



**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**

Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

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Alexandria, VA  
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**DATE:** August 8, 2012

**MEMO CODE:** SP 40-2012

**SUBJECT:** Child Nutrition Reauthorization 2010: Certification of Compliance with New Meal Patterns – Validation Review Checklists

**TO:** Regional Directors  
Special Nutrition Programs  
All Regions

State Directors  
Child Nutrition Programs  
All States

Attached for your use and information are prototype lunch and breakfast Validation Review Checklists to support the School Year (SY) 2012-13 Validation Reviews set forth in the interim rule entitled, *Certification of Compliance with Meal Requirements for the National School Lunch Program under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010*.

As indicated in the interim rule, during a validation review, State agencies must observe a meal service for each type of certified menu (i.e., each distinct menu by age grade grouping) and review the production records for observed meals to ensure the meal service meets the updated meal pattern requirements and is consistent with the menu/documentation on which certification was based. In addition, State agencies must review documentation submitted for certification to ensure that ongoing meal service operations are consistent with certification documentation.

In the *Meal Observation Checklist* section of the prototype, State agencies answer questions related to a meal observation. States are not required to observe the entire meal service; they must only observe meals long enough to be able to answer all questions in this section. The amount of time spent observing meals is left to the discretion of the State agency.

In the *Meal Documentation Checklist* section, State agencies answer questions based on records associated with the week of observed meals. While State agencies are required only to observe one meal service, they must review records to answer questions related to the whole week to ensure the SFA is meeting the weekly meal pattern requirements. In cases where the State agency is reviewing records early in the week, this may mean the State is reviewing planned records for the week.

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Finally, in the *Certification Documentation Checklist* section, State agencies are to compare documents submitted for certification against records and other documentation available at the School Food Authority (SFA) to ensure that what the SFA actually served is consistent with the information submitted by the SFA.

If a State agency is unable to validate compliance with the updated meal patterns during a validation review, the State agency must determine the proper action to take. State agencies should provide technical assistance as needed and consider appropriate fiscal action based on the entire validation review when making the determination that a certification cannot be validated. A question that is answered, “no” on the validation checklist does not automatically mean that fiscal action is required. Finally, State agencies should keep in mind that if corrective action occurs immediately, the SFA may continue to earn the 6 cents.

State agencies may direct any questions concerning this guidance to the appropriate Food and Nutrition Service Regional Office.

**Original Signed**

for:  
Cynthia Long  
Director  
Child Nutrition Division

Attachments