

Illinois State Board of Education  
Nutrition Programs  
Day Care Home Sponsors  
**INSTRUCTIONS TO REVIEW AND APPROVE  
HOUSEHOLD ELIGIBILITY APPLICATIONS  
FOR DAY CARE HOME PROVIDERS**

It is the responsibility of the Sponsoring Organization (SO) to complete the tiering process for a new or renewing provider as quickly as possible to assist the provider in receiving the highest reimbursement available to the provider. A SO is required to complete the Household Eligibility Application (HEA) tier determination prior to submitting the new provider site file to ISBE for approval.

For existing providers, once the SO has approved the tier determination, the tier reimbursement status will go into effect at the beginning of the month following the determination. Providers should be encouraged to submit the HEA and all required documentation on a timely basis to ensure the SO has enough time to meet the approval process deadlines.

**I. Providers Applying For Tier I Determination for Outside Children in their Care:**

**A. Requirements For Providers Determined Tier I Status By School Or Census Applying To Claim Children Residing With The Provider.**

Provider must complete the HEA to claim the child(ren) residing with the provider when outside children are present. The HEA does not require verification in the case of a provider determined Tier I status by school or census.

**B. Requirements Based on SNAP or TANF Information.**

Providers who receive benefits from either SNAP or TANF are automatically eligible to receive the higher rate of reimbursement (Tier I status), for all children enrolled in their day care home. The provider must include the following information on the HEA and submit the proper verification documentation.

- Current SNAP or TANF case number
- For providers wanting to claim their own child(ren), to include foster child(ren), or children residing with the provider, while outside enrolled children are present, include the following:
  - Child(ren)'s name
  - Ages of child(ren)
  - Signature and date of the provider
  - Include letter of eligibility from either SNAP or TANF including dates of eligibility.

**C. Requirements Based on Household Income Information.**

A HEA is approved based on current household income, how often they receive their income and the household size. This information must be compared to the current Income Eligibility Guidelines (IEGs) to see if the total income falls within the IEGs. Check the dates on the IEGs to ensure the correct year is used. The provider must include the following information on the HEA:

- Names of all household members related or non-related and the current monthly income by source for each household member
- Applicant must provide his/her last four digits of their social security number (If the provider does not have a social security number, they must make a check in the box that states, *I do not have a social security number*).
- Provider's signature and date.
- Include verification documentation for **each** wage earner listing income; e.g., check stubs; self-employed business individuals can submit tax forms, including the Internal Revenue Service Form 1040, Schedule C, etc.

## II. Providers Applying For Tier I Determination for Providers' Own Children in their Care:

### A. Requirements For Foster Children For Tier I Reimbursement.

Provider may receive Tier I reimbursement for a foster child residing with the provider regardless of the provider's income determined tier status.

Sponsor must have documentation that the child is a foster child. The definition of a foster child is, "a child who has been appointed guardianship by the State of Illinois or its agencies."

Provider must complete the HEA to claim the foster child when outside children are present. The HEA does not require verification in the case of a provider claiming Tier I status for the foster child.

### B. Applications with SNAP, TANF, WIC, Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, or National School Lunch Program benefits.

Children or families who receive these benefits are automatically eligible to receive Tier I, the higher rate of reimbursement. The following areas must be completed by the household to approve this type of application:

- Child(ren)'s name(s) for whom the application is submitted
- Current SNAP or TANF case number
- Current WIC identification number
- Letter of eligibility for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program
- Documentation of qualification for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs
- Signature and date of an adult household member including both home and work telephone numbers, as well as the address
- Sponsor must check the *Categorically Eligible for Federal and State Programs* box
- Sponsor must check the *Approved for Tier I Meal Rate* if the application is approved
- If approved, sponsor must state effective date based on approval procedures and provide official signature

### C. Requirements Based on Household Income Information.

A HEA is approved based on current household income, how often they receive their income, and the household size. This information must be compared to the current Income Eligibility Guidelines (IEGs) to see if the total income falls within the IEGs. Check the dates on the IEGs to ensure the correct year is used. The provider must include all of the required information:

- Names of all household members related or non-related and the current monthly income by source for each household member
- For providers wanting to claim their own child(ren), to include foster child(ren), while outside enrolled children are present, include the following:
  - Child(ren)'s name
  - Ages of child(ren)
  - Provider has the option of claiming a foster child on the HEA
  - Increases household size
  - Reportable income of the foster child must be included
- Applicant must provide his/her last four digits of their social security number (If the provider does not have a social security number, they must make a check in the box that states, *I do not have a social security number*)
- Applicant signature and date
- Include verification documentation for **each** wage earner listing income, e.g., check stubs; self-employed business individuals can submit tax forms, including the Internal Revenue Service Form 1040, Schedule C, etc.

### **III. Requirements For Providers Determined as Tier II Seeking Higher Reimbursement For Outside Children In Their Care:**

A provider has the option of trying to receive the higher reimbursement rate for outside children in the provider's care if the provider cannot qualify for Tier I reimbursement. The provider may opt to request the parent(s)/guardian(s) to complete a HEA on behalf of the child(ren)'s household and submit to the sponsor for tier determination. The provider may collect the applications and submit it to the sponsor if the parent(s)/guardian(s) gives the provider permission to do so.

### **IV. Miscellaneous**

#### **A. Effective Date**

Each Sponsoring Organization now has a choice regarding the effective date of Household Eligibility Applications. One must be selected for all household applications.

The **determining representative** for the sponsor **signs and dates** the household eligibility application form. The date the determining representative signs the application is the effective date certifying the child(ren)'s eligibility. The effective date *may* be made retroactive back to the first day the child participates in the CACFP as long as it occurs in the same month in which the child(ren)'s eligibility is certified.

The **date the parent or guardian signed** the household eligibility application is the effective date certifying the child(ren)'s eligibility. The effective date *may* be made retroactive back to the first day the child participates in the CACFP as long as it occurs in the same month in which the child(ren)'s eligibility is certified.

#### **B. Approval and Verification**

All information submitted by the provider must be verified by one of the following methods:

- Written Evidence
  - Documentation from the provider of information on the application. e.g., check stubs; self-employed business individuals can submit tax forms, including the IRS Form 1040, Schedule C; etc.
  - Letter of eligibility for SNAP or TANF
  - Foster child documentation
- Collateral Evidence
  - Confirmation from third party sources not related to the provider (not a neighbor or anyone that could benefit from the household receiving the Tier I determination)
  - Agency records

#### **C. Guidance for SNAP/TANF Case ID Numbers**

The State of Illinois recently updated the case identification numbers for SNAP/TANF, and those case numbers are now nine digits. If a household is not aware of their new nine-digit case ID number, the household may contact a local Illinois Department of Human Services office or the DHS Helpline at (800) 843-6154. Please note that child care staff should NOT contact DHS local offices; DHS is limited to disclose information about case ID numbers to the individuals receiving the benefits only.