

## Direct Certification with Medicaid

# Steps to Consider when Working with Point-of-service (POS) Software Companies

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is participating in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Demonstration Project to Evaluate Direct Certification with Medicaid. This project allows school food authorities (SFAs) to use Medicaid as a method of directly certifying children for free or reduced-price meals.

Until now, all direct certifications have corresponded to the free meal benefit. However, the income levels of Medicaid recipients span a broader range than Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) recipients. While all SNAP and TFA recipients automatically qualify for free meals, Medicaid data will, on a case-by-case basis, directly certify the student for either free or reduced-price meals.

This handout summarizes the steps that SFAs must consider when working with their software company to update the direct certification process.

### Step 1

Notify your Point of Sale (POS) software company that effective in July 2017, Connecticut's direct certification system includes Medicaid. This means there will now be two eligibility categories for direct certification: free eligibility and reduced-price eligibility.

### Step 2

Discuss with the POS software company their ability to categorize these expanded benefits sources to include both free Medicaid and reduced Medicaid. For reporting purposes, all the eligibility categories must be distinguished.

### Step 3

Determine if the school's or district's POS system is automated or manual. If the POS software allows for an automated import of the CSDE's direct certification file, discuss the software's system ability to process the two new categories:

- Free Medicaid (FM); and
- Reduced Medicaid (RM).

If the POS software allows for the manual input of direct certification data, discuss the need for the system to have the ability to qualify the determination method and the eligibility type to include both free Medicaid and reduced Medicaid.

## Direct Certification with Medicaid

# Steps to Consider when Working with POS Software Companies

### Step 4

Discuss the POS system's ability to activate and populate the fields on the Student Eligibility Reports to include categories for free Medicaid and reduced Medicaid.

### Step 5

Review the other considerations that apply to direct certification with Medicaid and the impact these areas may have on the POS system. These considerations are listed below.

- Students who are determined to be directly certified as free or reduced Medicaid are not subject to verification. Therefore, they cannot be included in the October 1 sample pool of households that are subject to verification. Including these households will lead to verifying more applications than required.
- The POS system must be able to differentiate between the different types of direct certification categories for reporting purposes, which are summarized below.

<b>FS</b> (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program [SNAP] benefits)	Free benefits extend to all children in the household
<b>AF</b> (Temporary Family Assistance [TFA])	Free benefits extend to all children in the household
<b>OT</b> (Other, e.g., foster child, homeless, runaway, or Head Start)	Free benefits do <b>not</b> extend to all children in the household
<b>FM</b> (Free Medicaid)	Free benefits extend to all children in the household
<b>RM</b> (Reduced Medicaid)	Reduced-price benefits extend to all children in the household

## Direct Certification with Medicaid

# Steps to Consider when Working with POS Software Companies

- There is a hierarchy of eligibility and certain considerations when allowing the POS software to override a determination. For example, eligibility for SNAP benefits (FS) supersedes all other eligibility categories. Additionally, a Medicaid match should never overlay an existing direct certification match with another allowable program category (e.g., SNAP, TFA or OT). Districts must identify a Medicaid match only when the child does not match with SNAP, TFA, or OT. The hierarchy is as follows:
  1. **FS** (SNAP benefits): Free benefits extend to all children in the household.
  2. **AF** (Temporary Family Assistance): Free benefits extend to all children in the household.
  3. **OT** (Other, i.e., foster child, homeless, runaway or Head Start): Free benefits do **NOT** extend to all children in the household.
  4. **FM** (Free Medicaid): Free benefits extend to all children in the household.
  5. **RM** (Reduced Medicaid): Reduced-price benefits extend to all children in the household.

**Example of Hierarchy of Eligibility:** If a student is categorized as RM and the latest direct certification file now has the student categorized as AF, the student's eligibility category would change to AF and this would extend to all children in the household.



For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Direct Certification for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/DirectCert/DCMedicaidSteps.pdf>.

# Steps to Consider when Working with POS Software Companies

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of age, ancestry, color, criminal record (in state employment and licensing), gender identity or expression, genetic information, intellectual disability, learning disability, marital status, mental disability (past or present), national origin, physical disability (including blindness), race, religious creed, retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, sex (pregnancy or sexual harassment), sexual orientation, veteran status or workplace hazards to reproductive systems, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes.

Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Levy Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director/Americans with Disabilities Coordinator (ADA), Connecticut State Department of Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 607, Hartford, CT 06103, 860-807-2071, [levy.gillespie@ct.gov](mailto:levy.gillespie@ct.gov).