

Verification

Exploring the Process

September 14, 2021





Hello!

I'm Wendy Pyne.



Region 11 NSLP Child Nutrition Team



Elisha Bury



Ashley Phillips



Heather Morris



Patti Adams,
Program Assistant

Everyone at the ESC Region 11 team is ready to help!





Where are the restrooms?



Where are the snacks/drinks?



What if my phone rings?



What if I have a question?

Acknowledgment Statement

You understand and acknowledge that:

- ☐ the training you are about to take does not cover the entire scope of the program; and that
- ☐ you are responsible for knowing and understanding all handbooks, manuals, alerts, notices and guidance, as well as any other forms of communication that provide further guidance, clarification or instruction on operating the program.



Who Should Attend This Class?

Directors

**CN &
Administrative
Personnel**

**Verifying
Officials**

**Business/
Financial
Managers**

School Administrators



Verification is the process of reviewing approved applications based on:

- X Income eligibility*
- X SNAP, TANF, FDPIR or Medicaid F/R programs*
- X Other Categorically eligible programs*

Class Outline

Verification Timeline

1

**Establishing the
Sample Size**

2

**Checking Household
Documentation**

3

**Completing
Verification &
Submitting the
Reports**

4



Verification Timeline



Timeframe

- X Begin verification process on Oct 1
- X Complete verification by Nov 15
- X Submit Verification Collection Report by Feb 1



