

In a “Nutshell”

Administrative Review (AR) Process: Preparing for your AR



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) AR assesses the School Food Authority’s (SFA’s) administration of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and other school nutrition programs. The AR process is intended to ensure regulatory guidance and offer technical assistance to schools to assist them in operating quality nutrition programs.

When to expect an AR: USDA guidance directs the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to conduct ARs of each SFA participating in the NSLP and/or SBP at least once every three years. Reviews are scheduled on a rotating system and occur in any given year.

Who conducts the AR: DPI’s School Nutrition Team (SNT) is responsible for conducting administrative reviews. Some ARs may be conducted by an outside firm that works closely with SNT staff. Each AR is assigned to a Nutrition Program Consultant (NPC) for the overall review process and a Public Health Nutritionist (PHN) for meal pattern and nutrient assessment portions of the review.

Site selection: If the SFA consists of more than one school as listed in the [Wisconsin School Directory](https://dpi.wi.gov/directories), the site of the focused review will be determined based on the September or October claim of the current review year (<https://dpi.wi.gov/directories>). This data and other criteria will be used in determining which school(s) will be reviewed for the AR. The number of sites depends on the size of the SFA as listed per the chart below. In addition, 50 percent of the schools that are selected for a NSLP review will also receive a review of the SBP.

Number of Schools in the SFA	Minimum Number of Schools to Review for NSLP	Number of Schools in the SFA	Minimum Number of Schools to Review for NSLP
1 to 5	1	41 to 60.....	6
6 to 10.....	2	61 to 80.....	8
11 to 20.....	3	81 to 100.....	10
21 to 40.....	4	101 or More.....	12*
* 12 plus 5 percent of the number of schools over 100. Fractions must be rounded to the nearest whole number using standard rounding procedures (i.e. if less than 5 round down, if 5 or more round up).			

AR performance standards and areas of review:

Performance Standard I ¹	Performance Standard II ¹	General Areas of Review ²		
Meal Access and Reimbursement	Nutritional Quality and Meal Pattern	Resource Management	Program Compliance	Other Federal Programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility Determination • Benefit Issuance • Direct Certification • Verification • Meal Counting, Claiming and Reimbursement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meal Components • Offer versus Serve • Dietary Specifications and Nutrient Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonprofit School Food Service Account • Paid Lunch Equity • Revenue from Non-program Foods • Indirect Costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Rights • SFA On Site Monitoring • Wellness Policy • Smart Snacks • Water • Food Safety • SBP & Summer Food Service Programs Outreach • Professional Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afterschool Care Snack Program • Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program • Special Milk Program • Elderly Nutrition • Wisconsin School Day Milk Program (WSDMP)

¹Performance standards I and II - both require fiscal action be calculated for any errors found as part of the review process. Calculated fiscal action is subject to a \$600 disregard by program before repayment is required.

²General areas of review - requires corrective action for noncompliant areas found during the review process but do not generally result in fiscal action.

Administrative Review Timeline:

Notification and Site Selection	June/July	DPI notifies SFAs that are due for an AR, and posts the list of SFAs that will be reviewed during the following school year to the Preparing for Your Administrative Review webpage (https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/school-nutrition/pdf/administrative-review-sfa-list-1718.pdf).
	September-October	The NPC assigned to conduct the AR contacts SFAs to set up a mutually agreeable time to conduct the AR.
	4-6 weeks prior to AR	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NPC assigned to AR sends introductory email to the SFA Authorized Representative notifying the SFA of the sites selected for review. 2. PHN assigned to AR sends introductory email to Food Service Director with instructions on submitting documentation to support meal pattern compliance.
	2-4 weeks prior to AR	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. SFA returns completed off site documents to NPC prior to the on site visit. 4. PHN contacts Food Service Director to complete the Meal Compliance Risk Assessment Tool. 5. NPC contacts SFA to offer technical assistance and guidance related to the completed off site documents.
Off Site Assessment	DPI collects information available to the State Agency and from the SFA and records that information on the <i>Off Site Assessment Tool</i> . The completed tool allows the SNT to gain a better understanding of the SFA's operations prior to the on-site review.	
On Site Visit	<p>During the on site review, the NPC and PHN will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an entrance conference to provide guidance and answer questions. • Verify information provided during the off site assessment. • Validate eligibility documentation for meal benefits. • Visit each selected school site to observe meal preparation and meal service. • Review documentation to determine if meals claimed for reimbursement contain the appropriate components and quantities, as specified in the meal pattern for each menu type and age/grade group served in the SFA. • Review other programs and all general areas of the review. • Provide technical assistance on USDA regulations and share best practices for program operation. • Conduct an exit conference to discuss findings, technical assistance, corrective action requirements, and commendations. 	
After the On Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AR report is posted on the SNT website within 30 days of providing the report to the SFA. DPI notifies SFA of any corrective action (CA) • CA is submitted by SFA to DPI for review and approval. • Once CA is received and approved, DPI calculates fiscal action, if required. • The SFA will receive a closure letter to document the review is closed and notify the amount of any fiscal action, if required. 	

Procurement Review: Procurement reviews follow the same three year cycle as ARs, but are scheduled on different dates.

Resources:

[Preparing for your Administrative Review](https://dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/national-school-lunch-program/administrative-review) (https://dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/national-school-lunch-program/administrative-review)

Preparing for your [Procurement Review](https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/school-nutrition/ppt/procurement-training.pptx) (https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/school-nutrition/ppt/procurement-training.pptx)