Administrative Update Packet

School Year 2025-2026

School Nutrition Programs

WHAT'S INSIDE?

CONTACT US

School Nutrition Programs
Website:
https://opi.mt.gov/Leadership/Management-Operations/School-Nutrition
Phone: (406) 444-2501

Mailing Address:
Office of Public Instruction
School Nutrition Programs
PO Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501

Nondiscrimination Statement

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. Nondiscrimination Statement: In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which can be obtained online at: https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.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:

1. mail:
U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. email:
program.intake@usda.gov.

Please Note:

The USDA is currently working on updating and revising the Nondiscrimination Statement (NDS) that School Nutrition Program operators are required to use. We will advise School Food Authorities (SFAs) as soon as we receive notification of the updated NDS so all sponsors can update their vital documents with the new NDS.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

August 4, 2025

We hope you've had a wonderful and restful summer. The Montana Office of Public Instruction School Nutrition Programs (MT OPI SNP) team extends a huge thank you for your exceptional work in school nutrition. We recognize the challenges you've faced, from staffing shortages to new USDA guidelines, and truly appreciate your dedication to ensuring students receive nutritious meals. Here's to a successful new school year!

We highly recommend your district consider opting into the online Free & Reduced Price Application (FRAPP). This system allows households to easily submit applications online and helps your Determining Officials process them efficiently in DCA. Moving to online FRAPP can significantly reduce paperwork, minimize application errors, and streamline the electronic delivery of approval and denial letters to households.

Begin using FRAPP by opting in through DCA. After logged into DCA, navigate to your Determining Official information box, click on *Use Online Free and Reduced Applications* link. Check the box to confirm your use of the online FRAPP and click *Ok*. Once you opt in, a URL will appear in the information box that you may publicize to your families.

We ask that you carefully review the new USDA regulations, which begin on page 4 of this packet. For any clarification, please connect with your Regional Specialist. As we are currently updating our Regional Specialist Map to reflect new team members, please do not hesitate to contact any School Nutrition Programs Specialist on the MT OPI team for support.

If you are new to working in School Nutrition Programs, we recommend contacting a School Nutrition Program Specialist so you are set up for success in meeting School Nutrition Program requirements. If you need to request access to MAPS, complete the MAPS User Access Form and contact Ashley Bodle at ashley.bodle@mt.gov or (406) 594-9228.

We look forward to seeing you at our trainings throughout the school year or out on our Administrative Review visits. Please call us at (406) 444-2501 anytime you have questions.

Warm regards,

The Montana OPI School Nutrition Programs Team

New USDA Regulations for School Nutrition Programs in School Year 2025-2026

The USDA has issued updates to the school nutrition standards for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). These changes are designed to encourage healthy choices and outcomes for students. While some adjustments will be phased in through SY 2027-2028, several key changes are effective July 1, 2025.

Please refer to the official [USDA Timeline for Updated Nutrition Requirements](#) for comprehensive details.

The following NSLP and SBP meal pattern changes must be implemented by July 1, 2025:

Added Sugar Limits (Product-Based)

Breakfast Cereal: No more than **6 grams** of added sugars per dry ounce ([7 CFR 210.10(c)(2)(iii)(B)](#))

Yogurt: No more than **12 grams** of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams per ounce) ([7 CFR 210.10(c)(2)(iv)(C)](#)).

Flavored Milk: No more than **10 grams** of added sugars per 8 fluid ounces. For flavored milk sold as a competitive beverage in middle and high schools, no more than 15 grams of added sugars per 12 fluid ounces ([7 CFR 210.10(d)(1)(iii)](#)).

> **TIP:** Review nutrition labels to determine 'added sugars' and work with your vendors/distributors before making food purchases to ensure they meet the new requirements!

NSLP Afterschool Snacks

Schools serving NSLP afterschool snacks must adhere to updated meal component and quantity requirements ([7 CFR 210.10(o)(2)](#)). Key highlights include:

Juice Limitation: No more than half of the weekly fruit or vegetable offerings may be in the form of juice.

Whole Grain-Rich: At least 80% of grains offered weekly must be whole grain-rich.

Grain-Based Desserts: Except for sweet crackers (e.g., animal and graham crackers), grain-based desserts do not contribute toward the grains requirement.

New USDA Regulations for School Nutrition Programs in School Year 2025-2026

Meal Modifications

Schools must accept medical statements from **registered dietitians** requesting meal modifications for students with disabilities in school meal programs ([7 CFR 210.10(m)(1)(i)](#)).

Substitutions of Vegetable for Fruit at Breakfast

One Day Per Week: Schools choosing to substitute vegetables for fruit one day per week may offer any vegetable, including a starchy vegetable.

Two or More Days Per Week: Schools substituting vegetables for fruit on two or more days per week are required to offer vegetables from at least two different vegetable subgroups.

Refer to [SP 02-2025](#) and [SP 13-2025](#) for more information.

Sodium Limits

The current sodium limits at breakfast and lunch will remain in place until **July 1, 2027**. Schools are encouraged to gradually work toward meeting future sodium requirements ([7 CFR 210.10(c)](#)).

Visit the following website for more information: https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/nutrition-standards/sodium-limits [fns.usda.gov].

Buy American

Schools' non-domestic food purchases must **not exceed 10%** of total annual commercial food costs ([7 CFR 210.21(d)(5)(ii)(A)](#) and [7 CFR 220.16(d)(5)(ii)(A)](#)).

MT OPI may approve temporary accommodations for School Food Authorities (SFAs) that demonstrate an inability to meet this threshold (see [SP09-2025](#)).

- [Buy American Exception Document Form](#)
- [Buy American Exceptions Tracking Tool for Food Costs](#)

Program Reminders!

Public Release

Montana OPI will once again be completing the required Public Release on behalf of all our program sponsors for SY 2025-2026. It will be posted on our webpage under *Meal Eligibility*.

30 Day Carryover

Remember to carryover benefit status from the previous SY 2024-2025 by 30 *operating* days (school days), *not* calendar days. The carryover status is valid until a new benefit eligibility is determined through DCA or application; otherwise the student is changed to paid. Refer to Eligibility Manual for more details.

School Nutrition Program Checklist

Please use the SY 2025-26 Checklist (available in this packet) to find program requirements and due dates. This will help you stay on track throughout the year!

MAPS & Document Library

Log into the Montana Agreement and Payment System (MAPS) to enter program claims, complete annual agreements, and access helpful documents in the Document Library. Usernames and passwords are the same for GEMS, DCA, and MAPS.

School Nutrition Programs Website

Check our OPI School Nutrition Programs website regularly for program guidance, upcoming training opportunities, grants, and events.

Meal Counting

Ensure that accurate meal counts are being taken/counted at the point of service when the child receives the meal. Also remember to fill out daily production records!

Include Content for School Year 2025-2026

Please find descriptions for included content in this packet below. These will be helpful to have on hand for program success into the new school year!

Staff Contact Information

Find contact information for Office of Public Instruction School Nutrition Staff and Montana Team Nutrition Staff.

Regional Specialist Map

Use this map to identify the county of your school to determine who your School Nutrition Regional Specialist is. As always, feel welcome to reach out to any of our Specialists.

SNP Checklist SY25-26

Use this checklist as a tool to meet all requirements for School Nutrition Programs. Please look for these forms on the OPI School Nutrition Programs website or in MAPS under Applications > Document Library.

Procurement Checklist

Consult this checklist for help in planning and for all major SNP procurement requirements.

MT Team Nutrition Flyer

Montana Team Nutrition (MTN) is housed at Montana State University and works in cooperation with OPI to deliver quality education, training, and outreach opportunities to schools. Learn about the great opportunities MTN has planned this school year, as well as important information and resources on school wellness, Farm to School, and more.

USDA Foods Shipment Schedule

Find relevant dates of USDA foods shipments throughout the school year. Reach out to Erin Benson (erin.benson@mt.gov or 406-410-5719) with any questions.

USDA DoD Fresh Information

Learn more about the USDA Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (USDA DoD Fresh) program, which is available to schools to help increase access to fresh produce for schoolchildren.

Meal Pattern - Breakfast & Lunch

Be sure to swap out your old version from last School Year! The new USDA meal pattern changes (as covered above) are now reflected on our updated meal patterns. We recommend printing this out and having them handy in your kitchen!

Include Content for School Year 2025-2026

Please find descriptions for included content in this packet below. These will be helpful to have on hand for program success into the new school year!

Buy American

Find more details about Buy American provisions including the requirements, more information about exemption forms and the template, examples of exempted items, and more.

Civil Rights Training Documentation

Civil rights training must be completed annually with all staff involved with School Nutrition Programs- with documentation kept on file! Civil Rights Training can be found on the OPI School Nutrition Programs website on the [Civil Rights page](#) or via our online [Bright Track course](#).

Free and Reduced Paper Application

Households may complete a paper application or we recommend all schools opt into using the [Online Free & Reduced Price Application](#) that households can submit online for your school to process.

Income Eligibility Guidelines

Find School Year 2025-2026 income eligibility guidelines for free and reduced price meals, helpful for processing applications and for families interested in applying.

Reimbursement Rates for SY 25-26

Review the updated reimbursement rates for the new school year for free, reduced, and paid meals. Find detailed information about SBP, NSLP, and ASP.

Verification Instructions

Step by Step instructions for completing Verification. Find more information on the OPI School Nutrition website under *[Meal Eligibility](#)*.

Self Review Meal Counting and Claiming

Schools must visit each site at least once during each meal service to ensure proper meal counting and claiming procedures are being followed. This is required to be conducted close to the beginning of the school year and by February 1st.

Professional Standard Requirements

Use this guide to understand minimum hiring standards for new School Nutrition Programs Directors and annual continuing education requirements for all School Nutrition Program staff.

Include Content for School Year 2025-2026

Please find descriptions for included content in this packet below. These will be helpful to have on hand for program success into the new school year!

Continuing Education Calendar
Save the Date! OPI School Nutrition Programs will continue to offer one-hour Webinar Wednesdays throughout the year from 2-3 PM. See the schedule for this year's scheduled education opportunities and join us for fun and learning.

Adult Meal Price Memo | To be released SOON!
The OPI Adult Meal Price Memo will be available soon. We need to wait to release for the current school year because we are still awaiting final guidance from the USDA.

Find OPI School Nutrition Programs SY24-25 Adult Meal Price Memo here.

The Adult Meal Price Memo for SY25-26 will be posted on the OPI School Nutrition Webpage under Meal Eligibility - Meal Counting and Claiming - Pricing here. We will provide notification once this has been finalized and released.

This Memo provides recommended pricing for districts to set for adult meals (to ensure they are compliant and covering the overall cost of adult meals).

