

Disclosure Process Fact Sheet

The information provided by families on the Free and Reduced Price Application will be used only for determining eligibility for meal or milk benefits and verification of eligibility. Schools that plan to disclose children's eligibility status for purposes other than determining and verifying free or reduced price eligibility must inform households of this potential disclosure. In some cases the school must obtain consent of a parent or guardian prior to the disclosure. The disclosure requirements also apply to information obtained through direct certification.

Step 1. Check USDA's Disclosure Chart (on pages 86-87 of the [Eligibility Guidance Manual](#)) and [Indiana's Disclosure Chart](#) to determine if you need parental permission before sharing any information with others. If the individual/group is not listed on the charts, contact the State agency.

Step 2. If no prior permission is necessary, Food Service must still notify the household of the disclosure and enter into a memorandum of understanding or other agreement with all involved parties.

If parent/guardian permission is required, send a letter home that specifically outlines the disclosure request. Food Service must also complete a disclosure agreement with the individual or group that wants this information.

Step 3. The parent/guardian will need to sign and send the consent back to Food Service, who then releases the names of those giving consent. Contact the state agency if you have another disclosure method you would prefer to implement.

Reminders

- Disclosure is always an option, not a requirement.
- The school food service director and any school staff who are determining officials review free and reduced price meal or free milk applications and make the decision on whether or not children's information will be disclosed.
- Distribution and processing applications solely for information about household income to determine the funding or benefits for programs other than the Child Nutrition Programs is prohibited.
- Consent forms cannot be extended from one school year to the next. Consent must be obtained each school year.
- Each disclosure request must be individually listed for parents to opt in.
- Disclosure requests can be provided with the distribution of free and reduced applications, however households must know that disclosure is completely optional and has no impact on their student's free or reduced eligibility determination.
- Although a program or person may be authorized to receive free and reduced price eligibility information, there must be a legitimate "need to know" to provide a service or carry out an authorized activity.
- Eligibility information cannot be made available to all school officials as a general practice. Teachers, guidance counselors, principals, etc. who are not providing such assistance under the appropriate statutory or regulatory requirements cannot have access.
- For more information, view pages 83-95 of the [Eligibility Guidance Manual](#).
- To access a template disclosure agreement and parent letter, click [here](#).