



FLEXIBILITY NOTIFICATION: ELIGIBILITY EFFECTIVE DATE FOR DIRECTLY CERTIFIED STUDENTS

DIRECTIONS

Fax or email the completed form to: Food and Nutrition Services Section at (573) 526-3897 or email to schoolfoods@dese.mo.gov

Subject Line: Flexibility Notification DC

Questions regarding this form contact (573) 751-3526 or schoolfoods@dese.mo.gov

LEA AGREEMENT NUMBER

LEA NAME

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP also know as Food Stamps) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF also known as Temporary Assistance) Students via the Direct Certification System: Local Education Agencies (LEAs) may consider the effective date of eligibility for free school meal or milk benefits to be the date the automated Direct Certification (DC) data matching file is available that first identifies the student as eligible for DC, rather than the date the LEA accesses the file. This also applies to any student(s) who receive extended eligibility. The date of eligibility will always be the date Food and Nutrition Services (FNS), Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department), announces the new DC file has been generated and is available to the LEAs.

Example: FNS announces a new DC file is available on 09/02. An LEA accesses the file on 9/08 and determines DC benefits for eligible students. The LEA extends eligibility to other household members of students on the DC list on 9/15. All students (those on the DC file, and those with extended eligibility) may have an effective date of 09/02 rather the date the students were identified and processed at the LEA level.

Homeless, Migrant, Runaway, Head Start, Even Start or Foster Children Directly Certified via a list: LEAs may consider the effective date of eligibility for free school meal or milk benefits to be the date the LEA receives such lists, rather than the date the school official processes the documentation.

LEAs must notify FNS, if plan to implement this flexibility. LEAs that choose this flexibility are encouraged to resolve and implement DC matches as early as possible upon receipt of appropriate documentation.

If elect this flexibility, the LEA must:

- Do so consistently for all DC methods;
- Apply the DC effective date to all students directly certified to all participating schools and school meal programs within the LEA;
- Documentation of the date the lists are available (ex: retain email from FNS regarding the date of the DC file.);
- If categorical eligibility is based on SNAP or TANF, extend eligibility to all children in the household; and
- Refund any money paid by or on behalf of the student for reimbursable meals or milk during the period from the free meal eligibility effective date through the date the DC is actually implemented at the school, including forgiving accrued debt for any meals or milk adjusted to free due to the change in the effective date. The LEA can only claim the meals or milk at the free reimbursement rate if the student is given a refund or the debt is discharged.

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE TITLE

DATE