

2019 Enrollment and Income Eligibility Guidance

Participants are only eligible for the free or reduced price meal category when a completed income form has been approved. Forms cannot be approved until all required information is completed.

Abbreviations:	FAP	Food Assistance Program
	FDPIR	Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
	DCF	Department for Children and Families
	SSN	Social Security Number
	TAF	Temporary Assistance to Families
	E/IEF	Enrollment & Income Eligibility Form
	SSI	Supplemental Security Income

ERROR or SITUATION	ACTION REQUIRED
A. Child Enrollment (Part 1)	
1. Child's Date of Birth has been left blank.	Application cannot be determined until it is complete. The form must be returned to the parent/guardian to complete the child's date of birth.
2. Times of Care has been left blank.	Application cannot be determined until it is complete. The form must be returned to the parent/guardian to complete the regular times of care, arrival times and departure times.
3. Regular Days of Care has been left blank.	Application cannot be determined until it is complete. The form must be returned to the parent/guardian to complete the regular days the child will be in care.
4. Meals Served During Care has been left blank.	Application cannot be determined until it is complete. The form must be returned to the parent/guardian to complete the meals served to the child during their time in care.
5. Ethnic/Race classifications have been left blank.	The parent/guardian has the option of completing this information or not. If they choose to not provide the information the center staff MUST complete the information to the best of their ability and mark the form in the space above this section with their initials and the date classification was made.
6. Parent listed drop in for the child's enrollment information.	Application cannot be determined until it is complete. The form must be returned to the parent/guardian to complete all components of enrollment: child's date of birth, times child may be in care, days the child may be in care, and meals that may be served while the child is in care. Parents should mark the form for any possible time, days, and meals that the child might be in care.
7. Multiple children are listed in Part 1 but the enrollment information is only provided for one child.	The form must be returned to the parent/guardian to complete all components of enrollment for each child in care. If the additional children listed are not in care at the center, the center staff will move them down to part 3B and contact the parent/guardian for the income information for these children. Record the additional information provided by the parent/guardian, date and initial form.
8. Weeks after the E/IEF has been completed, parent lets center staff know that child's times of care, days of care and/or meals needed during care has changed.	Center staff should ask the parent to update and correct the current enrollment form to reflect current needs initial and date form or they can complete a new enrollment form.

ERROR or SITUATION	ACTION REQUIRED
B. Household Receiving Benefits (Part 2)	
1. Foster Child(ren) are listed on the same form with other children in the household.	All children in a household, including foster children, may be listed on one form. Note: It is possible they will receive different benefits.
2. FAP or TAF case number is invalid. The case number must be 8 digits beginning with 0, 1, or 2.	Application cannot be determined until it is complete. Contact parent/guardian to obtain a valid case number or determine form based upon income information provided.
3. Parent lists that they receive FAP (TAF, FDPIR, SSI or Medicaid) but no case number is provided.	Application cannot be determined until it is complete. Contact parent/guardian to obtain a valid case number. If none, request they complete Part 3B or determine form based upon income information provided.
4. Medicaid or SSI case number is invalid. (Adult form only)	Application cannot be determined until it is complete. Contact parent/guardian/participant to obtain a valid case number or determine form based upon income information.
C. Household Income (Part 3A & Part 3B)	
1. For one or more household members, the income section is blank and the "Check if Zero Income" box is not checked.	Any income field left blank is a positive indication of no income and certifies that there is no income to report. Applications with blank income fields are to be processed by the sponsor as complete, rather than incomplete as in prior practice.
2. Child(ren) listed in Part 1 also receive personal income.	Application cannot be determined until it is complete. Child(ren) must also be listed under Part 3B and list their personal income. This income will also be included in the households total annual income.
3. Household did not indicate frequency of income.	Contact household to determine income frequency.
4. Household indicates a range of income.	Contact adult who signed application to determine annualized income OR income received in the month prior to application, whichever most accurately reflects current income. If unable to get clarification from parent then determine the form based on the largest amount of the range.
5. Household reports income from prior year's income tax information rather than current income.	Contact adult who signed application to clarify income. Household may use prior year's income tax information <u>only</u> if income reported is seasonal, farm, or from self-employment, and only if last year's income is representative of the current year's estimated income. If prior month's income is more representative of household's current income, the household should report prior month's income amount.
6. The box is checked stating the household income is over guidelines but there is income information reported in part 3B	Calculate the income information provided in part 3B, if the household income is within the income guidelines determine based upon the income reported for the free or reduced-priced category and draw a line through the box checked in part 3A. If the income is over guidelines then disregard income reported in part 3B and mark the form in the paid category.

