

May 5, 2003

SUBJECT: Summer Food Service Program (SFSP): Using 2000 Census Data

TO: Regional Directors
Child Nutrition Programs
All Regions

The Census Bureau has completed the special tabulation of the 2000 Census data for use with the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and it may now be used in determining site eligibility. This memorandum sets forth the guidelines for use of the Census data for the summer of 2003 and future years.

Section 13(a)(1)(C) of the National School Lunch Act specifically allows the use of Census information for determining 'areas in which poor economic conditions exist.' The information obtained from the Census Bureau, at the Census "Block Group" (CBG) level, is more focused than Census "Tract". This increased level of detail can help to more clearly identify & "pockets of poverty" that the legislation intended.

The Census Data

Upon conclusion of the data collection efforts for the 2000 decennial census, we asked the Census Bureau to provide the Food and Nutrition Service with a special tabulation of population data using specific SFSP criteria. The criteria included the 2000 income eligibility guidelines, the total number of children 18 years or younger within a CBG, and of those children, the total number at or below 185% of poverty. We also asked the Census Bureau to calculate the percentage of children 18 years or younger **at** or below 185% of poverty compared to the total number of children 18 years or younger. One of the more critical pieces of information in the Census data is the calculated percentage. A complete explanation of the Census data is included in the attached instructions.

The Data Files Provided

Census data files are provided for each State in two file formats: Text (.txt) and Microsoft Word (.doc). A State agency or sponsor may import the text file into data management software that has data manipulation capabilities, such as sorting. However, the information contained in the Word document is sufficient to view the data and print a map using the American Factfinder feature of the Census Bureau's website. The files are easily distinguishable from each other, with the State designation in the filename.

Using the Data and Generating a Map

Data for every CBG within a State is provided in the Text and Microsoft Word files. It~ extremely important for States and sponsors to become familiar with the data prior to using the information to determine area-eligibility and printing a map since many CBGs do not qualify. Major steps in using this data will be the certification that an area of interest is eligible and the elimination of non-eligible areas.

SFSP Eligibility Using Census Data

Sites located in CBGs in which 50 percent or more of children 18 years of age and younger live in households at or below 185% of the poverty level are eligible to participate the SFSP based on the 2000 Census data. This percentage is shown in column 7 of the data provided. We recommend that maps be printed for each of these area-eligible locations for reference and outreach purposes.

Fiscal Year 2003 Policy

The 2000 Census data is being provided well after the usual outreach, training and application cycle has started in most States. Since many site determinations have already been made for the summer of 2003, sponsors may, with State agency approval, use either the 1990 or 2000 Census data for determining eligibility. For example, a State may approve site A with 1990 data and site B with 2000 data for the same sponsorship.

For the summer of 2004, only the 2000 Census data may be used for determining site eligibility.

Please share this information with your State agencies as soon as possible. If you have any questions concerning any of the issues addressed in this memorandum, please contact Keith Churchill or Ron Ulibarri.

Original Signed

STANLEY C. GARNETT
Director
Child Nutrition Division

Attachments

SFSP Instructions . Census 2000 Data

This information is provided for the purpose of Census 2000 data to determine site eligibility in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). The data will identify the number of children within a Census Block Group (CBG) that were 18 years of age and younger and will calculate the percentage of these children living in households at or below 185% of poverty.

Two files for each State are provided; one in Microsoft Word (.doc) and the other is in text (.txt) format. The text file is provided in the event a State wants to import the data into another software format, such as Microsoft Excel, for data management purposes.

Each of the attached files was named for the State the data represents. Note the file contains information for every Census Block Group (CBG) in the State. Note that, although the information is displayed for every CBG, not every CBG is area-eligible for the SFSP. The State must first become familiar with the information provided, and then close examination of the CBG data should be done to eliminate those CBG's that are no area-eligible. After a thorough review of the data has been accomplished, the State or sponsor should follow the instructions provided to generate a map.

Provided below are instructions for becoming familiar with the CBG information and for printing a map to determine area-eligibility for the SFSP. There are basically two steps the process, the first is to become familiar with the Census data and the second is to use the Census information to generate a map from the Census website or from another source.