Keep a Calendar

Manage Your Time

Develop a Written Plan

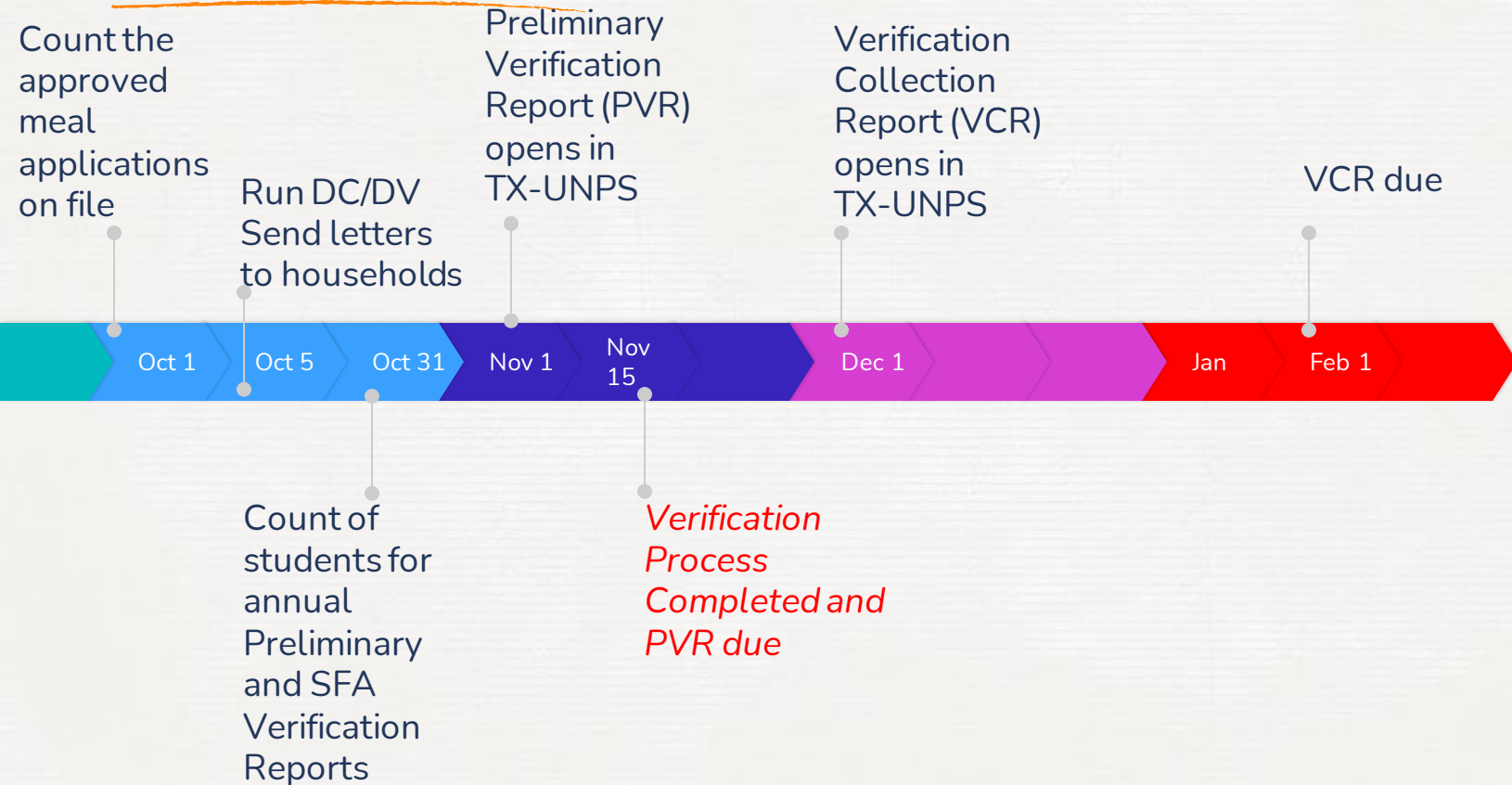
Provide Backup to Your Staff



Meeting Verification Deadlines



Verification Timeline



Students Excluded From Verification

**Texas
ELMS
Matched**

SNAP

TANF

Medicaid F/R

**DC
(without
app):**

Migrant

Runaway

Homeless

Foster

Head Start/Early HS

RCCI residents

**F/R app
from
Admin**

**Students
attending
CEP sites**



Verification for Cause

CEs should verify applications *For Cause*, on a case-by-case basis, when the school is aware of additional income or persons in the household and/or known or available information indicates that there is a mistake or misrepresentation on the application



Let's Review!

CEs begin verifying applications by counting the number of approved applications on file *on or before* _____

CEs must select a sample size for verification on _____

CEs must determine the total number of students enrolled on _____

CEs must complete the verification process & submit PVR on _____

CEs must submit the VCR into TX-UNPS on _____





Establishing the Sample Size

Which Applications *Must Be Included* in the Verification Sample?



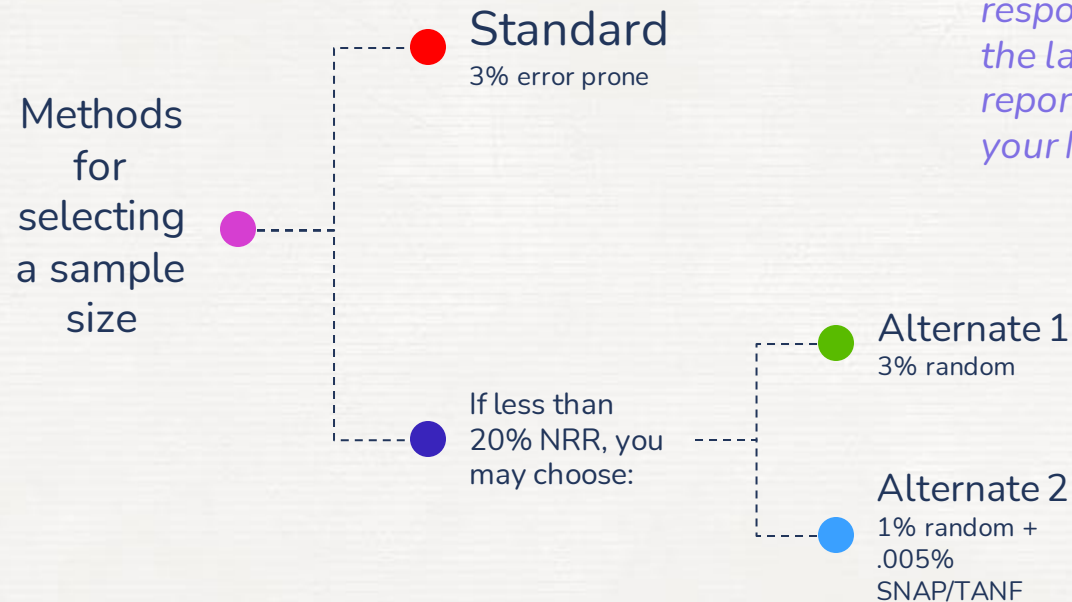
Other source categorical that are not Direct Cert:
those with EDG#s



*Income
eligible*



Establishing a Sampling Method



Sampling method is based on the non-response rate / NRR from the last verification report. TDA will email your NRR before Oct 1.



Goal = Increase your Response Rate!

If you have a good year and most of your families respond & submit documentation/proof of income (NRR of 20% or less), you may choose Alternate 1 or 2 for the following year.

Using an alternate method can save a LOT of time and effort, especially in a large district!



