

Guidance for CEs Transitioning from Free Claiming for All Students to Their Regular Counting and Claiming Method

Contracting Entities (CEs) located in the disaster counties have several options in determining the most appropriate method for counting and claiming once they discontinue claiming all students as free. The guidance in this document describes the options CEs have based on their current circumstances. For more information related to the guidance in this document, see *Administrator’s Reference Manual (ARM), Section 4, Determining Eligibility* and *Section 5, Special Provisions*. CE’s may also contact their education service center (ESC) for additional information or the TDA’s Business Operations staff at NSLP-SBP.BOps@TexasAgriculture.gov.

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) encourages CEs to weigh the needs of the students as well as financial considerations in making these decisions. There are advantages and disadvantages to continuing the CE’s intended operational practices as indicated in August of 2017. This includes, but not limited to, practices related to counting and claiming.

Please note the following calendar for the last day for claim submissions:

60-Calendar Day Rule Chart	
Month	Last Day for Claim Submission
January	April 1 (Leap Year – March 31)
February	April 29
March	May 30
April	June 29
May	July 30
June	August 29
July	September 29
August	October 30
September	November 29
October	December 30
November	January 29
December	March 1 (Leap Year – February 29)

CEs located in disaster counties may amend their counting and claiming methods within this calendar, i.e., before the 60 day window closes the CE’s ability to make a change to a claim. However, TDA recommends that CEs determine their method of counting and claiming for all sites as soon as possible.

Methods of Counting and Claiming

CEs that are no longer using the flexibility to claim all students as free may return to the counting and claiming method indicated in the Texas Unified Nutrition Programs System (TX-UNPS) as of August of 2017 or may choose to operate the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) at qualifying sites.

Standard Counting and Claiming	Special Provision Counting and Claiming	– Disaster Flexibility– Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) at Any Site If Current Student Population Qualifies for CEP
<p>CEs that continue standard counting and claiming will take the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Review the site applications for all sites in operation to ensure that the information provided in the NSLP application is still accurate. – Make changes if appropriate. – Distribute, collect, and process household meal applications and conduct direct certification as required. – Submit claims for reimbursable meals served based on student eligibility determinations. 	<p>CEs that have had no change to their student population will take the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Review the site applications for all sites in operation to ensure that the information provided in the NSLP application is still accurate. – Make changes if appropriate. – Submit claims for reimbursable meals served based on claiming percentages established in TX-UNPS as of August of 2017. 	<p>CEs that decide to use the current flexibility to change one or more sites to CEP for site(s) that qualify for CEP will take the following actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Determine the Identified Student Percentage (ISP) for each site. – Contact TDA Business Operations at NSLP-SBP.BOps@TexasAgriculture.gov for directions on how to make the necessary changes in Texas Unified Nutrition Programs System (TX-UNPS). – Submit claims for reimbursable meals. TX-UNPS will automatically apply the appropriate claiming percentage. – Submit updated ISP information in the CEP Report in March, 2018. – Work with ESC to verify the accuracy of the CEP Report data using the CEP worksheet if the CE plans to continue to operate CEP in School Year 2018-2019.

The following guidance describes possible options based on the unique situations for the CEs in the disaster counties.

Unique Situations for CEs to Consider in Determining the Most Appropriate Counting and Claiming Method

Districtwide Special Provision

If a CE operates special provision districtwide, the CE may continue to count and claim as indicated in TX-UNPS in August of 2017.

Districtwide Standard Counting and Claiming

If a CE uses standard counting and claiming districtwide, the CE may continue to count and claim as indicated in TX-UNPS in August of 2017.

Two Sites in One Location Where One Site Indicated Standard Counting and Claiming and the Other Site Indicated Special Provision in TX-UNPS in August of 2017

The CE has the following counting and claiming options when there are two sites in one location:

Option 1, One Site Operating Standard Counting and Claiming: If students that previously attended a special provision site are now attending a standard counting and claiming site and the site chooses to operate as one site, the CE may use standard counting and claiming for the merged site. If this is the case, see the directions for *Standard Counting and Claiming* on Page 2.

Please note, once the student population of the two sites is combined, the student population for the special provision site has changed significantly. This change requires the site to reestablish special provision claiming percentages. If the CE prefers to operate a special provision program for the combined sites, it must meet the criteria described in Option 2 or Option 3 to do so.

Option 2, CEP at One Site or Grouped Sites: If the combined student population of the two sites or each site meets the criteria for CEP, the sites may operate CEP as single CEP sites, a group of CEP sites, or one site. If this is the case, see the directions for *Standard Counting and Claiming* and *Disaster Flexibility Operate Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) at Any Site If Current Student Population Qualifies for CEP* on Page 2.

Option 3, Two Separate Sites as Indicated in TX-UNPS as of August of 2017: If the CE continues to operate two separate sites in one location, the student population for each site will remain distinct. In this case, each site will claim reimbursable meals based on the information recorded in TX-UNPS as of August of 2017. If this is the case, see the directions for *Standard Counting and Claiming* and *Special Provision Counting and Claiming* on Page 2.

Relocation of Special Provision Site Students to One or More Non-Special Provision Sites

If the students who attended a special provision site are relocated across multiple sites, the free meal status does not follow the students. In this case, the CE has the following options:

Option 1, Standard Counting and Claiming: If students that previously attended a special provision site are now attending a standard counting and claiming site, the site may continue to use standard counting and claiming. If this is the case, see the directions for *Standard Counting and Claiming* on Page 2.

Option 2, CEP: If the new student population for any one site or all involved sites meets the criteria for CEP, the site or sites may operate CEP as single CEP sites or a group of CEP sites. If this is the case, see the directions for *Disaster Flexibility Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) at Any Site If Current Student Population Qualifies for CEP* on Page 2.

Relocation of Students to a Special Provision Site

If students from one or more sites are relocated to a special provision site—not districtwide special provision, the CE must determine if the special provision site's population has changed significantly. If the student population for a special provision site has changed significantly, the CE has the following counting and claiming options:

Option 1, Standard Counting and Claiming: If students that previously attended another site or other sites are now attending a special provision site, the CE may change to standard counting and claiming. If this is the case, see the directions for *Standard Counting and Claiming* on Page 2.

Option 2, CEP: If the new student population for any one site or all involved sites meets the criteria for CEP, the site or sites may operate CEP as single CEP sites or a group of CEP sites. If this is the case, see the directions for *Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) at Any Site If Current Student Population Qualifies for CEP (Disaster Flexibility)* on Page 2.