Included Content

Office of Public Instruction | School Nutrition Programs
Staff Directory

School Nutrition Programs
Phone: 406-444-2501
Fax: 406-444-1488
Mailing Address:
> Office of Public Instruction
> School Nutrition Programs
> PO Box 202501
> Helena, MT 59620-2501

Contact	Phone	Email
Christine Emerson, Program Director	406-444-2502	cemerson@mt.gov
Erin Turner, Assistant Program Director	406-559-7588	Erin.Turner@mt.gov
Tarryn Erikson, Administrative Assistant	406-444-2501	Tarryn.Erickson@mt.gov
Alie Wolf, Business Analyst/Direct Certification	406-594-5394	AlieW@mt.gov
Ashely Bodle, Data Processor	406-594-9228	Ashley.Bodle@mt.gov
Erin Benson, Food Distribution Program Manager	406-444-4412	Erin.Benson@mt.gov
Sarah Kuhn, Summer Food Service Program Specialist	406-594-9747	Sarah.Kuhn2@mt.gov
TBD, School Nutrition Program Specialist, FFVP Manager	406-444-2501	
Sydney Dickinson, School Nutrition Program Specialist	406-594-7313	Sydney.Dickinson@mt.gov
Rachel Ariaz, School Nutrition Program Specialist	406-422-3318	Rachel.Ariaz@mt.gov
Emily Madsen, School Nutrition Program Specialist	406-594-4142	Emily.Madsen@mt.gov
Amber Lewis, Farm to School Specialist	406-594-7232	Amber.Lewis@mt.gov

Montana Team Nutrition
Phone: 406-994-5641
Mailing Address:
> Montana State University
> Health and Human Development
> 325 Reid Hall, P.O. Box 173370
> Bozeman, MT 59717

Contact	Phone	Email
Molly Stenberg, Co-Director	406-994-7217	stenberg@montana.edu
Jay Stagg, Co-Director, Farm to School Coordinator	406-994-5996	jay.stagg@montana.edu
Haley Scott, Program Lead	406-994-5641	haley.scott1@montana.edu
Kate Huston, Peer Educator Expansion Program (PEEP) Coordinator	406-587-6386	katherine.huston@montana.edu
Kylie Cassidy, Administrative Coordinator	406-994-5397	kylie.cassidy@montana.edu

Regional Specialist Map

Rachel Ariaz (Region 1)
Rachel.Ariaz@mt.gov
Phone: 406-422-3318

Sydney Dickinson (Region 2)
Sydney.dickinson@mt.gov
Phone: 406-594-7313
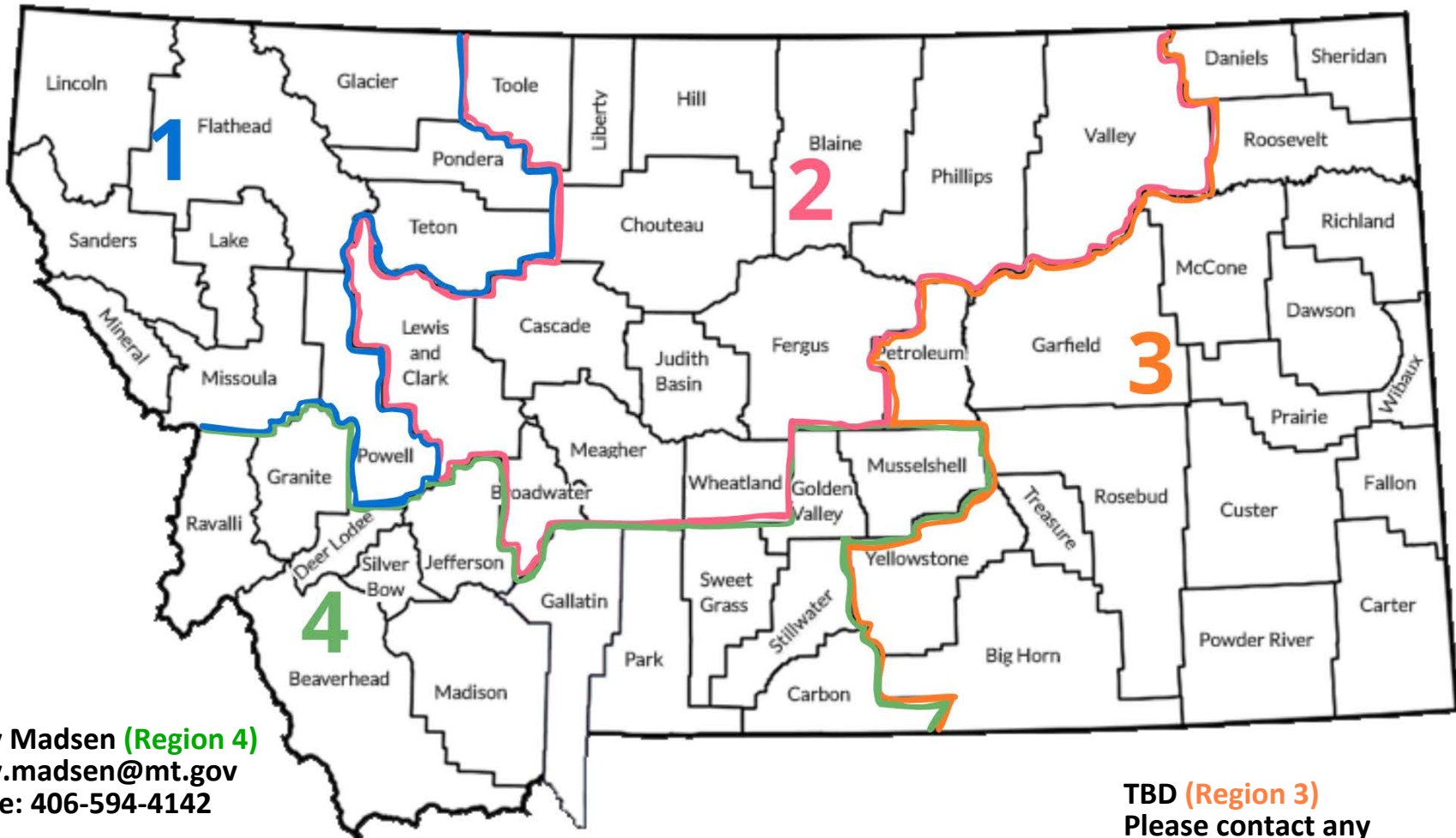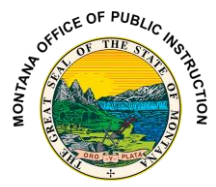

Emily Madsen (Region 4)
Emily.madsen@mt.gov
Phone: 406-594-4142

TBD (Region 3)
Please contact any specialist

School Nutrition Programs Checklist
SY 2025-26

Use this document to check off School Nutrition Programs requirements as they are completed.
Assign individual responsibilities to staff and document the date they are finished. Keep this checklist on file for your reference.

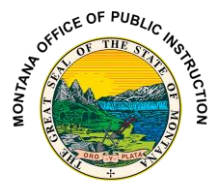| Task	Deadline	Documentation	Date Completed	Who
Free and Reduced (F/R) Benefits				
*Complete direct certification through the Direct Certification Application (DCA) at least 3 times per year. Mail notice of direct certification to households.	• Beginning of SY • 3 months into SY • 6 months into SY	Update Point of Sale. Maintain DCA lists on file.		
*Have F/R applications available for those who are not directly certified. We recommend opting into & using our Online Application FRAPP to reduce paper application errors and for easy processing of the application via DCA.	Start of school year (ongoing)	Record procedure		
*Approve F/R applications. Mail approval/denial notification to households. If using Online FRAPP, approval & email notification is a breeze!	Start of school year (ongoing)	Keep applications		
*Update any F/R students from the previous school year without a current application to paid status. Mail notification of change in eligibility.	30 operating days after first day of school	Update Point of Sale		
Verification (*Does not apply to Provision/CEP schools except to submit the Verification Report in MAPS*)				
*Select households for verification.	On October 1	Use the verification activity tracker		
*Complete verification process	By November 15	MAPS		
*Submit Verification Report (FNS-742) in MAPS	By November 30	MAPS		
Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)				
Qualify for CEP if 25% of enrolled students (per site) are directly certified.	April 1	DCA		
Review Identified Student Percentage (ISP) counts. Send corrections and finalize ISP counts.	April 15	ISP-CEP Annual Snapshot Data Form- submit to OPI		
Elect participation in CEP for School Year 2026-27 by submitting MAPS SNP application.	April 1 - June 30	MAPS site application and CEP Schedule		
Required Self-Reviews				
Conduct review of Meal Counting and Claiming System for both breakfast and lunch meal service at all sites.	February 1	Keep a copy (form in MAPS)		
If participating, conduct two After School Snack Program (ASP) reviews.	First Four Weeks / Before End of Year	Keep a copy (form in MAPS)		
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program (FFVP) *(OPI invites districts to be a part of FFVP each year based on Free/Reduced data)*				
Submit FFVP Application in MAPS SNP application packet. Attach required FFVP signature form to MAPS application	Application due by June 30th	MAPS FFVP Application		
Claim FFVP expenses on the MAPS FFVP Claim. To see your remaining FFVP grant allocation balance, navigate to FFVP Grants within the Applications section of MAPS.	Use 1st allocation by September 30, Spend 2nd allocation October 1 – June 30	Keep all receipts; submit FFVP claim in MAPS by the 10th of each month		
Professional Standards				
Complete Professional Standards training hours. See OPI Professional Standards Training Schedule on the website. • Director - 12 hours • Manager - 10 hours • Full Time (≥ 20 hours/week) - 6 hours • Part Time (<20 hours/week) - 4 hours New: FSD and staff that purchase/procure food, supplies, equipment must complete a procurement training annually	Annually	Document training hours completed on a training log		

* Indicates requirements that may not apply to RCCIs/CEP schools.
All documentation for the items listed must be kept on file for three years plus the current year.
Reminder: Claims for reimbursement are due on the 10th of each month.

School Nutrition Programs Checklist
SY 2025-26

Task	Deadline	Documentation	Date Completed	Who
Annual Requirements				
Update and submit SY 26-27 Application in MAPS	April 1 - June30	MAPS		
Update sponsor/site information in MAPS SNP application	As staff changes occur	MAPS		
Complete production records.	Daily	Keep original records		
*If breakfast is offered, complete breakfast outreach. Ex.: Send menus home, post menu on school website.	Start of school year (ongoing)	Keep a copy		
Submit public release to media	Annually	Completed by OPI		
Request two sanitation inspections via email or letter to local sanitarian. Keep this documentation on file.	Annually	Document both dates of inspection. Post inspection report in publicly visible place		
Report Food Safety Inspections requested and received in SY24-25 in MAPS under Applications>Food Safety Inspections.	November 10	MAPS		
Complete Civil Rights training with all school nutrition program staff.	Annually	Keep for records using OPI documentation form		
Post 'And Justice for All' Civil Rights poster in the Cafeteria.	Annually	Posted		
Keep the current USDA Nondiscrimination Statement updated on all program materials, including home page of school's nutrition program website. *This NDS may change soon*	Ensue correct NDS is posted on your SNP Webpage and on Program Materials.	Posted		
**Complete Paid Lunch Equity Tool to assess paid meal prices.	Annually	Keep electronic copy		
*Assess compliance with non-program revenue requirements through the USDA Non-Program Revenue Tool or OPI Lost Revenue Tool.	Annually	Keep electronic copy		
Ensure all items sold during the school day meet Smart Snacks regulations (a la carte, vending machines, concessions, etc.)	Ongoing	Keep documentation of all items sold to students		
*Implement and review a district-wide charging policy.	Annually	Keep a copy		
Review the Wellness Policy.	Annually	Keep most recent copy		
Formally assess the Wellness Policy & communicate results to public.	Once every 3 years	Keep recent assessment & post publicly		
Review and update HACCP plan. Have a copy at each school site where meals are served.	Annually	Keep a copy		
Develop and implement district-wide food service procurement policy & procedures.	Annually	Keep a copy of documentation		
Post Breakfast & Lunch Signage in the Cafeteria advising of what constitutes a reimbursable meal for Offer vs. Serve.	Annually	Posted		
Conduct outreach for the nearest Summer Food Service Program site, regardless of your district's participation.	Annually	Keep a copy		
USDA Foods order for SY2026-27: Submit 'Annual Survey' in (MAPS) and if participating in DOD Fresh, designate entitlement dollar amount to set aside. *An email notification will be sent when the Survey is available in MAPS.*	February	Info is recorded in MAPS. Print for reference if desired		
Other				
Private Schools: Submit Annual Financial Report	June 30	MAPS app→ Financial Report		

* Indicates requirements that may not apply to RCCIs/CEP schools.
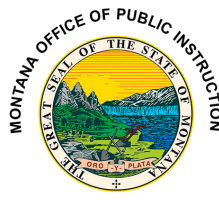** District will be notified if PLE needs to be completed.
All needed documents to complete these tasks can be found in MAPS > Applications > Document Library.
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

2025-2026 SY
SNP Checklist Calendar

August

August 30th:
Update sponsor/site information.

