

## VERIFICATION FOR CAUSE

**Verification for Cause** – The school has an obligation to verify all questionable applications (verification “for cause”). Such verification efforts cannot delay the approval of applications. If an application is complete and indicates that the child is eligible for free or reduced price benefits, the application must be approved at face value. Only after the determination of eligibility has been made can the school begin the verification for cause process.

### **Why conduct Verification for Cause? –**

1. Reduces the number of non-responders during the traditional verification process
2. Ensures integrity of the program by verifying all questionable applications
3. Assists schools from being required to do error prone method during the traditional verification process

### **Tips on when to conduct Verification for Cause -**

- ✓ Pull any applications verified for cause from total applications. This will reduce the number of problem applications and potentially the number of applications that need to be verified
- ✓ Automatically ‘verify for cause’ all non-responders from previous school year
- ✓ Flag all error prone applications (close to income guidelines) and ‘verify for cause’
- ✓ Begin verification early and select majority of sample size early in the school year (page 76 of the Eligibility Manual)
- ✓ Verify all applications with zero income repeatedly listed on the application every year
- ✓ See SP 13-2012 regarding the submission of school district employees’ applications and school employees *should not* be approving their own applications-  
<http://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/nutrition/sp-13-2012.pdf>.

### **Procedures –**

1. If an application is complete and indicates that the child is eligible for free or reduced price benefits, approve the application. Only after the determination of eligibility has been made can the school begin the verification for cause process.
  - Pull any applications verified for cause from the rest of the applications.
2. Send the household pulled for verification for cause a *We Must Check Your Application* letter, <http://www.doe.in.gov/nutrition/snp-verification>, explaining that they must submit verification of eligibility information for continued eligibility.
  - The *We Must Check Your Application* letter may be sent at the same time as a notice of eligibility.
3. The school verifies applications for cause by following the same procedures during the regular verification process (Sections H through N in the 2011 Eligibility Manual for School Meals).
4. After the requested information has been submitted, the household must be sent a *We Have Checked Your Application* letter, <http://www.doe.in.gov/nutrition/snp-verification>, stating the findings of verification.
  - Any household that fails to submit requested verification information by the date specified in the *We Must Check Your Application* letter must be sent a *We Have Checked Your Application* letter stating that their student(s) will go back to paid status
  - If a household submits another application after they have been terminated due to non-response in the same school year, then they must submit proof of eligibility (income, food stamp, or TANF) at the time that they reapply.