Figuring Non-Response Rate (NRR)

Number of households selected that did not respond

÷

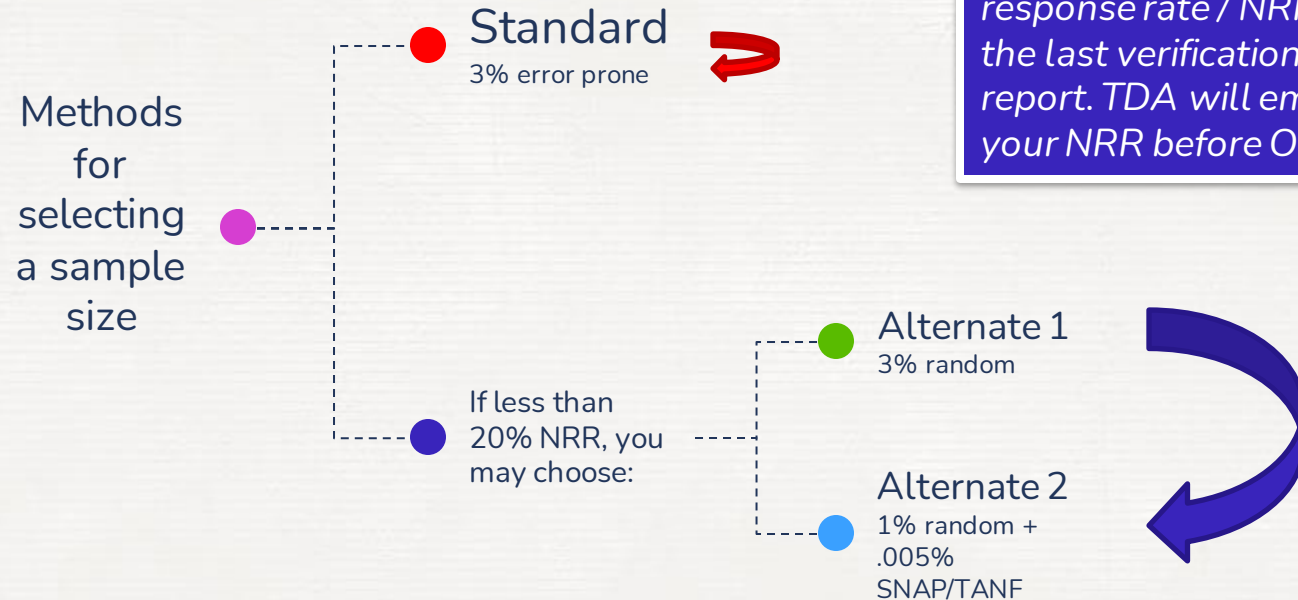
Number of applications selected

Example: Last year, Happy Valley ISD was required to check 100
households for verification.

82 households provided documentation & 18 households did not respond
----> Happy Valley ISD would have an NRR of 18%

18 (did not respond) ÷ 100 (total households verified) = 18%
NRR

Establishing a Sampling Method



Sampling method is based on the non-response rate / NRR from the last verification report. TDA will email your NRR before Oct 1.



Standard Method

CE's must use this method if the last verification's non-response rate was greater than 20%, or if there was not a NRR improvement of 10% or more from the previous year (large districts/20K+ apps)

CEs must select 3% of all applications on file or 3,000 applications (whichever is less).

*Once the number is determined, the selection of applications must first be selected from **ERROR PRONE** applications: those within \$100 per month (or \$1,200 per year) of the current Income Eligibility Guidelines. If there are not enough error-prone apps, select non-error prone apps to complete the sample.*



Alternate 1 Method

*CEs must select 3% or 3,000 (whichever is less) **RANDOMLY** selected applications*



Alternate 2 Method

CEs must select 1% or 1,000 (whichever is less) of all approved applications + 500 or .005 % (whichever is less) of approved SNAP/TANF applications.

CEs May Replace Up to 5% of the Verification Apps in the Pool Under the Following Conditions:

