



# Food Distribution National Policy Memorandum

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

**DATE:** February 23, 2005

Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

**POLICY NO:** FD-045: Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)

3101 Park  
Center Drive

**SUBJECT:** Direct Certification and Direct Verification for National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs

Alexandria, VA  
22302-1500

**Direct Certification** - The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 allows children to be certified as eligible for free meals under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) based on participation in other programs authorized under the Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended. No further application by the child’s household is necessary. Therefore, participation in **FDPIR** will automatically qualify a child for free school lunches and breakfasts.

**Direct Verification** – Local school authorities are required to verify the eligibility of some children for free and reduced meals. By law, income and program participation information from FDPIR may be used to verify eligibility for NSLP and SBP. This means that local school authorities may contact the ITOs and State agencies to obtain information on participating FDPIR households.

**Action by Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs) and State Agencies** - FDPIR regulations at 7 CFR 253.5(a)(2)(vii) permit the disclosure of information obtained from FDPIR households to other Federal or federally aided, means-tested assistance programs. Therefore, ITOs and State agencies may provide information regarding the participation of school-age children in FDPIR to local educational authorities for Direct Certification and Direct Verification purposes.

We strongly encourage the cooperation of ITOs and State agencies in this effort to ensure that all eligible school-age children have an opportunity to participate in NSLP and SBP.

Cathie McCullough  
Director  
Food Distribution Division

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