August:
Private Schools: Submit Annual Financial Report

September

September 10th:
Submit claims in MAPS for August

By September 30th:
Claim 1 allocation of FFVP expenses on the MAPS FFVP Claim. To see remaining FFVP grant allocation balance, navigate to FFVP Grants within the Applications section of MAPS.

October

October 1st:
Select households for verification.

October 10th:
Submit claims in MAPS for September

November

November 10th: Submit claims in MAPS for October

November 10th: Report Food Safety Inspections requested and received in SY24-25 in MAPS under Applications>Food Safety Inspections.

By November 15th: Complete verification process

By November 30th: Submit Verification Report (FNS-742) in MAPS

December

December 10th:
Submit claims in MAPS for November

January

January 10th: Submit claims in MAPS for December

January:
Conduct review of Meal Counting and Claiming System for both breakfast and lunch meal service at all sites.

February

February 1: Counting and Claiming review deadline for both breakfast and lunch meal service at all sites. Keep on file.

February 10th: Submit claims in MAPS for January

February: USDA Foods order for SY2026-27: Submit 'Annual Survey' in (MAPS or new FD 2.0 -TBD) and if participating in DOD Fresh, designate entitlement dollar amount to set aside.

March

March 10th: Submit claims in MAPS for February

March
SFSP Application Opens (if participating)

April

April 1: Qualify for CEP if 25% of enrolled students (per site) are directly certified for free meals.

April 10th: Submit claims in MAPS for March

April 15th: Review Identified Student Percentage (ISP) counts. Send corrections and finalize ISP counts.

May

May 10th:
Submit claims in MAPS for April

May
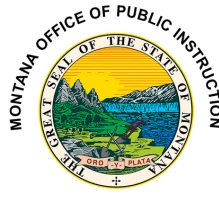SFSP Applications Due (if participating)

June

In June: Eligible elementary schools are invited to participate in FFVP. Complete the FFVP Application in MAPS SNP application packet

June 10th: Submit claims in MAPS for May

June 30th: SNP applications are due.

2025-2026 SY
SNP Checklist Calendar

Start of SY and On-going

- ☐ Notify households of their direct certification status
- ☐ *Have F/R applications available for those who are not directly certified. We recommend opting into & using our Online Application FRAPP to reduce paper application errors and for easy processing of the application via DCA.
- ☐ *Approve F/R applications. Mail approval/denial notification to households. If using Online FRAPP, approval & email notification is a breeze!
- ☐ *If breakfast is offered, complete breakfast outreach. Ex.: Send menus home, post menu on school website.
- ☐ Ensure all items sold during the school day meet Smart Snacks regulations (a la carte, vending machines, concessions, etc.)
- ☐ Continually review extended eligible and potential match lists in DCA, and manually certify as needed.

Annual Tasks

- ☐ Complete Professional Standards training hours. See OPI professional standards flyer for number of required hours for each employee type. **Annual procurement training now required.**
- ☐ Submit public release to media Request two sanitation inspections.
- ☐ Complete Civil Rights training with all school staff involved with school nutrition programming.
- ☐ Post 'And Justice for All' Civil Rights poster in the Cafeteria.
- ☐ **Complete Paid Lunch Equity Tool to assess paid meal prices.
- ☐ *Assess compliance with non-program revenue requirements.

- ☐ *Implement and review a district-wide meal charge policy (8205).
- ☐ Review and assess the school wellness policy & communicate results to public.
- ☐ Review and update HACCP plan. Have a copy at each school site where meals are served.
- ☐ Develop and implement district-wide food service procurement policy & procedures.
- ☐ Post Breakfast & Lunch Signage in the Cafeteria advising of what constitutes a reimbursable meal.
- ☐ Conduct outreach for the nearest Summer Food Service Program site, regardless of your district's participation.

Dependent on SY Start Date

- ☐ **Beginning of SY, 3 months into SY, and 6 months into SY:** *Complete direct certification through the Direct Certification Application (DCA) at least 3 times per year. Mail notice of direct certification to households.
- ☐ **30 operating days after first day of school:** Update any F/R students from the previous school year without a current application to paid status. Mail notification of change in eligibility.
- ☐ **First four weeks:** If participating, conduct two After School Snack Program (ASP) reviews.

Reminders

*Indicates requirements that may not apply to RCCIs/CEP schools.

** District will be notified if PLE needs to be completed.

All needed documents to complete these tasks can be found in MAPS > Applications > Document Library.

While this list is a good starting point it is not a comprehensive list for your administrative review. Please see communication from your regional specialist during the year of your review for a full comprehensive list of required documentation.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Annual Procurement Checklist

Task to Complete	Explanation	Documentation	Date Completed	Who
Procurement Preparation				
All sponsors must have a documented procurement plan, written standards of conduct that meet regulations, and written protest procedures.	7 CFR 210.21 2 CFR 200.318	Written procurement procedures		
Determine if your school district/sponsor has a more restrictive small purchase threshold than the state. MT Small Purchase Threshold: $80,000 Local Small Purchase Threshold:_____	Sponsors must follow the most restrictive threshold.	Written procurement Procedures		
Micro-Purchase Requirements ($0-$10,000): may be awarded without soliciting competitive price quotes if SFA considers price to be reasonable.				
Establish & Document Micro-Purchase Threshold. SFA may establish a threshold higher than set in FAR of $10,000 if self-certifies, up to $50,000. The self-certification must include a justification, clear identification of the threshold, and supporting documentation	SFA is responsible for determining and documenting an appropriate micro-purchase threshold (up to $50,000 if SFA self-certified) 2 CFR 200.320(a)(1)(iv).	Written procurement procedures		
Maintain purchasing documentation to verify that all procurements are below 10,000 (or below the SFA's self-certified threshold).	Ensure federal funds are allowable, reasonable, and allocable 2 CFR 200.320(a).	Invoices Receipts		
To the maximum extent practicable, program operators should distribute micro-purchases equitably among qualified suppliers (2 CFR 200.320(a)(1)(ii))	May be awarded without soliciting competitive price quotes if the program operator "considers the price to be reasonable based on research.	Written procurement procedures		
Small Purchase Requirements ($10,000 or less - $80,000): Must compare prices, SFA decides who to ask for prices, specifications required.				
Document Small Purchase Procedures.	Include plan for purchasing, who you are purchasing from, how often procurements are made.	Written procurement procedures		
Maintain procurement documentation to verify that all procurements are less than $80,000.	Ensure federal funds are allowable, reasonable and allocable.	Specifications Solicitation documents Purchase orders Invoices Receipts Contract terms (if applicable)		
At least 2 or more price quotes obtained for each procurement.	Competition is an essential part of the procurement process.	Include date of price quote. May use documented calls, store flyers, e-mails, solicitations, etc. Small Purchase Cost Comparison Worksheet		
Formal Purchase Requirements ($80,000+): Invitation for Bid (IFB) or Request for Proposal (RFP)				
Document Formal Purchase Procedures.	IFB, RFP	Written procurement procedures		
Maintain procurement documentation.	Specific process must be followed for proper formal procurement.	Competitive Sealed Bid/IFB Process Documentation Competitive Proposal/RFP Process Documentation		

Team Nutrition and Farm to School support schools this 2025-2026 SY!

Welcome to the 2025-2026 School Year! We hope to meet you and support your school nutrition and farm to school efforts throughout this school year. Please reach out to us as needed. We look forward to working together with you and your staff.

Montana Team Nutrition

Our vision: Cultivating healthy Montana children and communities by shaping lifelong positive food and physical activity habits.

How Team Nutrition supports Montana schools:
- Provide training related to USDA child nutrition programs, school meals, culinary workshops, nutrition education, school wellness, and more.
- Connect schools with regional School Food Service Trainers, peers and Peer Educators.
- School Food Service Peer Educator Directory www.montana.edu/teamnutrition/documents/peer_ed_directory.pdf
- Provide education and technical assistance to schools upon request.

Montana Team Nutrition located at Montana State University works closely with OPI School Nutrition Programs to provide remote and in-person education/support to schools across the state. Please reach out to Montana Team Nutrition if you have questions or need information about your school meals program.

Montana Farm to School

Farm to school is a movement to enrich the connection communities have with fresh, healthy food and local food producers by changing food purchasing and education practices at schools and early care and education sites. Students gain access to healthy, local foods as well as educational opportunities such as school gardens, cooking lessons and farm field trips. Farm to school empowers children and their families to make informed food choices while strengthening the local economy and contributing to vibrant communities.

If you are ready to roll up your sleeves and grow your farm to school program, head over to MTFarmtoSchool for steps to get started and a bounty of toolkits, guides, and materials.

Montana Farm to School:
Website: https://www.montana.edu/mtfarmtoschool
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/montanafarmtoschool
Instagram: @mtfarmtoschool

Montana Team Nutrition:
Website: https://www.montana.edu/teamnutrition
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/MontanaTeamNutrition

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USDA Foods Shipment Schedule 2025-2026

Shipment 1 August
Start Date To Be Determined

- 111790 Apple Juice Single Frz Cup -
- 110361 Applesauce Cups
- 110541 Applesauce Unsweetened Can
- 100364 Beans Vegetarian
- 100360 Bean Garbanzo Can
- 100158 Beef Fine Ground
- 110845 Eggs Whole Frz Ctn 12/2lb
- 100219 Peaches Cling Sliced
- 100241 Peach Frozen Cup
- 100224 Pear sliced can
- 100500 Rice Brown Long Parboiled
- 100336 Spaghetti Sauce Meatless
- 100256 Strawberry Frozen Cup

Shipment 2 September
Start Date To Be Determined

- 100359 Black Beans Can
- 100365 Bean Pinto Can
- 110711 Beef Patty Cooked Frozen
- 100359 Black Beans Can
- 100003 Cheese- Shredded Cheddar
- 100021 Cheese - Shredded Mozzerella
- 100018 Cheese -- Sliced American
- 111751 Egg Patty Round Frz
- 110851 Fish AK Pollock Stick Breaded
- 100400 Flour All Purpose Enrich Bleach
- 100875 UHT Milk 1%
- 100465 Oats Rolled Tube
- 110393 Pancakes WG Frz
- 100396 Peanut Butter Smooth Jar
- 100187 Pork Ham Sliced
- 100188 Pork Ham Diced
- 100334 Tomato Sauce Can
- 111882 Turkey Breast Smkd Slc Frz
- 100501 Whole Grain Macaroni Noodle

Shipment 3 October
Start Date To Be Determined
(No Deliveries OCT 16 &17)

- 110361 Applesauce Cups
- 100373 Great Northern Beans Can
- 100362 Bean Refried Can
- 110396 Cheese - Mozzerella String
- 110462 Chicken Unseasoned Grilled Strips Frz
- 110857 Flour White Whole Wheat Blend
- 110854 Peanut Butter Smooth Packet
- 100173 Pork Leg Roast
- 100327 Tomato Paste Can
- 100330 Salsa Can
- 111900 Turkey Deli Breast Sliced Frz
- 100125 Turkey Roasts Frozen
- 110506 Whole Wheat Spaghetti Blend

Shipment 4 November
Start Date To Be Determined
(No Deliveries NOV 26,27,28)

- 111790 Apple Juice Single Frz Cup -
- 100206 Apple Sliced Can -
- 100261 Apricot Frozen Cup
- 100307 Beans Green Can
- 110473 Broccoli Florets Frz
- 111053 Corn Frozen 12/2.5 lb bag
- 100313 Corn Whole Kernel Can
- 110723 Cranberry Dried Package
- 110859 Mixed Berry Cup Frozen
- 100212 Mixed Fruit Can
- 100241 Peach Frozen Cup
- 100220 Peached Cling Diced Can
- 110730 Pork Pulled Cooked
- 100256 Strawberry Frozen Cup
- 100329 Tomato Diced Can
- 100125 Turkey Roasts Frozen

