



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

BRIAN J. WHISTON
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

FOOD SERVICE

**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY NO. 15
SCHOOL YEAR 2015-2016**

SUBJECT: Independent Review of School Meal Applications

DATE: June 30, 2016

The final rule for *The Independent Review of Applications Required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010* was published in the Federal Register on February 6, 2014. Section 304 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010 requires Local Education Agencies (LEAs) that demonstrate high levels of, or a high risk for, administrative error associated with certification, verification and other administrative processes to conduct an independent review of the initial eligibility determinations for free and reduced price school meal applications for accuracy prior to notifying households of eligibility.

Schools determined to have a high error rate greater than 10% on income-based applications and benefit issuance lists during the Administrative Review Process are required to conduct a second review of all applications. The schools required to conduct an independent review of applications for school year 2016-2017 are attached to this memo.

The independent review of applications is part of an effort to decrease certification errors during the eligibility determination process. The independent review requires certain LEAs to conduct a second, independent review of the applications for free and reduced price meal benefits before eligibility determinations are made (Section 304 of the HHFKA).

The second review must be conducted by an independent individual or entity that did not make the original eligibility determination. This individual or entity is not required to be an employee of the LEA but must be trained to make application determinations. The second review of applications must be completed before the household is notified of eligibility and must not result in the delay of an eligibility determination. Households must be notified of the child's eligibility determination within 10 operating days of receiving the application.

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The second independent review requires a re-evaluation of the eligibility determination made by the original determining official, based on the information provided by the household on the application. The second review must determine if the application is complete. This includes:

- The signature of an adult household member
- The last four digits of a social security number (or indication of “none”)
- Names of all household members including the student
- Income information
 - ✓ Income amount for each household member (household members without income including children is indicated as zero)
 - ✓ Income source
 - ✓ Income frequency
 - ✓ Categorical eligibility if applicable

The independent review must also confirm the applications were correctly approved based on current income eligibility guidelines or categorical eligibility determination, as applicable, and that the master list or roster of student names correctly records the student eligibility.

Electronic systems used for eligibility determination are not exempt from the independent second review of applications. In situations where certification errors are caused by incorrect data entry in the electronic data system, data entry for all applications should be reviewed to ensure the information was correctly entered into the electronic system.

The results of the Independent review are reported on the Michigan Department of Education School Nutrition Programs Local Educational Agency (LEA) Second Review of Applications form. The completed form must be returned to the Michigan Department of Education School Nutrition Programs by fax 517-241-3885, Attention: Lisa Brown Taylor or scanned and emailed to browntaylorl@michigan.gov. The due date is November 15, 2016.

Additional information about the independent second review requirement is available at the links below:

- [Q&As Related to the Independent Review of Applications](#)ⁱ
- [Federal Register](#)ⁱⁱ

ⁱ <http://www.fns.usda.gov/qas-related-independent-review-applications>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/CN2014-02556.pdf>

Michigan Department of Education
Office of School Support Services
School Nutrition Programs

Schools Required to Conduct an
Independent Review of Applications
School Year 2016-2017

School Food Authorities (SFAs) determined to have a high error rate, greater than 10%, on income-based applications and benefit issuance lists are required to conduct an independent review of applications also known as a second review of applications. This determination is based on Administrative Review findings. The independent review of applications is part of an effort to decrease certification error during the eligibility determination process.

Agreement Number	School Food Authority
03070	Hopkins Public Schools
10015	Benzie County Central Schools
27010	Bessemer Area Schools
31020	Adams Township School District
36025	West Iron County Public Schools
39909	Augusta County Public Schools
41911	Grattan Academy
45010	Glen Lake Community Schools
55115	North Central Area School
57020	Lake City Area Schools
63020	Ferndale Public Schools
62060	Hesperia Community Schools
63935	Frederick Douglas International Academy
70010	Grand Haven Public Schools
75020	Burr Oak Community Schools
80000	Van Buren ISD
80020	Bangor Public Schools
80040	Covert Public Schools
82938	Summit Academy North
83010	Cadillac Area Public Schools
320605567	Zion Lutheran School Harbor Beach