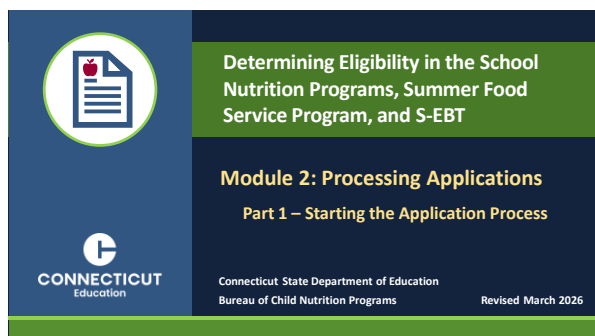


## Module 2: Processing Applications

### Part 1 – Starting the Application Process



**Determining Eligibility in the School Nutrition Programs, Summer Food Service Program, and S-EBT**

**Module 2: Processing Applications**

**Part 1 – Starting the Application Process**

CONNECTICUT Education

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Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs

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**Determining Eligibility Training Modules**

- Module 1: Introduction to Application Certification and Verification
- Module 2: Processing Applications
  - Part 1 – Starting the Application Process
  - Part 2 – Receiving and Processing Applications
  - Part 3 – Reviewing Applications and Special Considerations
  - Part 4 – Notification, Documentation, and Final Steps
- Module 3: Direct Certification
- Module 4: Test Your Knowledge About Processing Applications
- Module 5: Confidentiality and Disclosure

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/eligibility-for-free-and-reduced-price-meals-and-free-milk-in-school-nutrition-programs/determining-eligibility-training>

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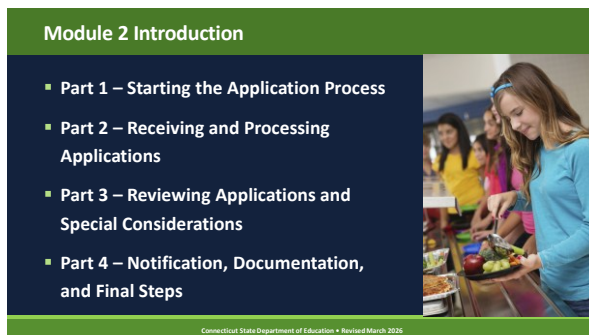
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**Introduction to Module 2**


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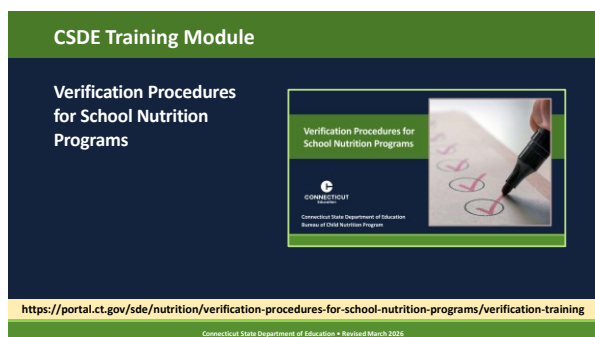
**Module 2 Introduction**

- Part 1 – Starting the Application Process
- Part 2 – Receiving and Processing Applications
- Part 3 – Reviewing Applications and Special Considerations
- Part 4 – Notification, Documentation, and Final Steps




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**CSDE Training Module**

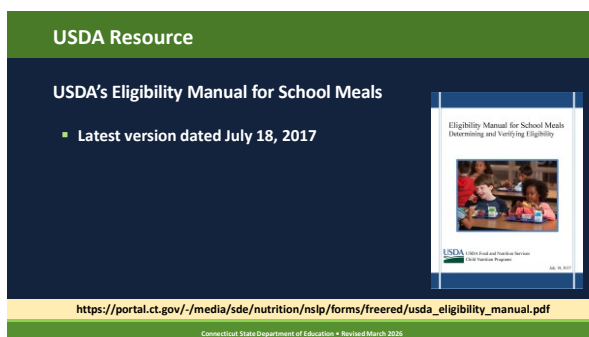
**Verification Procedures for School Nutrition Programs**



