



Maintaining Applications for Educational Benefits for School Nutrition Programs

This guidance provides recommendations in organizing Applications for Educational Benefits for the purpose of the School Nutrition Programs. All of the local educational agency's (LEA's) applications should be processed and filed centrally, such as in the district or nutrition services office. Review the [Eligibility Manual for School Meals](#) for comprehensive information on Federal requirements, policies, and procedures to help you accurately determine, certify, and verify children's eligibility for free and reduced-price school meals.

File all of your LEA's applications in a secure location using one of the following methods:

1. Assign each application a number when it is received. Write the number in the upper right hand corner of the application. File the applications by number regardless of the type.
2. File the applications in alphabetical order using the last name of the adult household member signing the application. Keep a separate file for each of the following types of applications:
 - Approved free eligible applications
 - Approved reduced-price eligible applications
 - Denied applications
 - Inactive applications (including those applications submitted prior to a household becoming directly certified and those applications of students who have withdrawn)
3. Enter the application information into a software database. Each application is assigned a file number or household identification number. File the applications using the software assigned number or household identification number regardless of the type.
4. If using a computer system to generate eligibility determinations, the determining official may sign or initial and date application approval on a separate sheet of paper that could then be attached to a batch of applications. File these batches of applications by date regardless of the type.