

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

This chart summarizes program operations under the CEP. Public and nonpublic schools may implement CEP if eligible. Residential Child Care Institutions are not eligible to participate in the CEP option. The [USDA Community Eligibility Provision: Planning and Implementation Guidance](#) is a valuable resource for School Food Authorities (SFAs) considering implementation of CEP.

Topic	Operations under CEP
Eligibility Requirement for School to Participate	Public or nonpublic schools must have an Identified Student Percentage (ISP) of at least 25% (effective 10/26/23 per SP 22-2023). The ISP is based on students who are directly certified (DC) through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Family Investment Program (FIP), or identified as a Foster Child, Migrant and Other Free. Also included are homeless/runaway students and students eligible for Head Start or PreK even Start eating a meal at school. Students reported on a free or reduced price meal application or identified as Other Reduced on the DC list are not included when determining eligible students for CEP. CEP may be implemented in a single building, a group of buildings or district-wide. School Food Authorities (SFAs) must notify patti.harding@iowa.gov by June 30 on intent to implement CEP.
Child Nutrition Programs	Schools must operate both the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) to implement CEP.
Cycle Length	CEP operates on a 4-year cycle. A new 4-year cycle may be determined if the ISP increases from one year to the next year. At the end of year 4 (June 30), the school may start another 4-year cycle, if eligible, based on previous April's ISP or return to regular counting and claiming.
Free and Reduced price meal applications and Direct Certification	Schools participating in CEP will not distribute the free and reduced price meal applications during the CEP 4-year cycle. CEP schools will continue to access the monthly DC lists and identify enrolled students. If one or more schools in an SFA are not participating in CEP the SFA will continue to distribute and process free and reduced price meal applications and access the DC lists for non-CEP schools.
Verification of Free and Reduced price Meal Application	Verification is not required for schools operating CEP. Verification is required if there is one or more schools in the SFA that process free and reduced price meal applications.
Meal Priced to Students	All students are served one reimbursable breakfast/lunch at no cost.

Household Survey	A CEP school must use a Household Survey for other programs such as Title 1, school fees or E-rate. Costs to process the Household Surveys are not allowable costs of the nonprofit school nutrition fund.
Topic	Operations under CEP
Claiming Percentage	The claiming percentage is validated by the State agency (SA) prior to the start of the 4-year cycle. The CEP free and paid claiming percentages are determined by multiplying the ISP by 1.6 (USDA factor). An ISP of 62.5% or greater will yield a 100% free and a 0% paid claiming percentage. An ISP below 62.5% will yield a free claiming percentage and a paid claiming percentage. For example, an ISP of 50% multiplied by 1.6 will yield a free claiming percentage of 80% and a paid claiming percentage of 20%. An ISP of 25% will yield a free claiming percentage of 40% and a paid claiming percentage of 60%. The school will report the total number of meals served and will receive reimbursement based on the claiming percentages. The claiming percentages will be the same each month and are determined by a school, a group of schools or SFA wide.
Schools Merge, Close, change in Attendance Area	When an individual school or group of schools (and the attending students) are added to or removed from a CEP group, the ISP must be recalculated. However, if students are moved or reorganized among schools within a CEP group (e.g., a grade moves from one CEP school to another CEP school and both schools are in the same CEP group), an ISP recalculation is not required, because the group's total identified student and total enrollment numbers are the same. If the attendance area of a CEP school changes the ISP must be recalculated.
A la carte	A la carte items, including a second meal, are not free and must be priced individually and sold to students.
CEP Funding Sources	<p>The school is no longer receiving payment for student meals. It is essential for SFAs to determine if CEP is a financially viable option prior to electing CEP, especially for schools with a lower ISP. The State agency recommends the SFA complete the USDA CEP Estimator to determine the reimbursement earned under CEP as compared to regular claiming by free, reduced price and paid.</p> <p>Funds in the nonprofit school food service account may be used to support CEP in accordance with 7 CFR 210.14(a). This includes Federal reimbursement and other assistance provided under the NSLA and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 [42 U.S.C. 1759a(a)(1)(F)(ii)(I)(bb)].</p>
Non-federal Funding Sources	If there is a difference between the cost of serving lunches and breakfasts at no cost to all participating children and funding available to support CEP the SFA must pay that difference with non-Federal funding sources (7 CFR 245.9(f)(4)(vii) and 7 CFR 210.14(a)). Sources of non-Federal funds may include local funds, profits from a la carte sales, cash donations and in-kind contributions from outside sources, such as volunteer services.

Record Retention	Base year records (DC/migrant/homeless/runaway/Head Start lists of eligible students by name/enrollment data) to support subsequent year earnings must be maintained on file for the 4-year cycle. Daily meal count records must be maintained.
Administrative Review	The SFA will maintain the current Administrative Review cycle.

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Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027,

USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at:

<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address,

telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. Mail:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-9410; or
2. Fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. Email: program.intake@usda.gov

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Iowa Nondiscrimination Statement (Revised 3-21-16)

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