ERROR or SITUATION	ACTION REQUIRED
7. Household reports an income loss from one or more income sources but has income from other sources.	Income from wages or other income sources may not be reduced by the amount of a business loss. Negative self-employment income is computed as zero income. When computing household income, include only income amounts that are positive numbers.
8. No Social Security Number is reported.	For applications approved based on income guidelines, obtain the last four digits of the SSN from adult signing the application. SSN may NOT be obtained from other school records and transferred to application. If adult signing the form does not have a SSN, and has checked the box or has written the word "No" or "None", the form may be approved without the SSN. The abbreviation "NA" is NOT acceptable. Don't assume adult signing application has no SSN if one is not listed. Contact household to obtain information. SSNs are NOT required for applications approved based on FAP, TAF or FDPIR eligibility or for foster child only applications.
9. SSN reported is NOT that of adult who signed form.	Treat application as if no SSN is reported. Obtain the last four digits of the SSN of adult who signed form or obtain signature of adult whose SSN was provided.
10. There is no adult signature (parent/guardian/participant/adult) on form.	Form is invalid until signature is obtained. Contact household and obtain adult's signature. If participant is a foster child, the foster parent or caseworker must sign form.
11. Adult household member's name, address, telephone numbers or e-mail is not reported.	Do NOT delay approval if household fails to provide this information. This information is helpful but not required.
12. Determining official did not sign and date the form.	Determining official must review the form for completion then make the income category determination, sign and date the form. Forms are not eligible to be counted in the free or reduced priced category until the determining official has signed and dated the form even if the sponsor chooses the parent signature and date as the effective date.
D. Other Application Situations	
1. Form has been faxed.	Faxing is an insecure way to transmit confidential information. Sponsors should NEVER fax a completed form. Use regular mail for these documents. Although households should be discouraged from faxing forms, such forms may be accepted.
2. No Enrollment or E/IEF is on file, but the participant's meals were claimed.	If no form is on file then the participant's meals are not reimbursable. Participants must have a current and complete E/IEF or an Enrollment form on file to be included in the income category counts. If a claim has been filed then a revised claim must be filed to remove these meals. Exception: At-Risk Afterschool Meals & Emergency Shelters do not require an enrollment or income form. Outside School Hours Centers do not require an enrollment form but they do collect income forms.
3. Not all required information was listed on application.	Contact adult who signed application to obtain required information such as income, last four digits of the Social Security number, names of household members and their income. Document contact, record information obtained and makes determination.

ERROR or SITUATION	ACTION REQUIRED
4. Not all household members or income sources were reported on application.	Determining official must make initial determination based upon face value of application.
5. Participant is listed on forms for two different households.	If the participant is living in more than one household, the participant is considered a member of each household. If households do not have same eligibility status, the participant receives greatest level of benefits.
6. Parent used white out to change information on the form.	If a parent used white out or erased information, make a notation in the For Center Use Only section.
7. White out was used by a staff member to change information on the form.	If a staff member uses white out or erases information provided by the parent/guardian the form becomes invalid. A new form will need to be collected from the household.
8. Sponsor completed section of the Enrollment or E/IEF form before making copies for the parent/guardian/participant to complete.	Forms cannot be pre-filled with enrollment information or any signature dates before coping for actual completion. If form is pre-filled the form is considered invalid. The parent/guardian/participant must complete a new form.
9. In a shared custody situation where a child lives alternately with their mother and father. The mother has turned in an E/IEF that is eligible for the free category. The father has turned in an E/IEF that is over guidelines. Which category would the child be claimed?	When joint custody has been awarded and the child physically changes residence, the child is considered part of the household where s/he resides. In these situations, if both parents complete an E/IEF for the child and different eligibility statuses result, the greatest benefit level is used. If the mother's situation results in the free category, then the child would counted as free regardless of which parent had custody at the time.
10. A child who was placed in foster care with a family at the time the E/IEF was completed. Later during the year the family adopted the child. Does a new E/IEF have to be completed?	Due to year-long eligibility the free eligibility status of the foster child does not change within the year if the child is adopted. When the current E/IEF form expires, a new form would need to be completed and the child would be a part of the household, not a foster child.
11. An E/IEF includes income that is received on a temporary basis and the center would like to make the determination for only 30 days and have the family update the income information.	USDA prohibits the use of temporary approval because of the year long duration of eligibility. Households are not required to report more often than annually.