



TITLE I PART C

Education of Migratory Children



Direct Certification Eligibility Title I Part C, Migrant Children & Youth

Coordination between the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) Nutrition Services and Title I Part C, Migrant Education Program (MEP) has permitted implementation of the Direct Certification process beginning with the 2018-2019 year. Direct Certification is the process by which the NDE Nutrition Services seeks to certify free/reduced price school meals for children attending public and private schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP) for free/reduced price school meals under the NSLP and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966. Direct Certification process is the process conducted by the State to certify eligible children free/reduced school meals without the need for household applications. Children residing in Nebraska who meet Title I Part C, MEP eligibility, are categorically eligible for free school meals.

The process for Direct Certification in Nebraska is as follows:

1. Eligible migrant student required data elements are stored in the state MEP student database system, MIS2000.
2. Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) extracts data from MIS2000 and matches information with NDE records nightly.
3. School district personnel receive updated data from NDE daily on students who are eligible for free/reduced price school meals.
4. The school district is responsible for notifying families of their eligibility status within two weeks of the Direct Certification date.
5. Once a student is Directly Certified, they remain on the list for the entire school year, plus 30 days into the following school year (ex. July 1st – September 30th). The eligible students will need to be recertified on an annual basis.

Benefits to Direct Certification:

- The process finds students in our system without NDE identification numbers.
- NDE validates student NDE identification numbers.
- Decrease in paper copies of Free/Reduced Price School Meals applications
- It greatly reduces the amount of time for students to receive free school meals.
- Students transferring between school and districts within Nebraska maintain free/reduced priced school meal benefits without delay.
- Families no longer need to provide income or other corroborating information for verification.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do we know that students are receiving free school meals?

You may contact the district nutrition services office and request a list of migrant student receiving free school meals.

What should I do if a known migrant student does not appear on the school's migrant eligible list? Contact the district nutrition services office to verify the student's eligibility. The student may have been certified through another program with a higher priority. If not, request them to correct their records.

The priority order for Direct Certification is: SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), FDPIR (Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations), Foster Children, and Migrant.

Another possibility is that they are on the "possible match" list. The possible match list is composed of students whose records in MIS2000 and NDE are not exact matches, but are similar. The district nutrition services office is responsible for resolving these possible matches using the "student look up" in their system. Request district nutrition services staff to check the possible match list. If the student in question appears on the list, work with them to determine if the match is correct or not.

There is a student we do not recognize on our list – what do we do?

If you see a false positive, call the district nutrition services office and ask them to correct their records. Matches will be undone if incorrect.

A migrant family I work with received a bill from their school for nutrition services. What should they do?

You should contact the district nutrition services office on the family's behalf to verify their direct certification status.

Do families have to pay for meals the student received prior to direct certification?

This is a district decision. You should contact the district nutrition services office if you have questions about their billing policy.

Does Direct Certification apply to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) or Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)?

No. These are separate programs with different processes to determine certification.