

Economically Disadvantaged Guidance: Definition and Usage

Per Act 136 (HB 130) of 2017, the Economically Disadvantaged (ED) definition includes any student who is:

- eligible for Louisiana's food assistance program for low-income families (SNAP),
- eligible for Louisiana's disaster food assistance program (DSNAP),
- eligible for Louisiana's program for assistance to needy families with children to assist parents in becoming self-sufficient (TANF),
- eligible for Louisiana's healthcare program for families and individuals (Medicaid) with limited financial resources,
- eligible for free or reduced lunch price meals based on the latest available data,
- an English Language Learner,
- identified as homeless or migrant pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act and the Migrant Education Program within the ESSA,
- incarcerated with the office of juvenile justice or in an adult facility, or
- placed into the custody of the state.

This ED definition applies to both the MFP At-Risk indicator and to the federal formula allocations.

Note: this ED definition does not affect school food service in any way.

Direct Certification for the National School Lunch Program

- The Direct Certification process involves the identification of students who are directly certified as eligible for free lunch because:
 - They, or any household member, receive benefits under Assistance Programs (e.g. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-SNAP)
 - They are designated as members of Other Source Categorically Eligible Designations (e.g. DC extended, Enrolled in Head Start or Even Start programs, migrants, runaways, homeless, or foster children)
- Maintain official documentation on file
- For additional information regarding direct certification, refer to Section 2: The Basis of Eligibility in the [USDA Eligibility Manual for School Meals](#) from the [CNP website](#).

Economically Disadvantaged Guidance: CEP School Options

- During enrollment and certification processes, CEP schools might discover that some families of students eligible for free and/or reduced lunch meals did not apply for any government assistance, and therefore those students do not show up in any proxy files (e.g. SNAP) for direct certification. This means that unless the school identifies these students as eligible for free and/or reduced lunch by other means, the students will not be included in the ED count for the LEA.
- For this reason, LEAs with CEP schools might want to qualify students by collecting household income; however, careful consideration should be given to this decision, since the purpose of CEP is to reduce burden on families. If a decision is made to survey families for household income, a sample template is available [HERE](#). If the LEA chooses to modify this template, please remember that the form cannot reference or imply that the survey is in any way for receipt of benefit from the school food service programs.
- As stated above, this income survey can be used in CEP schools as a means to identify additional ED students for funding purposes only and does not affect school meal programs.