1

Household Moves

2

Inability of Household to Respond to the Request

Replacement Applications

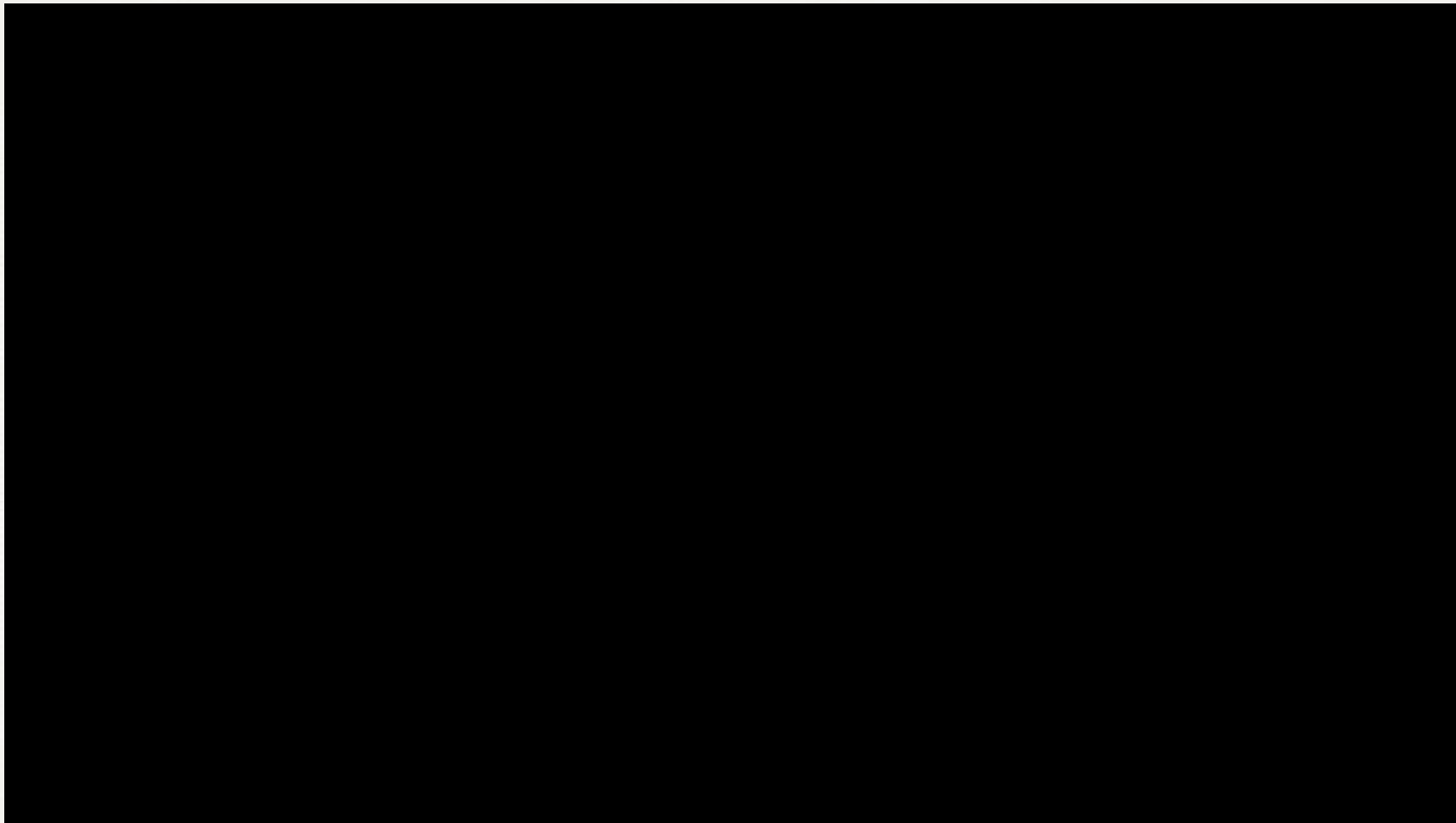




Let's take a break!

Ready to start back!







The Verification Sample

A quick review

[Finding Error Prone Applications](#)



MAKING IT COUNT

School Meals Accountability & Responsibility Training Tools

The Verification Sample / *Activity*

FEDERAL ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART			
Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$21,590	\$1,800	\$416
2	\$29,101	\$2,426	\$560
3	\$36,612	\$3,051	\$705
4	\$44,123	\$3,677	\$849
5	\$51,634	\$4,303	\$993
6	\$59,145	\$4,929	\$1,138
7	\$66,656	\$5,555	\$1,282
8	\$74,167	\$6,181	\$1,427
Each additional person:	+7,511	+626	+145



Finding The Error Prone Applications

Based on the threshold amounts listed in the Income Eligibility Guidelines, which of the following applications is error prone?

Use the household size and income frequency to determine this. Check the box that corresponds to your answer.

Begin >



TDA Sample Method Worksheet for Verification

Great tool on SquareMeals to help you choose the correct sample size!

[SquareMeals worksheet](#)

2 Enter the total number of approved applications as of October 1st:

Total applications refers to actual approved application documents/pieces of paper on file October 1. CE's must only complete verification activities based on applications received and certified and must not include directly certified students in their calculations.