<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/verification-procedures-for-school-nutrition-programs/verification-training>

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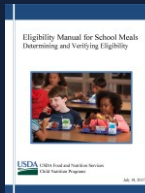
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**USDA Resource**

**USDA's Eligibility Manual for School Meals**

- Latest version dated July 18, 2017



[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/forms/freered/usda\\_eligibility\\_manual.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/forms/freered/usda_eligibility_manual.pdf)

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## Topics for Part 1 – Starting the Application Process

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### Topics

- Flagging applications and directly certified students
- Error-prone applications
- Notifying households about application process
- Application addenda



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## Key Messages About Processing Applications

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### Overview of Key Messages

- Local educational agency (LEA) must have process in place prior to reviewing applications
- “Complete” application depends on type
- Benefit issuance document is critical for ensuring each child receives correct benefit



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## Flagging Applications and Directly Certified Students

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### More Information About Direct Certification

- **Module 3: Direct Certification**




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### Flagging Applications and Directly Certified Students Based on Different Types of Eligibility

- Determining official (DO) must develop system
  - 6 categories of directly certified students




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### Direct Certification Eligibility Category 1

- Free meals or milk through SNAP
  - Does not include letter method (DSS)




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### Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

A federal program that provides nutrition benefits to supplement the food budget of families with low income



Terms to Know

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### Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS)

The state agency that oversees the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Family Assistance (TFA), and Medicaid




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### Direct Certification Eligibility Category 2

- Free meals or milk through non-SNAP programs
  - TFA




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### Temporary Family Assistance (TFA)

A federal program that provides cash assistance for basic and special needs, which are paid to recipients of Jobs First




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### Direct Certification Eligibility Category 3

- Free meals or milk through non-SNAP programs
  - Medicaid free




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### Direct Certification Eligibility Category 4

- Free meals or milk through non-SNAP programs
  - Homeless
  - Runaway
  - Foster
  - Head start




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### Direct Certification Eligibility Category 5

- Free meals or milk through SNAP
  - Letter method (DSS)



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### Direct Certification Eligibility Category 6

- Reduced-price meals through Medicaid



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### Flagging Applications

- DO must also flag other types of applications
  - 3 categories




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### Three Categories for Flagging Applications

- Applications and students determined eligible for free meals or milk based on income and household (HH) size
- Applications and students determined eligible for reduced meals based on income and HH size
- Error-prone applications



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## Flagging Error-prone Applications

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## Error-prone Applications

Applications with a total HH income that falls within \$100 monthly or \$1,200 annually of the income eligibility guidelines (IEG) for that HH size


**Terms to Know**

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## When Flagging Error-prone Applications is Required

- Only for LEAs required to do Standard Sample Size verification
- Must check software programs to ensure they correctly calculate error-prone applications



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## Example of Error-prone Application

- Annual income on application (HH of 2): \$ 26,500
- USDA free IEG for HH of 2: \$ 27,495
- Difference: \$ 995

Error prone = within \$1,200

Yes    No

Income Guidelines for Child Nutrition Programs: July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026

Number in family	Annual gross income	Monthly gross income	Twice per month	Every two weeks gross income	Weekly gross income
1	20,340	1,695	848	750	582
2	27,495	2,292	1,146	1,038	828
3	34,650	2,888	1,444	1,332	1,068
4	41,795	3,483	1,742	1,626	1,308
5	48,940	4,078	2,040	1,920	1,548
6	56,085	4,674	2,338	2,118	1,688
7	63,240	5,271	2,636	2,412	1,928
8	70,385	5,867	2,934	2,706	2,168
Each additional family member	7,145	594	298	270	218

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nsip/forms/freered/income\\_guidelines\\_snp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nsip/forms/freered/income_guidelines_snp.pdf)

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## Determining Error-prone with Different Income Frequencies

Dollar amount	Within IEG
\$1,200	per year
\$100	per month
\$50	Twice per month
\$46	every two weeks
\$23	every week

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## Notifying Households

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## Module 2: Processing Applications

