

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Fact Sheet

What is the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)?

Through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), school food authorities (SFA) offer no-cost lunch and breakfast to all students for up to four consecutive years in approved schools. SFAs on the CEP have less administrative burden, which streamlines the school meal program documentation process.

To determine eligibility of a school for the CEP, calculate the number of identified students as a percentage of school enrollment. The percentage of identified students to enrollment must be 40% or greater. Enrollment count is reflective of April 1 of the school year prior to CEP application and identified student documentation is from July 1-April 1 of the school year prior to CEP application.

Identified students are students certified free eligible for school meals using methods other than a free and reduced student meal application. The identified student count is not a school's free and reduced student percentage. An identified student must meet one of the following categories:

1. Directly certified for free meals based on participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Ohio Works First (OWF). This count includes children in the same household as students on the benefits;
2. Homeless and runaway students;
3. Migrant students;
4. Federal Head Start program participants;
5. Foster children confirmed using court documentation.

Benefits of the Community Eligibility Provision:

- Reduction of administrative paperwork and affiliated costs; no-cost meals for all students in the participating school;
- General improvement in student breakfast and lunch participation;

Community Eligibility Provision Meal Reimbursement

School food authorities will multiply the identified student percentage by a factor defined by the USDA. The final value represents the percentage of total student breakfast and lunch meals reimbursed at the free meal rate. The remaining percentage is reimbursed at the paid meal rate. Schools with an identified student percentage of 62.5% or greater will receive free meal reimbursement for all breakfast and lunch meals served to students.

Community Eligibility Provision Application Process

1. Review the [Ohio Department of Education CEP website](#);
2. Complete and submit the following documentation:
 - a. The CEP participation form and CEP eligibility worksheet. These documents are available in the Download Forms section of the Claims Reimbursement and Reporting System (CRRS).
 - b. Click **Modify** in the CRRS sponsor application and answer yes to Question 59, "Will any of your sites be participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) for the National School Lunch Program?" Then, **Save** the sponsor application.
 - c. Click **Details** beside checklist summary. In the checklist summary page, upload a completed CEP participation form and CEP eligibility worksheet.
 - d. Email Sarina.Wilks@education.ohio.gov about the Local Education Agency's (LEA) intention to participate in the CEP.

Community Eligibility Provision Household Notification

SFAs electing provision participation must notify households of children attending CEP school(s). SFAs may use the sample household letter on the CEP webpage or develop a household notification.

Community Eligibility Provision Contact Information

School food authorities may contact Sarina Wilks at 614-995-3866 or sarina.wilks@education.ohio.gov or contact the Office of Nutrition at 1-800- 808-6325.

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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