Shipment 5 December
Start Date To Be Determined

- 100134 Beef Crumbles w/spp
- 100158 Beef Fine Ground
- 111052 Carrots Diced Frozen 12/2lb
- 100352 Carrots Sliced Frozen 30lb
- 100018 Cheese -- Sliced American
- 100117 Chicken Fajita Strips Cooked FRZ
- 100875 UHT Milk 1%
- 100225 Pears Diced Can
- 100350 Peas Green Frozen 30lb
- 110724 Pepper/Onion Strips Frozen 30lb
- 100355 Potato Wedge Frozen
- 100293 Raisin Box
- 110721 Sweet Potatoes Crinkle Cut

Shipment 6 January
Start Date To Be Determined

- 100361 Applesauce Cup
- 100541 Applesauce Unsweeten Can
- 100307 Beans Green Can
- 100158 Beef Fine Ground
- 110711 Beef Patty Cooked Frozen
- 100242 Blueberries Wild Unsweetened Frz
- 100003 Cheese- Shredded Cheddar
- 111643 Cherries Dried Tart Pkg
- 100313 Corn Whole Kernel Can
- 100220 Peached Cling Diced Can
- 100224 Pear sliced can
- 100187 Pork Ham Sliced
- 406001 Montana Marinara
- 110860 Strawberry Slices Frozen

Shipment 7 February
Start Date To Be Determined

- 100216 Apricot Diced Peeled Canned
- 100359 Black Beans Can
- 100370 Beans Kidney Dark Red
- 100158 Beef Fine Ground
- 100018 Cheese -- Sliced American
- 110462 Chicken Unseasoned Grilled Strips Frz
- 100313 Corn Whole Kernel Can
- 100212 Mixed Fruit Can
- 100439 Oil Vegetable Btl 6/1 gal
- 100220 Peaches Cling Diced Can
- 110763 Peas Green Frozen 12/2lb
- 110730 Pork Pulled Cooked
- 111900 Turkey Deli Breast Sliced Frz

Shipment 8 March
Start Date To Be Determined

- 110361 Applesauce Cups
- 100541 Applesauce Unsweeten Can
- 100307 Beans Green Can
- 100003 Cheese- Shredded Cheddar
- 100021 Cheese - Shredded Mozzerella
- 100313 Corn Whole Kernel Can
- 100212 Mixed Fruit Can
- 111230 Mixed Frozen Vegetable 6/5lb
- 100219 Peaches Cling Sliced
- 100357 Potato Oven Fry
- 100256 Strawberry Frozen Cup

If an item only appears one time on this schedule you will get your full requested amount at that time.

If an item appears more than once, it will be divided as equally as possible between the scheduled shipment dates.

Questions? Call Erin Benson at 406-410-5719 or email erin.benson@mt.gov

>>> Schedule is subject to change<<<

USDA DoD FRESH PROGRAM:
A Source for Locally Grown Produce

* *

The USDA Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (USDA DoD Fresh) is a program available to schools to help increase access to fresh produce for schoolchildren. More than 42,000 schools place orders for weekly deliveries of American-grown fresh fruits and vegetables through USDA DoD Fresh to serve as part of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). Schools interested in participating in USDA DoD Fresh should contact their State Distributing Agency.

How Does USDA DoD Fresh Work?

Schools participating in the NSLP receive two types of support from the USDA. The bulk of USDA's support comes in the form of cash reimbursements which are provided to schools for the meals they serve. Schools also receive USDA Foods entitlement or pre-determined allocations that can be used to order food procured by the USDA for use in school meals. Schools may elect to spend a portion of their USDA Foods entitlement to receive produce through USDA DoD Fresh.

USDA DoD Fresh operates through a partnership between the USDA and the Department of Defense (DoD) Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), as well as the State Distributing Agencies in each participating State. State Distributing Agencies vary from State to State, but can be State Departments of Agriculture, Departments of Education, Departments of Human Services, or other agencies. State Distributing Agencies communicate with schools to determine how much of their USDA Foods entitlement they choose to spend on fresh produce through the USDA DoD Fresh Program.

How Is Local Produce Available in USDA DoD Fresh?

USDA DoD Fresh leverages DoD's procurement system to provide a variety of nutritious U.S.-grown fresh fruits and vegetables to schools. The DLA serves as the procurement agent that contracts with produce distributors to purchase and deliver produce to participating schools. Schools place orders directly in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Order/Receipt System (FFAVORS), an online catalog of domestically grown produce that is updated weekly by the vendors. FFAVORS tracks schools' entitlement balances and provides the actual cost at the time of order. DLA manages vendor payment and reconciliation.

The USDA and DLA support the purchase of locally grown produce to the maximum extent practicable because many participating school districts value local food and have local procurement goals. USDA DoD Fresh vendors are encouraged to source local produce, taking into consideration price, quality, availability, and other factors. Local produce for the purposes of USDA DoD Fresh is defined as produce from within the State or adjacent States, even though schools may establish their own definitions of local. Vendors selected to supply produce through USDA DoD Fresh must submit a local purchasing plan to DLA that includes:

- A list of products that the vendor currently purchases locally;

- A list of local growers from which the vendor sources products;

- Plans to expand the purchase of local items; and

- A list of resources that might assist in efforts to source more local products.

Vendors are required to report the State(s) where each fruit or vegetable is grown in FFAVORS, where schools can review available produce and place their orders. Local produce must meet the same contract requirements for quality, food safety, and reasonable pricing as non-local produce in the USDA DoD Fresh Program.

PATRICK LEAHY
FARM to SCHOOL
PROGRAM

What Should States and School Districts Do If They Want To Source Local Foods Through USDA DoD Fresh?

States and schools that want to order local produce through USDA DoD Fresh should start by looking for the State of Origin information or look for produce indicated as locally grown in the FFAVORS catalog, and compare this information to the school's own definition of local. This can be done by accessing the State of Origin report in FFAVORS.[1] If States or schools would like to request local products not listed in the FFAVORS catalog, they should contact their USDA DoD produce vendor and DLA Service Representatives (www.fns.usda.gov/usda-foods/usda-dod-fresh-fruit-and-vegetable-program) to ask if the product is available and can be added to the catalog.

> Producers interested in selling to the USDA DoD Fresh Program should contact the DLA contracted vendor in their State. USDA and DLA have specific requirements for USDA DoD Fresh vendors and producers, such as the requirement that all producers supplying fruits and vegetables for the program be Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certified. GAP certification is a requirement for USDA DoD Fresh, but is not required for all produce served by schools.

USDA DoD Fresh vendors are required to include State of Origin information for all products in the FFAVORS catalog. Products marked as "Local Grown" are grown within the State the customer is located or an adjacent State. Note that vendors may choose up to three States when inputting State of Origin information.

What are the advantages of sourcing local produce through the USDA DoD Fresh Program?

Convenience and Value: USDA DoD Fresh provides an option for school districts to use their USDA Foods entitlement to source a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables grown locally and in-State through a vendor that schools may already be using.

Availability: USDA DoD Fresh encourages vendors to supply local products, especially in-season. USDA DoD Fresh offers a variety of U.S.-grown whole and pre-cut fresh fruits and vegetables.

High-Quality Produce: Locally grown produce, like all produce available through the USDA DoD Fresh Program, must meet specific quality and food safety requirements such as Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP). All produce must meet requirements for U.S. No.1 or better.

Variety: USDA DoD Fresh offers different types and varieties of locally grown produce. Produce may be available in different package sizes and whole or pre-cut options.

Trackability: States and schools may use FFAVORS usage reports to track local products ordered through the USDA DoD Fresh program, making it easy to see if local procurement goals are met.

Learn More

For more general information on USDA DoD Fresh, a list of DLA contacts, and a list of USDA DoD Fresh vendors, visit www.fns.usda.gov/usda-foods/usda-dod-fresh-fruit-and-vegetable-program.

Contact information for State Distributing Agencies is available on the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) website (www.fns.usda.gov/contacts) (Select your State on the map and then select "USDA Foods in Schools"). Feedback or inquiries about USDA DoD Fresh should be directed to USDADoDFresh@usda.gov.

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[1] Contact your DLA representative if you need assistance running the State of Origin report in FFAVORS.

* *

For more information and to sign up for The Dirt, the e-letter from the Patrick Leahy Farm to School Program, visit
www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/e-letter-archive
Questions? Email us at SM.FN.FarmToSchool@usda.gov

PATRICK LEAHY FARM to SCHOOL PROGRAM

SBP Meal Pattern - 5 Day
School Breakfast Program

Components	Grade K - 5	Grade 6 – 8	Grade 9 - 12	Additional Information
Milk Must offer two varieties and one variety must be unflavored.	5 cups/wk 1 cup daily	5 cups/wk 1 cup daily	5 cups/wk 1 cup daily	Allowable varieties include flavored or unflavored fat-free/skim or low-fat/1 %. **Flavored milk added sugar limits:** **≤ 10 grams added sugars per 8 fl oz or; grade 6-12 a la carte limit is 15 grams per 12 fl oz.**
Fruits / Vegetable / Juice No more than half weekly offering may be juice.	5 cups/wk 1 cup daily	5 cups/wk 1 cup daily	5 cups/wk 1 cup daily	Juice must be 100% full-strength.
Grains / Meat / Meat Alternate May offer either grains, meats/meat alternates, or a combination of both to meet the ounce equivalent minimum.	7-10 oz eq/wk* 1 oz daily min	8-10 oz eq/wk* 1 oz daily min	9-10 oz eq/wk* 1 oz daily min	Daily & weekly minimums must be met. At least 80% of grain items offered must be whole grain rich (WGR). **Breakfast cereal added sugar limit: ≤ 6 grams per dry oz.** **Yogurt added sugar limit: ≤ 12 grams per 6 oz(2 g/oz).**
Min. – Max. Calories (kcal)	350 – 500	400 – 550	450 - 600	Weekly Average
Saturated Fat (% of total calories)	<10%	<10%	<10%	Weekly Average
Sodium Target (1A)	≤ 540 mg	≤ 600 mg	≤ 640 mg	Weekly Average **Sodium Target for NSLP SY2027-28
Trans Fat	0 grams	0 grams	0 grams	Serving Limit

*Serving below the maximum aligns with dietary specifications but is not required.**Sodium target, in effect beginning July 1, 2027, reduced by approximately 10% for breakfast.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Meal Pattern - 5 Day

Just Serve Instructions:	Offer versus Serve (OVS) Instructions:
● Must PREPARE all 5 components in the required amount. ● At POS: Must SERVE all 5 components in minimum required amount.	● Must PREPARE all 5 components in the required amount. ● At POS: Must TAKE 3 components: at least 1/2 cup of fruit or vegetable & 2 other components in minimum required amount.