ENTER NUMBER OF APPROVED APPLICATIONS:

Categorically-eligible

Income-based free

Income-based reduced-price

Total approved applications

Number of error-prone applications (Enter 0 if there are none)

Select the allowable sampling method based on the response rate from the SFA Verification Report from the previous year.
*Check with regional ESC if you don't know

Indicate the method you have selected by entering "X" in the box:

SELECT METHOD OF VERIFICATION:

Standard ☐

Alternate 1 ☐

Alternate 2 ☐

Standard Sample Size Method:
Those CE's that do not qualify for an alternate sample size will use the Standard Sample Size method. For this method, error-prone household applications are verified first, non error-prone applications are used to complete the sample size if not enough error-prone household applications.

Section 6: Verification

The ability to use an alternate sample method must be determined annually. Those CE's that qualify for an alternate sample size must meet one of the following conditions:

- Low Non-Response Rate: CE's that have less than a twenty percent non-response rate for verification requests for the preceding school year.
- Improved Non-Response Rate: CE's that
 - Have more than 20,000 students approved by household application as eligible for free or reduced-price meals as of October 1
 - and
 - have at least a 10 percent decrease in the non-response percentage between Year 1 and Year 2 qualify to use an alternate sample size method in Year 3.

For the Standard and Alternate 1 methods, verify 3% or 3000, whichever is less.

For Alternate 2 method, verify the lesser of 1% or 1000 total applications PLUS the lesser of one-half percent of categorically eligible applications (applications with an EDG

Verifying Required Information & Checking Household Documentation





SNAP

TANF

Medicaid F/R

CHIP F/R

Direct Verification



Direct Verification: Texas ELMS

- ✗ [Direct Verification Files and Reports in Texas ELMS - How to Upload DV Files and Reports | Rise 360 \(articulate.com\)](#)
- ✗ Formatting Excel Documents for DV Upload

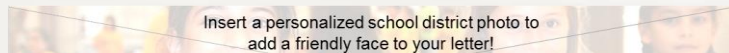
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	SSN	Last Name	First Name	DOB	Gender	Site ID	Grade	CE ID
2	123456789	DOE	ALEX	08/01/2016	F	0001	PK	11111
3	123456789	DOE	PAT	06/01/2013	M	0001	KG	11111
4	123456789	DOE	ALEX	11/28/2008	M	0001	06	11111
5	123456789	DOE	PAT	08/06/2016	F	0001	PK	11111
6	123456789	DOE	ALEX	01/22/2014	F	0001	01	11111
7	123456789	DOE	PAT	11/25/2008	M	0001	06	11111

Notification Letter for Selection of Verification



<< School District Name and Logo>>

<<Household ID #____>>



Confirm Your Eligibility for Free/Reduced Price Meals

Dear <<Susan>>,

Your application was approved a little while ago, and <<Bob, Jill, and Sara>> should already be receiving free or reduced price meals.

However, there is one last step you need to take – please send us documents to confirm your eligibility. Each year we select different meal applications to confirm eligibility. This year, your household was selected.



You must send us the information by <<date>>, or <<Bob, Jill, and Sara>> will stop receiving free or reduced price meals.

You can send a Certification Notice for <<SNAP>>, <<TANF>>, or FDIPIR benefits, or documents that show your household income, for example, paycheck stubs, benefits statements, and/or copies of checks. The back side of this letter has more information about what to send and how you can send it.

For questions or help, please contact <<Name>> at the toll free number <<(xxx)-xxx-xxxx>> or by email at <<email>>.

Sincerely,

<<Signature>>

<<Name>>

<<Principal/Superintendent?>>

<<School District Name>>

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires the information requested in order to verify your children's eligibility for free or reduced price meals. If you do not provide the information or provide incomplete information, your children may no longer receive free or reduced price meals. Pursuant to Section 7 of the Privacy Act, disclosure of your Social Security number is not required. We do not need and are not requesting any Social Security numbers that may appear on documents you submit.

Non-Discrimination Statement: This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter 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; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Find this link on our *ESC Region 11 Child Nutrition* website under Other Helpful Tools! 😊

OTHER HELPFUL TOOLS

- o [Cheerful Notification Letter](#)
- o [How to Respond Flowchart](#)
- o [Strategies to Improve Response Rates in Verification](#)
- o [Sources of Income](#)



Helpful USDA Resources



How to Respond Flowchart

[Flowchart](#)

Strategies to Improve Response Rates

[Strategies](#)

Sources of Income

[Sources](#)



Verifying Household Eligibility

Written Income Evidence

Must provide household documentation that shows gross income received for each individual for the most recent full month

