Appendix E12. Guide for Telephone Calls on Collection of Household Applications

Introduction
Good morning/afternoon [LEA DIRECTOR NAME]. Thank you for taking the time to speak with me. My name is [CONTACT NAME] and I work for Westat, the private research company the Food and Nutrition Service has contracted with to evaluate the independent review of applications requirement for school meal programs, also called the second review of applications.

First, we want to thank you for taking part in the telephone interview with our study team on [insert date of LEA interview]. We really appreciate the information you provided about the processes at your LEA.

Purpose of the Call
As you know, I am calling today to review the procedures for your LEA to sample and submit household applications to the study team, and answer any questions you may have.

Before I start with the procedures, do you have any questions? [ANSWER QUESTIONS]

Procedures to Review

Now I will review the procedures. Feel free to stop me at any time if you have questions. I also want to let you know that after we talk today, I will be sending you a follow up email to summarize the important points from our call. [IF THIS IS A FOLLOWUP CALL, CUSTOMIZE SCRIPT BELOW TO COVER NEEDED TOPICS AND RESPOND TO QUESTIONS]

1. Specific school years for which applications are being requested. We are collecting applications for two school years: [insert school year 1] and [insert school year 2]. You'll notice these are not consecutive school years and that is on purpose.

   - Can you tell me how many household applications your LEA processed in each of those school years?

     [RECORD RESPONSES, ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS, AND GO TO #2.]

     [SCHOOL YEAR #1 TOTAL APPLICATIONS: _____]
     [SCHOOL YEAR #2 TOTAL APPLICATIONS: _____]

2. <u>Sampling procedures to select applications to send to the study team.</u>
   - [IF 100 OR LESS APPLICATIONS FOR A SCHOOL YEAR:] Since you have a relatively small number of applications, we are asking that you submit copies of all of the applications for that school year and any supporting documentation.

   - [IF MORE THAN 100 APPLICATIONS FOR A SCHOOL YEAR:] We do not need you to submit all applications for the school year. Instead, we are asking that you draw a sample of applications to send us along with supporting documentation.

     - [INTERVIEWER CONSULT SAMPLE TABLE TO DETERMINE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS TO SAMPLE] Given the total number of applications for School Year [INSERT YEAR], we would like you to select [INSERT #]. These applications should be selected randomly, using specific procedures we will send you over email. For example, we may ask you to look at a list of all applications in alphabetical order and select every third application to send to us, until you reach the target number. The follow-up email I will send you after our call will include the number we need and step-by-step instructions how you should select them. It will also have a phone number to call if you have questions later on.

   - [FOR ALL] Along with the applications, I mentioned that you will need to submit supporting documentation. Supporting documentation includes all documents that show how you arrived at the eligibility determination—free, reduced price, or paid/denied--for the application, either on the initial certification review or the second review (IRA). We want to be able to see any changes made as a result of the second review (IRA). These could be notations on each application or separate documents that cover multiple applications. If you use software to process applications,

there may be printouts or reports you would send. [INSERT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM LEA INTERVIEW ABOUT LEA-SPECIFIC PROCEDURES AND/OR DOCUMENTATION]

Do you have any questions now? [ANSWER QUESTIONS AND GO TO #3]

3. <u>Methods to submit the applications to the study team</u>**.** Once you select the applications, you will need to transmit them to the study team here at Westat. It is very important that we safeguard the personally identifiable information (PII) on the applications. We have two ways to do that.

   You can upload and <u>submit the files electronically</u> through a secure FTP server. I can send step-by-step instructions on how to do this, and provide technical support if you are interested and able to send them this way. If not, you can <u>copy and mail</u> the documents to us using a secure package tracking service. We will send you the needed tracking/packing slips for mailing.

   Which method do you think will work best for you?

   [RECORD PREFERRED METHOD. IF NEITHER, OBTAIN SPECIFICS ABOUT WHY. STUDY DIRECTOR WILL DETERMINE NEXT STEPS AND CONTACT LEA.]

Timeline for Submission

I will ask that you submit the applications to us within the next [2 weeks]. Is that reasonable? [IF NO:] What would be a more realistic timeframe? [RECORD]

Closing

Thank you so much for your time and attention today. I will send you the follow-up email with the information we discussed and step-by-step procedures for selecting and sending the applications to us shortly. If you have any questions you can

always call [study phone number] or send an email to [study email]. Thank you for your participation in this important FNS study. Good-bye. [END]