Food Components	Grade K - 5	Grade 6 – 8	Grade 9 - 12	Additional Information
Milk Must offer two varieties and one variety must be unflavored.	5 cups/wk 1 cup daily	5 cups/wk 1 cup daily	5 cups/wk 1 cup daily	Allowable varieties include flavored or unflavored fat-free/skim or low-fat/1 %. **Flavored milk added sugar limits: ≤ 10 grams added sugars per 8 fl oz or; grades 6-12 a la carte limit is ≤15 grams per 12 fl oz.**
Fruits	2 ½ cups/wk 1/2 cup daily min	2 ½ cups/wk 1/2 cup daily min	5 cups/wk 1 cup daily min	Only 100% fruit juice is allowed. No more than half the weekly offering of fruit may be 100% juice.
Vegetables (total) Subgroups:	3 ¾ cups/wk 3/4 cup daily min	3 ¾ cups/wk 3/4 cup daily min	5 cups/wk 1 cup daily min	Daily minimum must be offered (or 'served'). For OVS, ½ cup may be taken. Leafy greens credit as half the amount. Dried fruit credits as double. *Additional Vegetables from any subgroup must be offered in order to meet weekly total.*
Dark Green	1/2 cup/wk	1/2 cup/wk	1/2 cup/wk	
Red / Orange	3/4 cup/wk	3/4 cup/wk	1 ¼ cup/wk	
Legumes	1/2 cup/wk	1/2 cup/wk	1/2 cup/wk	
Starchy	1/2 cup/wk	1/2 cup/wk	1/2 cup/wk	
Other	1/2 cup/wk	1/2 cup/wk	3/4 cup/wk	
Additional Vegetable	1 cup/wk	1 cup/wk	1 ½ cup/wk	
Meat or Meat Alternates	8-10 oz eq/wk* 1 oz daily min	9-10 oz eq/wk* 1 oz daily min	10-12 oz eq/wk* 2 oz daily min	Daily & Weekly requirements must be met **Yogurt added sugar limit: ≤ 12 grams per 6 oz(2 g/oz).**
Grains - At least 80% of grain items offered must be whole grain rich (WGR)	8-9 oz eq/wk* 1 oz daily min	8-10 oz eq/wk* 1 oz daily min	10-12 oz eq/wk* 2 oz daily min	Daily & Weekly minimums must be met ≤ 2 oz eq grain-based desserts may be offered weekly. **Breakfast cereal added sugar limit: ≤ 6 grams per dry oz.**
Min. – Max. Calories (kcal)	550 – 650	600 – 700	750 - 850	-Weekly average
Saturated Fat (% of total calories)	<10%	<10%	<10%	-Weekly average
Sodium Target (1A)	≤1,110 mg	≤1,225 mg	≤1,280 mg	-Weekly average **Sodium Target for NSLP SY2027-28
Trans Fat	0 grams / serving	0 grams / serving	0 grams / serving	

*Staying within the maximums helps with dietary specifications but are not required. **Sodium target, in effect beginning July 1, 2027, reduced by approximately 15% for lunch.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Buy American Provision Requirements

WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF AN AMERICAN PRODUCT?

An agricultural commodity that is produced in the United States; and

A food product that is processed in the United States substantially using agricultural commodities that are produced in the United States: Substantially using agriculture commodities that are produced in the United States means over 51 percent of a food product must consist of agricultural commodities that were grown domestically.

BUY AMERICAN REQUIREMENTS

Non-American produced items must have an exemption form on file

No more than 10% of total food costs can be spent on Non-American produced items as of SY 25/26.

School food authorities must include language requiring the purchase of foods that meet the Buy American requirements in all procurement procedures, solicitations, and contracts.

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Exemption Forms for Non-American Produced Items

For every item purchased that does not meet the definition of an American product, an exemption form must be kept on file.

One exemption form is required annually per item.

For example, once you have an exemption form on file for kiwi, you do not have to document any additional exemption forms for purchasing kiwi when it is grown outside of America.

A template of the exemption form is included on page 3.

Exemption forms should be kept on file for 3 years plus the current school year.

EXEMPT FOOD ITEMS

Some items are exempt from requiring these forms, which are listed on page 4 of this document. When purchasing items on this list that are produced outside of America, **you do not need to fill out an exemption form.**

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Montana Office of Public Instruction
School Nutrition Programs

Sample Buy American Exception Form

This form helps school food authorities (SFAs) comply with documentation requirements when purchasing non-domestic food products with Nonprofit School Food Service (NPSFS) account funds, in accordance with 7CFR 210.21(d). **SFAs should complete this form for each non-domestic food product purchased with NPSFS Funds**

The BUY AMERICAN PROVISION safeguards the health and well-being of our Nation's children and supports the U.S. economy, American farmers, and small and local agricultural businesses (7 CFR 210.21 (d) and Memo SP 38-2017). School food authorities (SFAs) in the continental United States must purchase domestic agricultural commodities and food products. For foods that are unprocessed, the agricultural commodities must be domestic, and for foods that are processed, they must be processed domestically using domestic agricultural food components that are comprised of over 51% domestically grown items, by weight or volume. Information on availability of domestic foods is available at: https://www.ams.usda.gov/market-news. **Exceptions to Buy American:** There are two limited exceptions when non-

domestic foods may be purchased. A
documented exception is permitted for these two exceptions, and a non-domestic agricultural commodity or food product may be purchased. Schools should consider domestic food alternatives prior to approving non-domestic foods and show documentation on procurement and administrative reviews. These exceptions are determined by the SFA:

- **Availability**: The food or food product is not produced or manufactured in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities of a satisfactory quality; or
- **Cost**: Competitive bids reveal the cost of a United States food or food product is significantly higher than the nondomestic product.

Non-Domestic Product Name: _____

Reason for not procuring acceptable domestic product (check all that apply):

- ☐ **Availability**: Limited availability - the agricultural food component is not produced or manufactured in the U.S. in sufficient and reasonably available quantities of a satisfactory quality. *Attach documentation from vendors showing lack of availability, with specific product names.*
- ☐ **Cost**: Competitive bids reveal the cost of domestic agricultural food components are significantly higher than the non-domestic ones. *Attach documentation showing increased cost over non-domestic product.*

1. Describe in detail the reason for using the non-domestic food product:

2. Describe the efforts taken to find domestic products that meet the Buy American provision:

Signature of Food Service Director   _____   Date _____

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Buy American Food Exemption List

Fruits and Vegetables	- Bananas - Bamboo shoots - Grapefruit sections (canned) - Mandarin oranges (canned) - Pineapple (canned) - Water chestnuts - Capers - Olives (green, pitted, or unpitted, or stuffed, in bulk)
Nuts and Seeds	- Brazil nuts (unroasted) - Cashew nuts - Coconut and coconut meat (unsweetened, shredded/desiccated) - Chesnuts
Staples and Specialty Ingredients	- Cocoa beans - Coffee (raw, or green bean) - Sugar (raw) - Tea (in bulk) - Vanilla beans - Tapioca flour - Cassava flour - Yeast (active dry and instant active dry)
Meats	- Beef, corned (canned) - Beef extract
Oils and Fats	- Olive oil - Castor oil
Spices and Herbs	- Spices and herbs (in bulk) - Thyme oil - Lavender oil
Other	- Chicle - Agar (bulk) - Cream of tartar (bulk)

The items on this list do not require a Buy American exemption form when purchasing. However, they do need to be included in your total food cost for non-American produced items.

*An exhaustive list of exempt items can be found **here**.*

Food Cost Cap for
Non-American Produced Items

As of SY 25/26, food costs for Non-American produced items cannot exceed 10% of your total annual food cost.

This includes all items that do not meet the definition of an American product, including those on the exemption list on page 4.

As you purchase items throughout the school year, use the USDA tracking tool to document expenses to ensure the SFA is meeting this requirement.

This cap will continue to decrease:

As of SY 28/29, food costs for Non-American produced items cannot exceed 8% of your total annual food cost.

As of SY 31/32, food costs for Non-American produced items cannot exceed 5% of your total annual food cost.

Please see pages 5 and 6 for instructions on requesting an accommodation to exceed the Food Cost Cap.

For addition information regarding the Buy American requirements, please contact your OPI school nutrition specialist.

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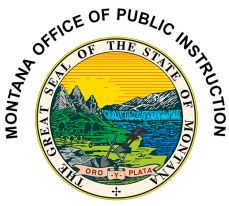
Civil Rights Training Documentation Form

Date:	
Presenter:	
Attendees: (list names)	
Topics Covered: (A copy of the training may be attached)	Check the box if the OPI training was used ☐

Complete annually with all SNP & SFSP food service staff and volunteers.
Keep this form on file at the School Food Authority (SFA).

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Household Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals

Complete one application per household. Please use a pen (not a pencil).

APPLY ONLINE:
RETURN TO (School/District Name):
ADDRESS:

STEP 1 — List ALL children, infants, and students up to and including grade 12. Attach another sheet of paper if you need space for more names.

List ALL children in the household. Do not forget to list infants, children attending other schools, children not in school, and children not applying for benefits. This includes children not related to you in your household.

Child's First Name	MI	Child's Last Name	Grade	Foster Child	Migrant	Runaway	Homeless	
				☐	☐	☐	☐	If you checked any of these boxes, please refer to the Application Instruction's Step 1: Part C & Part D.
				☐	☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	☐	

Check all that apply

STEP 2 — Do any household members (including you) participate in: SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR?

○ **NO** → Go to STEP 3. ○ **YES** → Write case number here, fill in social security number in STEP 3 and proceed to STEP 4. Subject to verification.

CASE NUMBER (NOT EBT NUMBER):

Write only one case number in this space.

STEP 3 — List ALL household members and income for each member (before taxes and deductions)

A. All Adult Household Members (Anyone who is living with you and shares income and expenses, even if not related, including you.)

List all Adult Household Members not listed in STEP 1 (including yourself) even if they do not receive income. For each Household Member listed, if they receive income, report total gross income (before taxes and deductions) for each source in whole dollars (no cents) only. If they do not receive income from any source, write '0'. If you enter '0' or leave any fields blank, you are certifying (promising) that there is no income to report.

Name of Adult Household Members (First and Last)	Earnings from Work	Weekly	Every 2 Weeks	2xMonth	Monthly	Annual	Public Assistance, Child Support, Alimony	Weekly	Every 2 Weeks	2xMonth	Monthly	Pensions, Retirement, Social Security, SSI, VA Benefits, All Other	Weekly	Every 2 Weeks	2xMonth	Monthly
	$	○	○	○	○	○	$	○	○	○	○	$	○	○	○	○
	$	○	○	○	○	○	$	○	○	○	○	$	○	○	○	○
	$	○	○	○	○	○	$	○	○	○	○	$	○	○	○	○
	$	○	○	○	○	○	$	○	○	○	○	$	○	○	○	○
	$	○	○	○	○	○	$	○	○	○	○	$	○	○	○	○

How often received?

Total Household Members (Children and Adults) ☐

Last Four Numbers of Social Security Number of Primary Wage Earner or other Adult Household Member (If Applicable)

Check if no Social Security Number ☐

Please see application's back for list of income sources.

B. Child Income

Sometimes children in the household earn or receive income.

Include the TOTAL income (before taxes and deductions) received by ALL children listed in STEP 1 here.

Child Income $ _____

Weekly	Every 2 Weeks	2xMonth	Monthly	Annual
○	○	○	○	○

How often received?

STEP 4 — Contact information and adult signature.

"I certify (promise) that all information on this application is true and that all income is reported. I understand that this information is given in connection with the receipt of Federal funds, and that school officials may verify (confirm) the information. I am aware that if I purposely give false information, my children may lose meal benefits, and I may be prosecuted under applicable State and Federal laws. I attest that all information I have provided is true and correct, and I am not already receiving Summer EBT benefits in another State or ITO."

Print Name of Adult Signing the Form _____   Signature of Adult _____   Today's Date _____

Mailing Address (if available) _____   City _____   State _____   Zip _____   Phone (optional) _____   Email (optional) _____

Return completed form to your child's school.

SOURCES AND EXAMPLES OF INCOME
For additional information on income, please refer to the instructions that accompany this application.

Sources of Income			Examples of Income for Children
Earnings from Work	**Public Assistance/Alimony/ Child Support**	**Pensions/Retirement/ All other sources of income**	• A child has a regular full or part-time job where they earn a salary or wages
• Salary, wages, cash bonuses, tips, commissions • Net income from self-employment (farm or business) **If you are in the U.S. Military:** • Basic pay and cash bonuses (do NOT include combat pay, FSSA, or privatized housing allowances) • Allowances for of-base housing, food, and clothing	• Unemployment benefits • Workers' compensation • Supplemental Security Income (SSI) • Cash assistance from State or local government • Alimony payments • Child support payments • Veterans benefits • Strike benefits	• Social Security/Disability (including railroad retirement and black lung benefits) • Private Pensions or disability benefits • Income from trusts or estates • Annuities • Investment income • Earned interest • Rental income • Regular cash payments from outside household	• A child is blind or disabled and receives Social Security benefits • A parent is disabled, retired, or deceased, and their child receives Social Security benefits • A friend or extended family member regularly gives a child spending money • A child receives regular income from a private pension fund, annuity, or trust

OPTIONAL
Children's ethnic and racial identities. This information is kept confidential and may be protected by the Privacy Act of 1974.