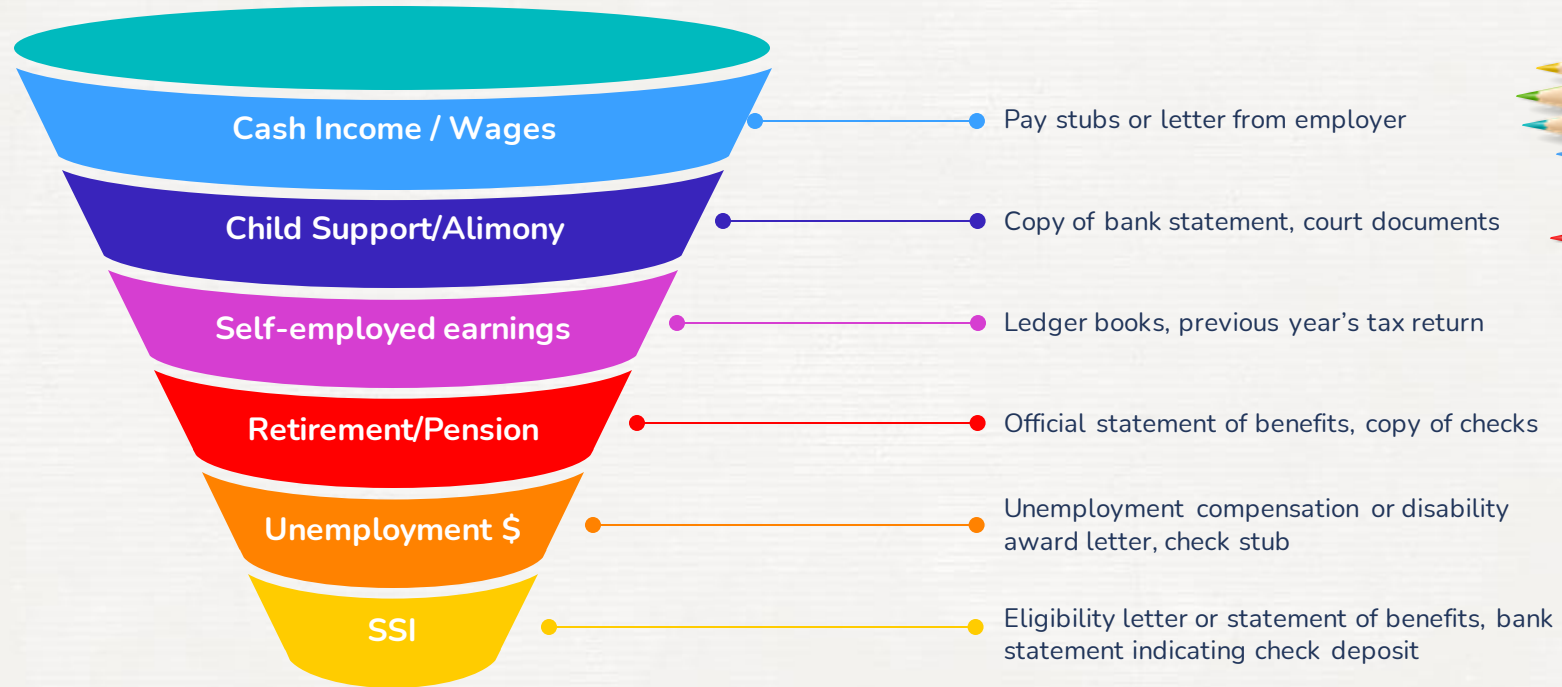
Agency Records

May provide proof that a household or individual participates in a government program and may be in the form of a letter or other benefit issuance form

Collateral Contacts

Indication of “no income” – request an explanation of how living expenses are met – the person supporting them (religious organization, relative) may be asked to document the duration and type of assistance being provided

Acceptable Documentation





Let's take another quick break!



Completing Verification & Submitting the Reports



Completing Verification on the Application

Verified Application Example

The **Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act** requires the information on this application. You do not have to give the information, but if you do not, we cannot approve your child for free or reduced price meals. You must include the last four digits of the social security number of the adult household member who signs the application. The last four digits of the social security number is not required when you apply on behalf of a foster child or you list a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) case number or other FDPIR identifier for your child or when you indicate that the adult household member signing the application does not have a social security number. We will use your information to determine if your child is eligible for free or reduced price meals, and for administration and enforcement of the lunch and breakfast programs. We MAY share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them evaluate, fund, or determine benefits for their programs, auditors for program reviews, and law enforcement officials to help them look into violations of program rules.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture, administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race or ethnicity. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication, or Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing may have their program information made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested. To USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-4302; (2) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Do Not Fill In

Income Determination: Multiple income frequencies must be converted to annual amounts. Income frequency is provided by the household. If converting income to annual, round only to the nearest dollar. **26 | Twice a Month x 24 | Monthly x 12**