Census Data Familiarization

Step 1: Open the Word file (or .txt file using a word processor software) for a particular State and review the data format.

The data will look like this Example Shown:

51001 990300 3 08120 70 45 64.3 VA Bloxom town

Step 2: Review the data descriptions below of the Census data. The information is provided in 9 columns.

Column Description

- 1 State Code plus County Code (2 digits plus 3 digits =5 digit number)
Example Shown: 51001
- 2 Census Tract Code (6 digit number) *Example Shown: 990300*
- 3 Census Block Group Code (1 digit number) *Example Shown: 3*
- 4 Place Code (5 digit number) *Example Shown: 08120*
- 5 Number of Population 18 years or younger in Census Block Group
Example Shown: 70
- 6 Number of Population 18 years or younger below 185% of USDA's poverty

- threshold (includes children in group quarters based on 1-person income threshold) within the Census Block Group. *Example Shown: 45*
- 7 Percent of population 18 years or younger below 185% of USDA's poverty threshold. For this Census Block Group to be area eligible, this number must be 50.0 or higher. *Example Shown: 64.3*
- 8 State Postal Abbreviation (2 digit alpha) *Example Shown: VA*
- 9 Census Place/remainder name. *Example Shown: Bloxom town*

Step 3: In order to be area-eligible for the SFSP, the value in column number 7 must be 50.0 percent or higher. Remember, this value represents the percentage of children within that CBG that are at or below 185% percent of poverty in that area. Any value below 50.0 (49.9 or lower) does not qualify as area eligible.

Step 4: For those areas determined to be area-eligible, follow these steps to print a map using the American Factfinder feature of the Census Bureau's website. Note, using this method will generate a map that is approximately 4 inches by 5 inches, but does not show sufficient detail to determine area boundaries with adequate street references. For additional resources for printing a larger map, please see the attached list of Map Printing Resources.

Printing a map:

- A. Get onto the American Factfinder feature of the Census Bureau's mapping at this website: <http://factfinder.census.gov/>
- B. In the upper left of the webpage, there is a link that says, Enter a street address, click this link.

Note, as you proceed through each step listed below, after each selection is made, the American Factfinder website will change and update information on the page. You will see information (questions~ below the question you just answered disappear or you will see lines of information added. This is normal and to be expected.

- C. The first line on the page says, **Choose a selection method:** Click the round button next to **Name Search**.
- D. After the page adjusts, the next line reads, **Select year and program:** The drop-down box will probably say **Census 2000** already. If so, continue to the next step. Note, **Census 2000** is the ONLY valid option for determining area-eligibility. If **Census 2000** is not displayed, click on the drop-down box and select **Census 2000**.
- E. After the page adjusts the next line reads, **Search for:** Click on the drop-down box and select **Block Group**, which is about the 9th item down. Note, Block Group

(Census Block Group) provides the lowest level of detail and is only option that should be used.

- F. After the page adjusts the next line reads, **Select a State:** Click on the drop-down box and select your State.

- G. After the page adjusts the next line reads, **Select a county:** Click on the drop-down box and select your County, which matches the place name listed on the file.
- H. After the page adjusts the next line reads, **Select a tract:** Click on the drop-down box and select your Census tract number from the provided file. The **tract** information comes from column 2 of the data. Note, the file shows a 6-digit number, without the decimal. The number in column 2 is the same as the **tract** number displayed, just without the decimal place. For Example Shown, **tract** number 2001.01 is the same as 200101 in Column 2 on the data file.
- I. After the page adjusts the next line reads, **Enter block group:** Enter the 1-digit **block group** number from Column 3 of the data file. After entering the **block group** number, hit the **GO** button just to the right.
- J. After the page adjusts the next line reads, **Select a geography and click 'OK'**. In the dialog box below this line, one or more lines of information may be displayed. Click on the line that includes both the Block group number and tract number. Then click the **Map It** button to the right and the map will appear in a new browser window. To print the map, use the print button or print feature on your screen.