We are required to ask for information about your children's race and ethnicity. This information is important and helps to make sure we are fully serving our community. Responding to this section is optional and does not affect your children's eligibility for free or reduced price meals.

Ethnicity (check one): ☐ Hispanic or Latino (A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish Culture or origin, regardless of race)   ☐ Not Hispanic or Latino

Race (check one or more): ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native   ☐ Asian   ☐ Black or African American   ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander   ☐ White

Return this completed form to your child's school. *Do not mail, fax, or email completed applications to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights.

DO NOT FILL OUT
For school use only.

Annual Income Conversion: Weekly × 52, Every 2 Weeks × 26, Twice a Month × 24, Monthly × 12. Do not annualize income to determine eligibility unless more than one income frequency is listed.

Total Income	How often?					Household size	Categorical Eligibility ☐	Eligibility		
	Weekly	Every 2 Weeks	2xMonth	Monthly	Annual			Free	Reduced	Denied
_____	○	○	○	○	○	_____		○	○	○

Determining Official's Signature	Date	Confirming official's Signature	Date	Verifying official's Signature	Date

Use of Information Statement

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires that we use information from this application to see who qualifies for free or reduced price meals. We can only approve complete forms. We may share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them deliver program benefits to your household. Inspectors and law enforcement may also use your information to make sure that program rules are met.

Please be sure to provide the last four numbers of the Social Security number of the adult household member who signs the application. If the adult does not have one, 'Check if no Social Security Number.' Applications for a foster child do not need to list a Social Security number. Applications for children in households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) do not need to list a Social Security number. Some children qualify for free meals without an application. Please contact your school to get free meals for a foster child, and children who are homeless, migrant, or runaway.

The contact information below is solely to fle a complaint of discrimination

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

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
Ofce of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

FAX: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
EMAIL: program.intake@usda.gov

*Do not mail applications to this address, only complaints of discrimination.

Return completed form to your child's school.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES
(Effective from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026)

If more than one income is reported, all income should be converted to a yearly figure before a determination is made.
The conversion formula is as follows:
Monthly x 12
Twice a Month x 24
Every Two Weeks x 26
Weekly x 52

Household Size	Free Meals – 130%					Reduced-Price Meals – 185%				
	Annual	Monthly	Twice a Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly	Annual	Monthly	Twice a Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	$20,345	$1,696	$848	$783	$392	$28,953	$2,413	$1,207	$1,114	$557
2	$27,495	$2,292	$1,146	$1,058	$529	$39,128	$3,261	$1,631	$1,505	$753
3	$34,645	$2,888	$1,444	$1,333	$667	$49,303	$4,109	$2,055	$1,897	$949
4	$41,795	$3,483	$1,742	$1,608	$804	$59,478	$4,957	$2,479	$2,288	$1,144
5	$48,945	$4,079	$2,040	$1,883	$942	$69,653	$5,805	$2,903	$2,679	$1,340
6	$56,095	$4,675	$2,338	$2,158	$1,079	$79,828	$6,653	$3,327	$3,071	$1,536
7	$63,245	$5,271	$2,636	$2,433	$1,217	$90,003	$7,501	$3,751	$3,462	$1,731
8	$70,395	$5,867	$2,934	$2,708	$1,354	$100,178	$8,349	$4,175	$3,853	$1,927
For each additional family member, add	$7,150	$596	$298	$275	$138	$10,175	$848	$424	$392	$196

Prepared by the Office of Public Instruction - PO Box 202501, Helena, MT 59620-2501

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

School Nutrition Programs
Breakfast, Lunch, Snack and Milk
Reimbursement Rates

Effective July 1, 2025– June 30, 2026

School Breakfast Program	Non-severe Need	Severe Need
Paid	0.40	0.40
Reduced Price	2.16	2.64
Free	2.46	2.94

Schools may qualify for the "severe need" breakfast reimbursements if during the second preceding year 40% or more of lunches served were free or reduced price.

National School Lunch Program	Less than 60%	Less than 60% + 9 cents	60% or more	60% or more + 9 cents
Paid	0.44	0.53	0.46	0.55
Reduced Price	4.20	4.29	4.22	4.31
Free	4.60	4.69	4.62	4.71

Schools may qualify for the "60% or more" lunch reimbursement if during the second preceding year 60% or more of lunches served were free or reduced price. The additional nine cents lunch reimbursement is made available to schools certified to be in compliance with the meal pattern requirements.

Afterschool Snack Program	
Paid	0.11
Reduced Price	0.63
Free	1.26

Afterschool Snack Program Area Eligibility - An Afterschool Snack Program site is **area eligible** if it is located at a school or in the attendance area of a school where at least 50% of the enrolled children are eligible for free and reduced-price meals. All students at an area-eligible site receive an afterschool snack at no charge and schools claim all snacks served at the free rate. Sites that are **non-area eligible** must use a child's free and reduced-price status to determine reimbursement for the afterschool snack program.

Special Milk Program	All Milk	Paid Milk	Free Milk
Pricing Programs without Free Option	0.2675	N/A	N/A
Pricing Programs with Free Option	N/A	0.2675	Average cost per ½ pint of milk
Non-pricing Programs	0.2675	N/A	N/A

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

School Nutrition Programs:
Free & Reduced-Price Verification Instructions SY 25-26

Verification is the process by which schools confirm the eligibility of a sample of approved free and reduced-price meal applications. **Schools will report the verification results and October eligibility data on the School Food Authority (SFA) Verification Collection Report in** MAPS**.** Please carefully read through these instructions to ensure reporting accuracy. Additional instructions can be found in the USDA's Eligibility Manual. Ensure DCA direct certification eligibilities have been updated prior to starting the verification process.

All sponsors, regardless of participation type, must submit the Verification Report in MAPS by Nov 30th. District's operating CEP district-wide may not have any applications to verify but must submit the verification report in MAPS with the following items completed: 1-1 and check the boxes for items 5-1 and 5-6.

Important Verification Dates:

October 1	(1) Record Oct 1st Application Counts (2) Calculate Sample Size (3) Send Household Notification Letters
October 31	Record Student Counts as of October 31 (section 4 column B).
November 15	Deadline to collect household documentation/complete verification process with households.
November 30	Submit Verification Report in MAPS starting Nov 1. Report Deadline November 30.

October 1   (1) Record Application Counts (2) Calculate Sample Size (3) Send Household Notification Letters

Section 4 A – Number of approved free and reduced *Applications* on file as of October 1st
- Applications in the pool of those subject to being drawn for the verification process.

Student counts (column B) are to be captured as of October 31.

4-1 A: Categorically Free Eligible – Record the number of categorically free applications (SNAP, TANF, FDPIR, or Foster Care) only if NOT Directly Certified from DCA. *Do not duplicate counts.* Report applications confirmed as directly certified in Section 3 only as proof of their eligibility has already been confirmed and therefore are not subject to verification process. Free Direct Certs supersedes an application, and SNAP-DC supersedes all. I**tem 4-1 counts should be few to none since the majority should be DC and listed in Sect 3.**

4-2 A: Report the number of **Free Income based Applications**
4-3 A: Report the number of **Reduced-Price Applications**

Method of Verification Process -
Is dependent upon on the percent of household applications that responded to last year's verification process.

➢ If *at least* 80% of the households verified responded to last year's verification process, your district may conduct either:
 ▪ **Random (Alternate One) verification method,** (or)
  ➢ randomly draw the 3% verification sample from applications subject to verification (not directly certified).
 ▪ **Focused (Alternate Two) verification method**
  ➢ Draw the 1% verification sample from Error-Prone Applications, plus
  ➢ Draw the .5% verification sample from Categorical Eligible Applications (eligible prog/case# but not direct cert).
➢ If *less than* 80% of the households verified responded to last year's verification process, your district must conduct:
 ▪ **Error-Prone (Standard) verification method**
  ➢ Draw the 3% verification sample from Error-Prone Applications.
  ➢ Unsure? See the list of sponsors that must complete the Error-Prone Verification Method during SY 25-26.

Error-Prone Applications – within $100 per month ($1,200 annually) of the Income Eligibility Guidelines.

If conducting the Error-Prone or Focused verification methods, it is recommended to indicate Error-Prone Applications upon originally determining free or reduced eligibility statuses.

School Nutrition Programs:
Free & Reduced-Price Verification Instructions SY 25-26

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3" align="center">Verification Sample Methods
Do not include applications already confirmed as directly certified in the total count of applications that are in the pool of those subject to verification as their eligibility has already been confirmed from the program source.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Error-Prone (Standard)</td><td>Error-Prone (Standard) method required if less than 80% of the household apps responded to last year's verification process.</td><td>3% of all applications approved as of Oct 1, selected from error prone applications.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Random (Alternate One)</td><td>May conduct the Random (Alternate One) method if 80% or more of the household apps responded to last year's verification process.</td><td>3% of all applications approved as of Oct 1, selected at random.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Focused (Alternate Two)</td><td>May conduct the Focused (Alternate Two) method if 80% or more of the household apps responded to last year's verification process.</td><td>1% of all applications approved as of Oct 1, selected from error-prone applications.
<u>PLUS</u> .5% of applications approved as of Oct 1, selected from categorically eligible applications (household provided case # or categorical program on app) but NOT directly certified in DCA.</td></tr>
</table>

Example 3% Sample Size – Calculate the Number of Applications to Verify
- Random/Alternate-One (or) Error-Prone/Standard Verification Methods

Applications listed in section 4 are subject to verification because proof of eligibility has NOT been established (not in DCA).

- Total number of **applications** in section 4, column A.
  - This is the number of applications in the pool subject to the verification process.

- Multiply the total number of applications in section 4 by .03 (3%).
  - **Round all decimals up to the next whole number.**
  - This calculation equals the number of applications you will need to verify.

  - Random/Alternate-One – randomly draw the required number of applications using any random method.
  - Error-Prone/Standard – randomly draw the required number of applications from those considered error-prone.
    - If there are not enough error-prone applications on file to meet the required number of applications to verify, after exhausting all error-prone applications, sponsors may randomly pull from other applications on file that are subject to verification process.

3% Calculation - Example

Approved Applications as of Oct 1st

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Section 4</td><td rowspan="4">Students approved as FREE or REDUCED PRICE eligible through a household application</td><td align="center">**ALL SFAs collecting applications must report Section 4**</td><td align="center">A. Number of Applications</td></tr>
<tr><td>4-1: Approved as categorically FREE Eligible: Based on those providing documentation (e.g. a case number for SNAP, TANF, FDPIR on an application)</td><td align="right">1</td></tr>
<tr><td>4-2: Approved as FREE eligible: Based on household size and income information</td><td align="right">24</td></tr>
<tr><td>4-3: Approved as REDUCED PRICE eligible: Based on household size and income information</td><td align="right">17</td></tr>
</table>

Total number of Applications in section 4 (Column A) multiplied by 3% =

In this example 2 applications should be randomly selected for the verification process

42
X <u>00.03 (3%)</u>
= **1.26 = 2** (round <u>*all*</u> decimals up)

School Nutrition Programs:
Free & Reduced-Price Verification Instructions SY 25-26

Send Household Verification Letters

Recommend attaching the [Verification Application Tracker](#) sheet to verified applications to ensure requirements are met.

