

California SUN Bucks 2025 Verification Fact Sheet

The following guidance only applies to SUN Bucks compliant applications, or Universal Benefits Applications, used to make eligibility determinations for SUN Bucks in California. Eligibility determinations made using a National School Lunch Program meal application are not subject to these verification requirements and must comply with the verification requirements outlined in [7 Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) 245.6\(a\)](#).

SUN Bucks Benefit Issuance

- Benefits **cannot be issued** for SUN Bucks applications selected for verification until the verification process has been completed, with the exception of verification for cause, as described in [7 CFR 292.14\(a\)\(1\)](#).

Verification Samples

- The LEA must verify the eligibility of children in a sample of household SUN Bucks applications approved for benefits.
- The sample must be three [3] percent of all approved applications.
- Sample size must be selected randomly from all approved applications.

Rolling Verification Sample Selection

- For summer 2025, LEAs must conduct rolling verification for approved applications. LEAs will pull three [3] percent of approved UBAs/SUN Bucks applications for the verification sample size on the following dates:
 - July 1, 2025
 - August 1, 2025
 - September 2, 2025
- Each of the three sample pools must include only applications approved since the last sample period.
- First two samples on July 1, 2025 and August 1, 2025:
 - Select three [3] percent of approved applications for each sample period, rounding down to the nearest whole number.
 - If rounding down equals zero, no applications are verified in that period. Those applications must be included in the three [3] percent calculation for the next sample period.
- Final sample on September 2, 2025:
 - Select three [3] percent of approved applications, only including applications approved since the last sample period.
 - Add up all applications already selected for verification (including this final sample pool).
 - Calculate three [3] percent of all approved applications as of September 2, rounding up to the nearest whole number.

- If the total number of applications selected for verification from all three sample pools equals less than three [3] percent of all approved applications as of September 2, LEAs must randomly select more applications from the August 1-September 2 pool to ensure a total of three [3] percent of approved applications are verified.

Replacing Applications

- The LEA may, on a case-by-case basis, replace up to 10 percent of the applications that are randomly selected as part of the verification sample.
- Applications may be replaced if the LEA determines that the household would be unable to satisfactorily respond to the verification requirement.

Direct Verification

- LEAs must first directly verify any applications in the sample pool that were certified for benefits through categorical eligibility, using data from eligible programs (as defined in 7 *CFR* 292.12(d)) and other assistance programs or administrative data, where available.
- Direct verification must be done **before** asking the household for documents.
- Documentation can show program participation or income at any point during the eligibility period—it only needs to show the child was eligible once during that time.
- If eligibility is confirmed through direct verification, verification of the application is considered complete.

Notification Requirements

- Households selected for verification must be notified in writing that their application was selected for verification. Written statement must be made available in an understandable and uniform format, be translated into languages households can easily understand, if possible, and must include:
 - Explanation of the requirement to submit the requested documents needed to verify eligibility for SUN Bucks benefits by the deadline set by the LEA.
 - Information about the option to submit proof that their children receive benefits from CalFresh, CalWORKs, FDPIR, or another approved program.
 - Details on how a household may request the LEA to contact appropriate officials to confirm their children's foster, homeless, runaway or migrant status.
 - Statement explaining that failure to cooperate with verification efforts will result in the termination of benefits.

Telephone Assistance

- The LEA must provide a telephone number to households selected for verification to call free of charge to obtain information about the verification process.
- The telephone number must be prominently displayed on the letter to households selected for verification.

Sources of Verification Documentation

- Households not verified through direct verification must confirm eligibility through various forms of documentation:
 - Written evidence, such as pay stubs, award letters, or letters from employers. If written evidence is insufficient, the LEA may require confirmation from a person outside of the child's household or accept a statement from an adult member of the child's household.
 - Information concerning income, household size, or SNAP, FDPIR, or TANF eligibility, maintained by other government agencies to which the verifying agency can legally gain access, must be used to confirm a household's income, size, or receipt of benefits, as applicable.
 - Information may also be obtained from individuals or agencies serving categorically eligible children, as defined in [7 CFR 292.2](#), including foster, homeless, migrant, or runaway children.
 - Households which dispute the validity of income information acquired through an individual outside of the child's household or a system of records must be given the opportunity to provide other documentation.

Documentation Timeframe

- Households chosen for verification must provide documentation confirming the original eligibility determination.
- Documentation must include:
 - The source of the income
 - The amount of income
 - The frequency of income
- Documentation only needs to show they were eligible at any one point during the eligibility period—it does not have to show they were eligible at the time they applied or were verified.

Follow-up Attempts

- If a household does not respond or provides incomplete or ambiguous responses to a verification request, the LEA must try to contact them at least twice, with at least one week between attempts.
- Contact can be made by phone, email, or mail, and each attempt must be documented.

Verification for cause

- The LEA must verify applications on a case-by-case basis, such as if there is conflicting or inconsistent information.
- Verification for cause can happen at any time during the school year or summer period, but it must be completed within 30 days of receiving the application.
- Applications verified for cause do not count toward the three [3] percent sample size used for random verification.
- If questionable information comes up after benefits are issued, the LEA must still verify the application.
- All verification procedures in [7 CFR 292.14](#) must be followed for applications selected for verification for cause.

Verification After Benefit Issuance

- If an LEA is alerted to a questionable application after initial approval of a SUN Bucks application, no further SUN Bucks eligibility records should be shared with the California Department of Education until verification for cause is complete and eligibility is confirmed.

Eligibility Changes

- If a household refuses to cooperate with efforts to verify, eligibility for SUN Bucks benefits must be terminated.
- If verification results in a change in eligibility, the LEA must:
 - Make appropriate modifications to the initial eligibility determination.
 - Notify the household of any change in eligibility as a result of verification.
 - The notice must advise the household of:
 - The change,
 - The reason for the change,
 - Notification of the right to appeal and when the appeal must be filed,
 - Instructions on how to appeal, and
 - The right to reapply at any time during the instructional year or summer operational period.
 - Properly document and retain on file at the LEA the reasons for ineligibility.

Nondiscrimination

- The verification efforts must be applied without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, age, or disability.