Household Size: _____ Total Income: _____

Weekly ☐ Bi-Weekly ☐ Twice a Month ☐ Monthly ☐ Annually ☐ Determination ☐ Eligibility: Free ☐ Reduced ☐ Denied ☐

Reviewing/Determining Official's Signature/Date _____ Confirming Official's Signature/Date _____



CEs with automated systems may request a waiver to conduct the Confirmation Review

Recordkeeping

The CE must maintain records related to verification and keep these records ready for TDA or USDA to review



Verification Report -- Individual Household Form is REQUIRED



Verification Letters and Records

Click the links below to download the appropriate verification letters and records:

- [Verification Information Request | Statement of Earnings Form](#)
- [Verification Information Request | Statement of Earnings Form - Spanish](#)
- [Verification Information Request | SNAP/TANF Multiple Applicant Form](#)
- [Verification Information Request | Statement of Social Security Income Form](#)
- [Verification of Free and Reduced-Price Eligibility | Information for Households](#)
- [Verification of Free and Reduced-Price Eligibility | Information for Households - Spanish](#)
- [Verification Notification | Results/Adverse Action - Foster](#)
- [Verification Notification | Results/Adverse Action - Foster - Spanish](#)
- [Verification Notification | Results/Adverse Action Letter - Income](#)
- [Verification Notification | Results/Adverse Action Letter - Income - Spanish](#)
- [Verification Notification | Results/Adverse Action Letter - SNAP/TANF](#)
- [Verification Notification | Results/Adverse Action Letter - SNAP/TANF - Spanish](#)
- [Verification Notification | Continuation of Benefits Letter](#)
- [Verification Notification | Continuation of Benefits Letter - Spanish](#)
- [Verification Notification - Selection Letter for Households](#)
- [Verification Notification - Selection Letter for Households - Spanish](#)
- [Verification Report | Individual Household Form](#)

Household Information		Verification Selection
Household Name: _____		Date Selected: _____
Total Number of Household Members: _____		
Total Number of Enrolled Students: _____		
Verification Method		
<input type="checkbox"/> Basic (Error Prone) <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate Method 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate Method 2		
Verification Selected for Verification		
1 st Notice		2 nd Notice
Date Sent: _____		Date Sent: _____
Response Due: _____		Response Due: _____
Date of Response: _____		Date of Response: _____
Verification of Income/Categorical Status (SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR)		
Confirmed Status of Household		
SNAP/TANF confirmed by		Income
<input type="checkbox"/> SNAP/TANF Office		Monthly Income: \$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Eligibility		Confirmed by
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Wage Stubs (Gross Monthly Income)
FDPIR confirmed by		<input type="checkbox"/> Written Documents
<input type="checkbox"/> Governing Agency Documentation		<input type="checkbox"/> Collateral Contacts
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Agency Records
		<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Status Confirmed		
<input type="checkbox"/> Eligibility Not Confirmed		
Verification Determination		
Change	Reason for Change	Notification of Change
<input type="checkbox"/> No Change	<input type="checkbox"/> Non Response	Date Notice Sent: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced-Price to Free	<input type="checkbox"/> High Income	
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced-Price to Paid	<input type="checkbox"/> SNAP/TANF Eligibility Not Confirmed	
<input type="checkbox"/> Free to Reduced-Price	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Free to Paid		
Signature: _____		Date: _____

Sample Verification Planner

	Directly Verified	Sent Out Letter	First Follow-up	Second Follow-up	Documents Received/ Results	Notice of Adverse Action	Notes
Anderson		10/5	Call 10/12	Email/text 10/19	No response/ PAID	Notified 11/15 Termination of benefits	No response, called 11/10
Baker/Smith		10/5	Call/text 10/12	Email/text 10/19	Free to Reduced	Notified 11/1 Reduction in benefit level	Brought in documents to office 11/1
Doolittle		10/5	Call 10/12		Stayed FREE	n/a No change in benefit level	Husband on disability
Gomez-Villa	✓				Stayed FREE	n/a	
McDonald		10/5	Call/text 10/12		Free to PAID	Notified 11/15 Termination of benefits	Insufficient documentation
Nelson/Simpson		10/5	Call 10/12	Email/text 10/19	Reduced to FREE	Notified 10/25 Increase in benefit level	Self-employed, needed help-talked on the phone 10/21, 10/25
Vincent		10/5	Call 10/12		Stayed Reduced	n/a No change in benefit level	DC foster child on app that is free



Email or postal service

Explanation for change

Cannot notify by telephone

How to appeal + reapply



Notice of Adverse Action





Can They Reapply?