- Before sending verification letters, a Confirmation Review must be conducted to ensure accuracy of the initial determination.
    - Must be a person other than the official who made the initial eligibility determination
    - Document the confirmation review by signing the "confirming signature" line of the selected application
- Send the ["We Must Check Your Application"](#) letter to selected household(s)
    - Households have 10 days to reply
    - If no reply, follow-up contact at least 1 time and document follow-up attempts (phone call, email, text, etc.)
        - Districts with low response rates (less than 80%) will be subject to error-prone method next year
- Send the prototype ["We Have Checked Your Application"](#) letter to households
    - If verification results in higher benefits (e.g., changing from reduced-price to free category), the change is effective immediately and must be implemented no later than 3 operating days later
    - If verification results in reduced or terminated meal benefits, households must be given 10 calendar days' written advance notice of the change (continue benefits for 10 calendar days)
- **November 15th – Federal deadline to gather/confirm household's proof of eligibility responses and send final household correspondence for the verification process**
- Document household responses/nonresponses in section 5-8 on the *verification form*

October 31   Record Student Counts

Report the number of approved **students** as of October 31st for each category (Sections 1 – 4 Column B) and record counts on the [Verification form](#). An updated direct certification report should be reviewed on or just prior to October 31.

Section 1: School Sites/ Student Counts

1-1: Enrolled Student Counts – Enter the number of (A.) OPI School Sites and (B.) Total enrolled students as of Oct 31.

1-2: Residential Child Care Institutions (RCCIs) must enter the number of sites and students enrolled for each type.

Section 1 - Total Schools, Residential Child Care Institutions (RCCIs), and Enrolled Students

All SFAs must report Section 1.
Report schools or institutions operating the NSLP and/or SBP as of the **last operating day in October.**

	A. Number of Schools OR Institutions	B. Number of Students
1-1 Total schools (Do not include RCCIs):	3	0
1-2 Total RCCIs (Do not include schools counted in 1-1):	0	0
1-2a RCCIs with day students (Report ONLY day students in 1-2aB):	0	0
1-2b RCCIs with NO day students:	0	0

Section 2: This section is applicable to CEP sites only

2-3: CEP Sites – Enter the number of (A.) Schools and (B.) Students participating in CEP
- If ALL school sites are, CEP or RCCI check items 3-1 & 5-1, and you are finished.
- If only SOME of the district's sites participate in CEP, report item 2-3 to include the total count of CEP schools/student data and then complete the remaining sections (3 through 5, which includes the direct cert counts) for the remaining schools NOT participating in CEP.

Section 2 - SFAs with schools operating alternate provisions

Only SFAs with alternative provisions must report Section 2.
Report schools or institutions operating the NSLP and/or SBP as of the **last operating day in October.**

	A. Number of Schools AND Institutions	B. Number of Students
2-1 Operating Provision 2/3 in a BASE year for NSLP and SBP:	0	0
2-2 Operating Provision 2/3 in a NON BASE year for NSLP and SBP:	0	0
2-2a Provision 2/3 students reported as FREE in a NON BASE year:		0
2-2b Provision 2/3 students reported as REDUCED PRICE in a NON BASE year:		0
2-3 Operating the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP):	0	0

School Nutrition Programs:
Free & Reduced-Price Verification Instructions SY 25-26

Section 3-B: Student Counts - Directly Certified as of Oct 31

Students in Section 3 are NOT subject to verification because proof of eligibility has already been confirmed. Do not duplicate counts.

3-1: Leave 3-1 blank (unless *all* school sites are CEP or RCCI)

3-2 B: Students SNAP Directly Certified in DCA *(SNAP Direct Cert eligibility supersedes all other eligible categories)*
When a student is Free Directly Certified through DCA that eligibility supersedes all other information on file (such as household application or letter from the SNAP agency) and the student should be counted as directly certified. If a student is directly certified with SNAP and another program (e.g. Foster Care or Medicaid), SNAP supersedes all other program eligibility sources. Do not include CEP school SNAP DC counts with item 3-2 (regular pricing prog school sites only).

Items 3-2 & 3-3 auto-populates Oct 31ˢᵗ direct cert counts from DCA to the MAPS verification report. Please review for accuracy.

3-3 **B: Students Directly Certified by other source categories**: TANF, FDPIR, homeless, migrant, runaway & foster care and Medicaid-Free (proof of participant eligibility confirmed by source or through DCA system). *This item also auto-populates data counts from DCA.*

3-4 B: Categorically Free Students by household submission of <u>SNAP letter only</u>. SNAP Letters that were also validated in the DCA system as directly certified should be counted in 3-2 B as SNAP directly cert only (do not count in both places).

Medicaid-Reduced is currently not being collected on the USDA's Verification Reporting form.

	Students approved as FREE eligible NOT subject to verification	**ALL SFAs must report Section 3 or check box 3-1 if applicable** 3-1: ☐ Check the box only if all schools and/or RCCIs in the SFA were not required to perform direct certification with SNAP (i.e. NON BASE year Provision 2/3 for all schools)	B. Number of FREE Students
Section 3		3-2: Students directly certified through Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): Do *not* include students certified with SNAP through the letter method.	97
		3-3: Students directly certified through other programs: Include those directly certified through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), or Medicaid (if applicable); those documented as homeless, migrant, runaway, foster, Head Start, Pre-K Even Start, or non-applicant but approved by local officials. DO NOT include SNAP students already reported in 3-2.	11
		3-4: Students certified categorically FREE eligible through SNAP letter method: Include students certified for free meals through the family providing a letter from the SNAP agency.	0

Section 4-B: Student Counts – Categorical/Income Free & Reduced as of Oct 31

4-1 B: Categorically Free Students - **Application listing a Case Number** *only* **(SNAP, TANF, FDPIR or Foster Care)**
Report the number of Categorically Free Students that have NOT been confirmed as Directly Certified in DCA and therefore are subject to the verification process because proof of eligibility has not been confirmed.
Categorically Free Students that have been confirmed in DCA are considered Directly Certified and should be recorded in section 3.

4-2 B: Report the number of **Free Income based Students**

4-3 B: Report the number of **Reduced-Price Students**

	Students approved as FREE or REDUCED PRICE eligible through a household application	**ALL SFAs collecting applications must report Section 4**	A. Number of Applications	B. Number of Students
Section 4		4-1: Approved as categorically FREE Eligible: Based on those providing documentation (e.g. a case number for SNAP, TANF, FDPIR on an application)	1	3
		4-2: Approved as FREE eligible: Based on household size and income information	24	35
		4-3: Approved as REDUCED PRICE eligible: Based on household size and income information	17	30

School Nutrition Programs:
Free & Reduced-Price Verification Instructions SY 25-26

Section 5 – Verification Process & Results

5-1: Only check the box if **all** school sites are exempt from the verification process. Types of sponsors exempt to the Verification process include CEP (operated at all sites), Residential Child Care Institutions and Milk only.

5-2: Household documentation and correspondence must be completed by November 15th.
If you are unable to complete the verification process by November 15, the district must submit a written request to this deadline. Extensions may be approved up to Dec 15. See the Verification [Deadline Extension Request Form](#) online.

5-3: For further information, see pages 1-2 for the **Method of Verification** details, or reference the [USDA's Eligibility Manual](#).
- Most sponsors qualify for the Alternate One (Random) verification method.

5-4: Only report the number of Error-Prone Applications **if during last year's verification process,** less than 80% of the households responded and your district is required to conduct the Alternate One/Error-Prone method.

5-5: Report the number of Applications Verified:
- For most sponsors, this number should reflect the calculation on page 2
  - Total of Section 4 Column A multiplied by 3% - round all decimals up
- This number should also equal the total number of verified applications in Section 5-8

ALL SFAs must report Section 5 or check box 5-1 if applicable		
5-1: ☒ Check the box if ALL schools and/or RCCIs are exempt from verification *(see instructions for list of exemptions).* If 5-1 is checked, no further reporting in Section 5 is required.		

5-2: Was verification performed and completed?	5-3: Type of Verification process used:
☒ Yes, completed by November 15th ☐ Yes, completed after November 15th ☐ No, verification was NOT performed or the process was not completed.	1. ☐ Standard (Lesser of 3% or 3,000 error-prone) 2. ☒ Alternate one (Lesser of 3% or 3,000 selected randomly) 3. ☐ Alternate two (Lesser of 1% or 1,000 error prone applications PLUS lesser of one-half of one percent or 500 applications with SNAP/TANF/FDPIR case numbers)

If 1 or 3 is checked in 5-3, report 5-4. If 2 is checked in 5-3, enter	5-4: Total ERROR PRONE applications: *Report all applications as of October 1st considered error prone*		5-5: Number of applications selected for verification sample:	2

5-6: Direct Verification – Using records from public agencies to verify proof of income and/or program participation from the application(s) *selected for the verification process, if none* were validated as directly certified in DCA or confirmed with agency records, check the box.

5-7: Confirmed through Direct Verification - Only report counts in this section if applications randomly selected for the verification process were directly verified/confirmed with agency records (validated in DCA).

ALL SFAs must report 5-7 or check box 5-6 if applicable		A. Number of Applications	B. Number of Students
5-6: ☐ Check the box if direct verification was not conducted in the SFA, (i.e. not one of the schools and/or RCCIs in the SFA performed direct verification). **If 5-6 is checked, skip 5-7.**			
Report if FREE and/or REDUCED PRICE eligibility is confirmed through	5-7: Confirmed through		

School Nutrition Programs:
Free & Reduced-Price Verification Instructions SY 25-26

Nov 30   Submit Verification Report in MAPS System

Submit the SFA Verification Collection Report online through MAPS. **The electronic Verification Report will be available in MAPS November 1st-30th. Paper Versions Will Not Be Accepted.** The PDF/paper version of the form is available as a worksheet only.

Locate the Verification Report in MAPS:

1. Select the 'Application' menu 2. Then click on the '**Verification Report**'	
3. Click **Modify** Next to SY 25-26	

School Nutrition Programs:
Free & Reduced-Price Verification Instructions SY 25-26

4. Fill out all applicable fields
   - Unfortunately updates to the contact info section cannot currently be made. Please disregard that section for the time being.

5. Click **Save** at the bottom of the form when done.

MAPS Online Verification Form Features

The system pre-fills some of the items for you such as the number of directly certified students will auto-populate a count referenced from the DCA system. Edit checks have been built into the form to correct data entry errors.

Contact Alie Wolf at aliew@mt.gov or (406) 459-5394 with any further verification questions.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Self-Review: Meal Counting and Claiming System
Annual review for accuracy of the Point of Service system at each school under jurisdiction of the SFA.

Complete before FEBRUARY 1 each school year.

The purpose of this review is to ensure the site's claim for reimbursement is based on an acceptable meal counting system that yields the actual number of reimbursable free, reduced-price and paid breakfast and lunch meals served for each day of operation.

If any of the questions below are answered "NO," the SFA must ensure the school implements corrective action and conduct a follow up on-site review to determine if corrective action resolved the problem(s) within 45 days. Documentation of corrective action and follow up should be recorded at the end of this form.

School Name	
Self-Review Date	
Name of Reviewer	
Meal Service (Circle One)	Breakfast Lunch

Meal Counting System	YES	NO
1. Meal counts must be taken where complete meals are served to children. **Is the POS count taken at the end of the serving line, where a determination can be made that a reimbursable meal has been selected?** NOTE: If counts are taken at the front of the line, a staff person must monitor the end of the serving line to ensure all required components are selected for each student meal claimed for reimbursement. The following methods for taking meal counts are NOT acceptable: • attendance records or morning meal counts • tray counts • cash converted to meals • free, reduced or paid meals backed out of total meal count • counting/claiming number of meals ordered rather than number of meals served		
2. Is the person responsible for monitoring meals correctly identifying reimbursable meals?		
3. Is someone trained as a backup for the monitor and the meal counter?		

