



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Food and
Nutrition
Service

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Alexandria, VA
22302-1500

SUBJECT: Verification of Income Eligibility – Reauthorization 2004
Implementation Memo SP-5

TO: Special Nutrition Programs
All Regions

State Agencies
Child Nutrition Programs
All States

Effective July 1, 2004, school officials verifying income eligibility for free and reduced price meals must allow households to provide documentation of income for any point in time between the month prior to application and the time the household is required to provide income documentation. Although not addressed in the statute, this provision is in response to guidance by the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry to the Secretary during deliberations on the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004.

The “Eligibility Guidance for School Meals Manual” currently specifies that households selected for verification must document their income information for the most recent month available. That provision in the guidance is now superseded.

This provision is intended to support the concurrent statutory change that provides for full school year eligibility once an initial determination is made. We will update the “Eligibility Guidance for School Meals Manual” to reflect this change.

If you have any questions, please contact Rosemary O’Connell or Barbara Semper at 703-305-2590.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stanley C. Garnett".

STANLEY C. GARNETT
Director
Child Nutrition Division