### Part 1 – Starting the Application Process

#### Timing of Notification

- Must provide HHs with application materials before children begin attending school
- Cannot send home application materials at end of current school year (SY) for next SY
- Cannot distribute application materials for new SY at Kindergarten or preschool orientation in spring




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#### Timing of Notification for New Students

- Must provide application materials when new students enroll during school year




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#### Forms Must Be Current

- Destroy all outdated forms
- Update websites

Cannot accept or process applications submitted prior to July 1




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#### Distribution of Application Materials

- Sent by U.S. mail
- Emailed to parents/guardians
- Included in information packets provided to students

If use only paper applications, must include application and instructions with FAQ parent/guardian letter




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#### Informing Households About Application Materials

- Public Media Release
- District/school website
- School office
- Local library
- School menus



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#### Application Materials on Websites

- Easily accessible
  - Is the website user friendly?
  - Is it easy for parents/guardians to find the application?
  - How many “clicks” does it take to get to the application?

Tip: Ask someone not familiar with website to test it



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**CSDE Resource**

**Guidance for Notifying Parents of a Child's Eligibility for Free or Reduced-price Meals**




[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nsip/forms/freered/guidance\\_notifying\\_parents\\_child\\_eligibility\\_free\\_reduced\\_meals.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nsip/forms/freered/guidance_notifying_parents_child_eligibility_free_reduced_meals.pdf)

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**Examples of Notification Requirements Throughout SY**

- New students enrolling after start of SY
  - Must provide application materials when students enroll
  - Must check direct certification/S-EBT list to determine if student is directly certified



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**Application Addenda**

- **Addendum A:** Sharing Information with Other Programs
- **Addendum B:** Access Health CT Husky Health Insurance
- **Addendum C:** Information on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)


<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/eligibility-for-free-and-reduced-price-meals-and-free-milk-in-school-nutrition-programs/application-forms#Addenda>

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**Addendum A: Sharing Information with Other Programs**

- Provides parents/guardians opportunity to have their child receive additional benefits based on free or reduced-price status




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**Addendum A Must Outline**

- Specifics of applicable programs or services
- Title of person with access to student's name and eligibility status

May issue after application process




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**Addendum B: Access Health CT Husky Health Insurance**

- Provides households with important information regarding Connecticut's HUSKY Health Insurance Program




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### Addendum C: Information on SNAP

- Required
- Provides important information about SNAP benefits
- Identifies sources households may contact for more information
- Updated in October
- Must send to all households

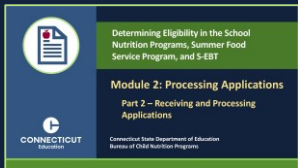


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### Next Module

- Module 2: Processing Applications
  - Part 2 – Receiving and Processing Applications



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### Questions? Contact School Nutrition Programs Staff

County	Staff
Middlesex County (includes Regions 4, 13, and 17) Tolland County (includes Regions 8 and 19)	Jennifer Bove 860-807-2044 • <a href="mailto:jennifer.bove@ct.gov">jennifer.bove@ct.gov</a>
Fairfield County (includes Region 9) Hitchfield County (includes Regions 1, 7, 12, 14, and 20)	Fionnuala Brown 860-807-2129 • <a href="mailto:fionnuala.brown@ct.gov">fionnuala.brown@ct.gov</a>
Hartford County (includes Region 10)	Teri Dandeneau 860-807-2079 • <a href="mailto:teri.dandeneau@ct.gov">teri.dandeneau@ct.gov</a>
New Haven County (includes Regions 5, 15, and 16)	Greg King 860-713-6804 • <a href="mailto:greg.king@ct.gov">greg.king@ct.gov</a>
New London County Windham County (includes Region 11)	Susan Alston 860-807-2081 • <a href="mailto:susan.alston@ct.gov">susan.alston@ct.gov</a>

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cnstaff/countysign.pdf>

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### Thanks for participating!



<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/eligibility-for-free-and-reduced-price-meals-and-free-milk-in-school-nutrition-programs/determining-eligibility-training>

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To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf> from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

- mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
- fax: (833) 725-1665 or (202) 696-7442; or
- email: [pr.program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:pr.program.intake@usda.gov)

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