4. Is there a method for recording non-reimbursable meals (for example, meals not meeting meal pattern requirements, second student meals, adult meals, ala carte purchases, etc.) to distinguish them from reimbursable meals?		
5. Are meals charged to student accounts claimed on the day the meals are served?		
6. Are meals served to student workers charged and claimed in the student's correct category of approval (free, reduced, paid)? If school does not utilize student workers, skip this question.		
7. Do meals taken on field trips meet meal pattern requirements and is a POS meal count taken to ensure a reimbursable meal is selected by each student? If "NO" explain:		
8. Does the cashier know the policy for handling:		
a) Lost, stolen, and misused tickets/meal accounting numbers?		
b) Meals served to visiting students?		
c) Non-reimbursable (incomplete) meals?		
9. Did the person(s) responsible for monitoring meals receive training on meal pattern requirements and Offer versus Serve provision (if utilized at this school) this year?		
10. Are daily meal counts (for all serving lines, serving periods, etc.) accurately totaled, recorded and reported?		
11. Does the meal counting and claiming system prevent overt identification (any action that openly identifies children for free or reduced meal benefits in the school lunch or breakfast program:		
a) In the type of meal coding system used?		
b) By disallowing students to share/borrow tickets or meal account numbers in the cafeteria line?		
c) By assuring that if a school uses a checklist, the checklist contains the names of all students, not only those students who receive free and reduced meals, and there is no color coding or indication of a student's category of eligibility on the checklist? If school does not utilize a checklist, skip this question.		
12. Is there a backup system in place if/when the primary counting system is not available (for example, a paper roster)?		

7 CFR 210.8(a)(1) SFAs
7 CFR Part 210.2 RCCIs

Claim for Reimbursement	YES	NO
1. Is the school's POS count used to determine the school's claim for reimbursement? If "NO" explain:		
2. Was a daily edit check performed by the SFA prior to submitting the monthly claim for reimbursement? The edit check requires daily meal counts are compared to the number of eligible students in each category multiplied by an attendance factor. If daily meal counts are greater than the number of students eligible in each category multiplied by the attendance factor, the reason must be documented. Document reasoning here:		
3. Do the monthly meal count summary and the total of the daily meal counts match the meal counts reported in the monthly claim for reimbursement? If "NO" explain:		
Note: The following two questions are for all SFAs <u>except</u> for SFAs on Provision 2 or 3 in non-base years, CEP, or RCCIs with only residential children		
4. Is a current eligibility list kept up-to-date and used by the meal counting system to provide an accurate daily count of reimbursable meals **by category** (free, reduced price, paid)?		
5. If applicable according to 7 CFR 220.11(d) are comparisons of daily free, reduced price and paid meal counts against data which will assist in the identification of breakfast counts in excess of the number of free, reduced price and paid meals served each day to children eligible for such meals completed?		
Readily Observable General Areas	YES	NO
Were any issues readily observed in relation to resource management?		
a) Maintenance of the Nonprofit School Food Service Account?		
b) Paid Lunch Equity?		
c) Revenue from Non-program Foods?		

d) Indirect Costs?		
Were any issues readily observed in other general areas?		
a) Free and Reduced Price Process – including verification, notification, and other procedures		
b) Civil Rights		
c) Reporting and Recordkeeping		
d) Food Safety		
e) Competitive Food Service		
f) Water		
g) Professional Standards		
h) SBP and SFSP Outreach		
i) Local School Wellness Policies		
j) Other		

Corrective action to be taken:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Corrective action will be implemented by:

Name	
Title	
Date	

FOLLOW UP Self-Review: Meal Counting and Claiming System

Name of Reviewer		
Date Conducted		

Corrective action implemented:

_____

_____

_____

Professional Standards

What School Nutrition Program Employees (that's YOU!) need

opi.mt.gov

to know about Professional Standards

School Nutrition Program Position	Required Training Hours
Program Director This person oversees all aspects of the School Nutrition Program in their district. This includes administering, planning, directing, assessing, implementing, and evaluating the program.	12 annual training hours
Program Manager Large districts that have a centralized kitchen and satellite kitchens often have a Program Manager for each satellite kitchen to oversee food production and service.	10 annual training hours
Program Staff working ≥ 20 hours/week. This is anyone that is employed to work in the School Nutrition Program.	6 annual training hours
All Program Staff working < 20 hours/week.	4 annual training hours

All school staff involved with meal service must complete **annual civil rights training**.
All nutrition staff involved with purchasing food must take an **annual procurement training.**

Any training that lasts 15 minutes or longer counts!
"Teachable Moments" in your kitchen can be counted towards Professional Standards training hours.

Training for Professional Standards is categorized into these 4 Key Areas

Nutrition: Menu Planning, Nutrition Education, General Nutrition.

Example: How to read the ingredients list to confirm a menu item is whole grain rich.

Operations: Food Production, Serving Food (offer vs serve), Cashier and Point of Service, Purchasing/Procurement, Receiving and Storage, Food Safety and HACCP.

Example: Learn about how much should be offered and how much should be served to make a reimbursable meal.

Administration: FreeandReducedPriceMealBenefits,ProgramManagement,FinancialManagement,Human Resources and Staff Training, Facilities and Equipment Planning.

Communications and marketing: Communications, Marketing.

Example: Share a Smarter Lunchroom technique you learned and want to implement in your School Nutrition Program.

Documentation of training hours must be available for Administrative Review.

An easy to use Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool is available here:

http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/professional-standards

Hiring Standards for **NEW** School Nutrition Program Directors

Minimum Prior Training Standards	**All new food service directors are required to have:** At least **8** hours of food safety training either not more than 5 years prior to their start date OR completed within **30 days** of the start date. Maintain the Managers Food Safety Certificate on file.
Student Enrollment	**Required Qualifications** **Must have at least one of the following:**
≥10,000 Students Billings Public Schools Great Falls Public Schools	☐ Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas.* ☐ Bachelor's degree in any academic major **and** at least 5 years experience in management of school nutrition programs.
2,500-9,999 Students Belgrade Public Schools Bozeman Public Schools Butte Public Schools Helena Public Schools Kalispell Public Schools Missoula County Public Schools	**Must have at least one of the following:** ☐ Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas.* ☐ Bachelor's degree in any academic major **and** at least 2 years of relevant experience in school nutrition programs. ☐ Associate's degree or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas,* **and** at least 2 years of relevant experience in school nutrition programs.
≤ 2,499 Students 51 Sponsors in Montana	**Must have at least one of the following:** ☐ Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas*. ☐ Bachelor's degree in any academic major, **and** at least one year of relevant experience in school nutrition programs. Associate's degree or equivalent educational experience, with academic major in specific areas,* **and** at least one year of relevant experience in school nutrition programs. ☐ High school diploma (or GED) **and** at least 3 years of relevant experience in school nutrition programs.
< 500 Students 199 Sponsors in Montana	**OPI School Nutrition Programs can approve a candidate who meets the educational standards as listed for schools with ≤ 2,499 students, but has less than 3 years of experience.**
☐ Specific majors/areas of concentration: food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field.	

Revised April 2025

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MONTANA OPI SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

School Year 2025-2026 Training Schedule and Continuing Education Opportunities

>> **TEAMS link to join the Webinars** <<

Activity	Location	Time	Date	Professional Standards Codes/Hours
August				
Webinar Wednesday: USDA Foods & Monthly Allocation Instructions	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, August 13, 2025	
Webinar Wednesday: Direct Certification Application (DCA)	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, August 20, 2025	*3000/3100/1*
Webinar Wednesday: How to Process Online Free/Reduced Applications (FRAPP)	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, August 27, 2025	*3000/3100/1*
September				
Webinar Wednesday: For School that are on Administrative Review – Tips for Completing Off-Site Questions in MAPS	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, September 3, 2025	
MASBO - Training for School Business Clerks, OPI SNP may have breakout session	In-Person Billings Registration Required	8-4 PM	Tuesday, September 9, 2025	
Webinar Wednesday: Resource Management (NPRT, Adult Meals, Allowable vs Unallowable Costs)	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, September 10, 2025	*1000/2000/3000/4000/6*
MASBO - Training for School Business Clerks, OPI SNP may have breakout session	In-Person Helena Registration Required	8-4 PM	Wednesday, September 10, 2025	
Webinar Wednesday: Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, September 17, 2025	*1100/2100/3200/1*
Webinar Wednesday: Verification for Determining Officials	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, September 24, 2025	*3000/3100/1*
October				

Updated August 2025

Webinar Wednesday: Montana Crunch Time Promotion & Montana Harvest of the Month	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, October 2, 2025	*1100/2000/2400/1*
Webinar Wednesday: Menu Planning & Production Records	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, October 8, 2025	*1100/2000/1*
SNP FALL WORKSHOP Required for School Claim Contacts/Business Clerks, & Determining Officials (Food Service Directors welcome to join as well)	TEAMS	9-12 PM	Thursday, October 16, 2025	*1100/1200/1300/2100/2400/1*
SNP FALL WORKSHOP Required for Food Service Directors & Food Service Staff (Claim Contacts/Business Clerks & Determining Officials welcome to join as well)	TEAMS	1-4 PM	Thursday, October 16, 2025	*1100/1200/1300/2100/2400/1*
Webinar Wednesday: Meal Counting & Claiming	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, October 29, 2025	
November				
Webinar Wednesday: How to Best Utilize USDA Foods	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, November 5, 2025	
Webinar Wednesday: Get to Know Your Food- How to Read a Food Label	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, November 13, 2024	
Webinar Wednesday: Resource Management (NPRT, Adult Meals, Allowable vs Unallowable Costs)	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, November 20, 2024	
December				
Webinar Wednesday: Get to Know the Details of the Smart Snack Policy, Smart Snacks, and School Wellness Policy	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, December 3, 2025	*1200/1300/3000/1*
Webinar Wednesday: Procurement Policy/Procedures & Buy American	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, December 10, 2025	*2000/2400/1*
January				
Webinar Wednesday: Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, January 7, 2026	*3100/1*
Webinar Wednesday: Beef to School	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, January 14, 2026	
Webinar Wednesday: USDA Foods/DoD Fresh	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, January 21, 2026	*1100/2400/2430/1*
Webinar Wednesday: TBD		2-3 PM	Wednesday, January 28, 2026	
February				
Webinar Wednesday: Standardized Recipes	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, February 4, 2026	*1000/1200/1300/3000/1*
Webinar Wednesday: Back Pack and School Pantries	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, February 11, 2026	*1000/1200/1300/3000/1*

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Webinar Wednesday: Mastering the New Meal Pattern	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, February 18, 2026	*1000/2000/3000/4000/1*
Webinar Wednesday: Bison & Beef Land to Lunch	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, February 25, 2026	*3000/3300/1*
March				
Webinar Wednesday: Summer Food Service Program Required webinar for SFSP <u>Sponsors</u> to learn about SFSP Application, Training Requirements, and other Program Requirements.	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, March 4, 2026	*1000/2000/3000/4000/1*
Webinar Wednesday: No Kid Hungry SFSP granting and summer rural non-congregate meal service.	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, March 11, 2026	
Webinar Wednesday: TBD		2-3 PM	Wednesday, March 18, 2026	
Webinar Wednesday: TBD		2-3 PM	Wednesday, March 25, 2026	
April				
Webinar Wednesday: TBD		2-3 PM	Wednesday, April 1, 2026	
Webinar Wednesday: TBD		2-3 PM	Wednesday, April 8, 2026	
Webinar Wednesday: Summer Food Service Program Training for <u>Site Supervisors and SFSP Staff</u> to meet SFSP staff training requirements	TEAMS	2-3 PM	Wednesday, April 15, 2026	
Webinar Wednesday: TBD		2-3 PM	Wednesday, April 22, 2026	
Webinar Wednesday: TBD		2-3 PM	Wednesday, April 29, 2026	
May				
TBD				
June				
MT School Nutrition Association (MTSNA) Summer Conference	**Billings**	N/A		*1000/2000/3000/4000/16*

Training Resources
- SNP Webinar Wednesday Resources Google Drive
- SNP Professional Standards Training Resources
- Professional Standards Training Code Topics List

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