTHLY FILES AND UPDATE BENEFITS FOR ALL STUDENTS AND ALL EXTENSIONS OF BENEFITS

CALCULATE TOTAL SAMPLE SIZE BASED ON ALL APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY OCTOBER 1ST AND NOT FOUND IN DIRECT CERTIFICATION FILES

NOVEMBER 15   DECEMBER 15

July 1   August 1   September 1   October 1

SELECT 3% SAMPLE AND SEND NOTICES TO HOUSEHOLDS

FOLLOW-UP WITH ALL NON-RESPONDENTS & SEND FINAL NOTICES

COMPLETION OF VERIFICATION ACTIVITIES

SUBMISSION OF VERIFICATION SUMMARY REPORT IN WINS

Verification Process

Timeline July 1st to December 15th

Reimbursement payments may be withheld if verification reports are not received by deadline.

START ACCEPTING & PROCESSING APPLICATIONS

REVIEW DIRECT CERTIFICATION MONTHLY FILES AND UPDATE BENEFITS FOR ALL STUDENTS AND ALL EXTENSIONS OF BENEFITS

CALCULATE TOTAL SAMPLE SIZE BASED ON ALL APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY OCTOBER 1ST AND NOT FOUND IN DIRECT CERTIFICATION FILES

NOVEMBER 15   DECEMBER 15

July 1   August 1   September 1   October 1

SELECT 3% SAMPLE AND SEND NOTICES TO HOUSEHOLDS

FOLLOW-UP WITH ALL NON-RESPONDENTS & SEND FINAL NOTICES

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✔ **Contact Us**

Nutrition Department

- Call (800) 545-7892 or (217) 782-2491, cnp@isbe.net

IWAS

Contact the ISBE Call Center 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday

- Call (217) 558-3600

Funding and Disbursements Department

For questions regarding claims and payments of Child Nutrition Programs

- Call (217) 782-5256, email contacts

ILLINOIS
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Questions?

Thank you!