Any household that has been terminated because of verification may reapply at any time during the school year. However, applications resubmitted *must be verified*



PVR Due Nov 15

Preliminary Verification Report Opens November 1

- X Located in TX-UNPS “download forms”
- X SNP – 123 Verification Report Resources
- X Sections 1-4 of the SFA Verification Collection Report (FNS – 742) [VCR in Square Meals](#)
- X Direct Verification results



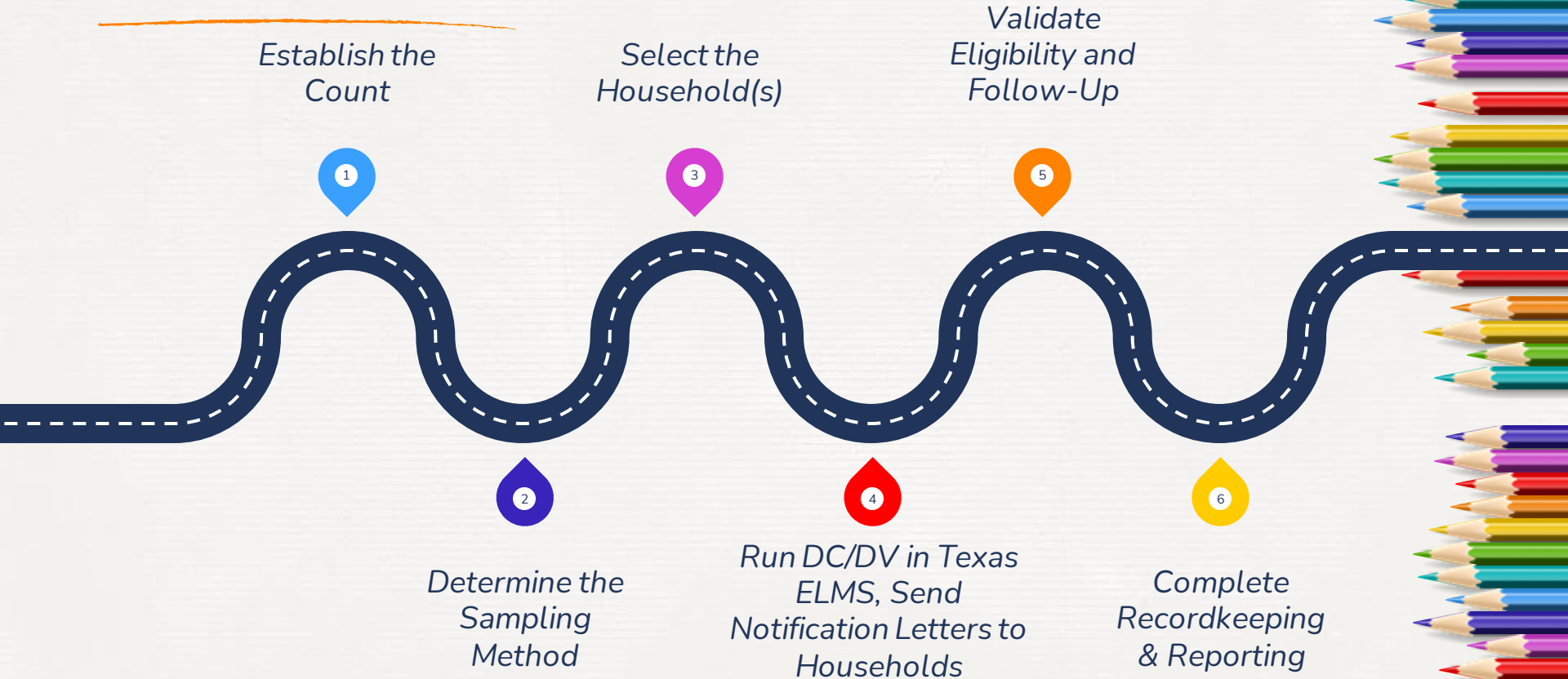
VCR Due Feb 1

Verification Collection Report Opens December 1


- X** Located in TX-UNPS “applications” + “verification report”
- X** Enter PVR data for Sections 1-4
- X** Enter Direct Verification results in Section 5
- X** CE must print a copy, sign, and file the VCR to document completion of the process



Road to Success!



USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

- 
- X** *In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.*
 - X** *Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.*

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(1) mail:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for
Civil Rights 1400
Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
(3) email:
program.intake@usda.gov.

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Thank you!

Any follow-up questions?

Virtual attendees may type questions into the chat, or you can find me at:

wpyne@esc11.net

817-740-7515

Credits

- X Template: [SlidesCarnival](#)
- X Content: Texas Department of Agriculture
- X Videos: Making It Count, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

