

Resuming Standard Counting and Claiming

This document provides information for School Food Authorities (SFAs) who no longer qualify for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) or who no longer wish to participate in CEP. There are many factors to consider when transitioning back to standard counting and claiming. Use this document as a checklist to assist with this transition.

# Notify Households

* Notify all households that meals will no longer be provided free of charge to all students. View sample letter at the end of this document.

# Applications for Meal Benefits

* Distribute and process Applications for Meal Benefits (free/reduced-price applications)
* Schools no longer participating in CEP must resume distribution and collection of free and reduced price applications. The Household Income Survey cannot be used.
* There is an allowance to utilize the 30-day carryover period in the transition between CEP and standard counting and claiming. All students who attend the CEP school transitioning to standard counting and claiming can receive free meals for up to 30 operating days or until a new eligibility determination is made, whichever comes first. More information on the 30-day carryover period is available in the [Eligibility Manual for School Meals](https://www.fns.usda.gov/eligibility-manual-school-meals).

# Verification

* Standard verification practices for the purposes of the school nutrition programs must resume. Verification training is available each fall from Oregon Department of Education (ODE). It is recommended that the staff person responsible for verification view the verification training as a refresher. Information related to the verification process can be found on the [ODE Verification webpage](https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/childnutrition/SNP/Pages/Verification.aspx).

# Meal Pricing

* The paid lunch equity tool (PLE) must be used to establish a paid lunch price. The last paid lunch price that was established prior to participating in CEP can be used as a starting point. The maximum amount that the school/district would be required to increase the paid lunch price is .10 cents. Although this is allowable, best practice would be to evaluate the projected revenues and expenses for the foodservice account to ensure the determined lunch price is adequate to support program operations. The USDA target meal price rounded down to the nearest .05 cents may be a good starting point. If the meal expense is projected to be more than the estimated revenue, then schools should consider starting at a higher price than the minimum.

# Meal Counting and Claiming

* Meal counts must be taken by student name at the point of service. A total meal count/clicker count can no longer be used.
* A traditional daily-monthly claims edit check must be completed. If using a point of service computer software, the edit check report generated from that system is also sufficient.

# Other Considerations

* Create a local meal charge policy if the district does not currently have one in place.
* Maintain all other program records for three years plus the current year.
* Follow all other rules and regulations for operating Child Nutrition Programs.

Sample Letter to Households for Schools/Districts Resuming Standard Counting/Claiming available below.

Sample Letter to Households for Schools/Districts Resuming Standard Counting/Claiming

*[Insert School District Letterhead]*

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Beginning school year \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [*insert school year*] \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*[insert name of school(s)/district]* will no longer be operating the Community Eligibility Provision under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs because *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [insert reason].*

To ensure families have sufficient time to apply for free and reduced-price meals benefits, students will continue to receive all meals free of charge until [insert 30th operating day of school year] or until a new eligibility determination is made, whichever comes first. After this date students will no longer automatically receive breakfast and lunch free of charge. Households must complete and submit an application for educational benefits to determine if they qualify for free or reduced-price meals. Please complete and submit the form to [*insert school/address*].

If you have any questions, please contact \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [*insert contact name*] at\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*[insert contact information].*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal and, where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, [complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](http://www.ocio.usda.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2012/Complain_combined_6_8_12.pdf), found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\_filing\_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities and wish to file either an EEO or program complaint please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish).

Persons with disabilities who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail directly or by email. If you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.