



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

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SUBJECT: New Edition of the Eligibility Manual for School Meals, Federal Policy for Determining and Verifying Eligibility

TO: Special Nutrition Programs  
School Programs  
All State Agencies  
All Regions

Shortly, we will be posting a new interim edition of the Eligibility Manual for School Meals, Federal Policy for Determining and Verifying Eligibility on the Partner Web and on the Child Nutrition Programs' public web site. This version will replace the August, 2001 edition. We will be requesting comments on the guidance, including additional areas that should be addressed or clarified. No paper copies will be produced for distribution.

The new eligibility guidance incorporates the policy memoranda issued as a result of changes made by the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, various final and interim regulations, and policy clarifications issued since August 2001. It is our intention to make use of the advantages of a web-based publication and update the manual periodically. We will maintain an index that provides a description and date for each update or addition. We will also provide questions and answers to clarify existing guidance or to address new developments.

We hope this updated guidance will assist our partners in their administration of the Child Nutrition Programs, and encourage State agencies to promptly notify local educational agencies when it is available on our public website.

**Original Signed**

STANLEY C. GARNETT  
Director  
Child Nutrition Programs