

## Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Modified USDA Application Requirements

Schools that participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) do not need to collect free and reduced-price meal applications to determine eligibility for school meals--all students eat for free in CEP schools. However, other programs such as Title I and SAGE/AGR continue to require individual student level information for their programs and thus still require schools to collect household income information. The USDA Free and Reduced-Price Meal Application may be used for both CEP and non-CEP schools, if there is additional language included on the application forms and if applications from CEP schools can be identified separately.

Provided below is information regarding required language on the application, application instructions, and parent letter/FAQ. This information may assist with updating any applications for use in CEP schools, including online applications. The addition of this language would make the USDA application allowable for use in both CEP and non-CEP schools.

### 1) The following statement must be included at the top of the application:

- *"In Community Eligibility Schools, receipt of free breakfast and lunch meals does not depend on returning this application; however, this information is necessary for other programs."*

### 2) The following statement must be included on the Instructions/How to Apply Document:

- **If your child attends a school that participates in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP),** receipt of free breakfast and lunch meals does not depend on returning this application. However, this information is necessary for other programs and may be used to determine if your household is eligible for additional benefits. The following schools participate in CEP: [*insert names of school(s) that participate in CEP*].

### 3) The following information must be included on the Parent/Guardian Information Letter/Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Document:

- **DO I NEED TO FILL OUT AN APPLICATION IF MY CHILD ATTENDS A COMMUNITY ELIGIBILITY PROVISION (CEP) SCHOOL? If your child attends a school that participates in CEP,** receipt of free breakfast and lunch meals does not depend on returning this application. However, this information is necessary for other programs and may be used to determine if your household is eligible for additional benefits.

For more information, please visit the Title I and Other Funding Programs section of [DPI CEP webpage](#). Copies of these three documents with the required language listed above are available on the [Free and Reduced Meal Application webpage](#).

In addition, SFAs may contact their software companies directly for technical assistance in understanding how CEP and non-CEP data is separated in the software system. For example, applications listing only students in CEP schools cannot be used for selecting the verification sample, conducting an independent review of applications, or for the Certification and Benefit Issuance portion of Administrative Reviews per [USDA SP 54-2016](#) question number 77.

For more information on CEP application requirements, contact one of the [CEP specialists](#).