

CEO E_11rev Sample recruitment email from State to LEA (on-site data collection)

Sample Recruitment Email for States to Send to LEAS (On-Site Data Collection)

Dear [FOODSERVICE DIRECTOR],

As you may be aware, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is conducting a study of a new reimbursement system for school meals, called the Community Eligibility (CE) Option. Under the CE Option, families are not required to submit applications for free or reduced-price meals and schools provide free meals to all students. [STATE NAME] was selected to offer the CE Option to eligible LEAs and schools. The Option will be available nationwide to all eligible LEAs and schools in the 2014-15 school year. Congress has mandated that FNS conduct an evaluation of the CE Option and FNS contracted with Abt Associates, a research company located in Cambridge, MA, to conduct this important study.

Your LEA has been sampled to participate in the CE Option Evaluation. Researchers from Abt Associates will be contacting you shortly to request your participation. I am writing to you today to encourage you to say yes. Your involvement in the evaluation would consist of the following:

- An on-site data interview with you, and appropriate school-level staff, about administrative costs, and facilitating a Certification Record Abstraction for about 114 to 150 certification records spread over up to three sampled schools.
- You will be asked to complete a web-based survey on Participation, Enrollment, Attendance and Revenue (PEAR). This survey will collect data from four school years, SY 2009/10 through SY 2012/13. The State Agency will provide some of the data needed for the evaluation, to reduce your burden. You will have the option of completing a paper version of the survey.
- In addition, you will be asked to complete a 24 to 30-minute implementation Web survey focusing on experiences and opinions of the CE Option.

Abt Associates may select your LEA for an additional data collection. If so, cafeteria managers at three sampled schools will be asked to participate in a menu survey of NSLP and SBP meals offered in their schools for a 5-day pre-specified “target week”. Other data collected in the schools will include an observation of meals taken by students and cashier transactions, as well as a review of meal counting and claiming procedures at the school and the LEA.

You will be performing a valuable service by participating in this evaluation and we encourage you to cooperate fully. As you may know, section 305 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 requires LEAs participating in the NSLP to cooperate with program evaluations.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Patty Connor of Abt Associates at (855) 759-5752 or at CommunityEligibility@abtassoc.com.

Sincerely,
[STATE CN DIRECTOR]