

APPENDIX B17. (INSTRUMENT D4). STATE MEAL CLAIM DATA REQUEST

OMB Number: 0584-0530 Expiration Date: XX/XX/XXXX



Dear <<STATE CHILD NUTRITION DIRECTOR/STATE DATA MANAGER>>:

As you may know, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (USDA FNS) has contracted with Westat to administer the Fourth Access, Participation, Eligibility and Certification Study (APEC-IV).

The goal of the study is to provide FNS with national estimates of overpayments and underpayments in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) in school year 2023-2024. Under the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019 (PIIA) (P.L. 116-117)*, all Federal agencies that administer large programs are required to report these rates of improper payments to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

APEC-IV data collection efforts include collecting meal claiming data that States submitted to the USDA. Westat has already collected meal claiming data at the school level and from school food authorities.

We ask that you electronically submit the meal claims data that you submitted to the USDA for the month of **October 2023** for all of your SFAs. Attached is a reference guide with instructions to send a file with your State's meal claims data through our secure website.

A member of the APEC-IV research team will contact you within the next few days to follow up on the status of your submission. We'll be happy to assist you if there are questions regarding our request.

Please feel free to contact us at [INSERT NUMBER] or email us at [INSERT EMAIL] if you have any questions.

Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation.

Sincerely,

APEC IV Research Team

Attachment: Reference Guide for State Meal Claims Data Request

*PIIA repealed and replaced the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-300) Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-204), and the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act (IPERIA) of 2012 (P.L. 112-248).

APPENDIX B17. (INSTRUMENT D4). STATE MEAL CLAIM DATA REQUEST

Attachment: Reference Guide for State Meal Claims Data Request

WHAT WE ARE ASKING YOU TO DO

We are requesting a data file or files showing the meal claims you submitted to USDA for **October 2023** for all school food authorities (SFAs) in your State. Westat has already collected meal claiming data at the school level and at the SFA level.

If you have questions or comments during this process, please contact us at [INSERT NUMBER] or email us at [INSERT EMAIL] if you have any technical questions or issues using the Web Portal.

REQUIRED DATA ELEMENTS

The required data elements for the file(s) are:

1. SFA name
2. SFA ID
3. School name [if you are able to provide meal claim data by school]
4. School ID [if you are able to provide meal claim data by school]
5. Number of free meals claimed in October 2023
6. Number of reduced price meals claimed in October 2023
7. Number of paid meals claimed in October 2023

You can submit one file with all SFAs or a separate file for each SFA. For each SFA, please provide the claiming data by school, if available, and include the school name and school ID.

ACCESING THE WEB-BASED PORTAL

Please send us these data files through Westat's secure web portal. To access Westat's secure web portal, you will need the link and your personal identification number.

< INSERT URL / LINK and QR CODE >

Your PIN is: <INSERT PIN>

The link will take you to the landing page where you will be able to:

- ✓ Log in using your Personal Identification Number (PIN)
- ✓ Access the secure web portal

APPENDIX B17. (INSTRUMENT D4). STATE MEAL CLAIM DATA REQUEST

- ✓ Answer questions about your process to collect meal claiming data
- ✓ Securely upload files with your State's meal claiming data
- ✓ Obtain the study's contact information

UPLOADING AND TRANSMITTING MEAL CLAIM DATA FILES

1. Prior to uploading your data file(s), we request that you provide information about your meal claiming process by answering two questions, each with 3 sub-questions. The questions are included below for your reference.

Question 1: Please describe the meal claim data you receive from the SFA and what you do with it once received.

- a) How often do you receive meal claim data from each SFA?
- b) In what format do you receive meal claim data from each SFA?
- c) How do you process the data you receive?

Question 2: What is your process for finalizing the data before you submit it to FNS?

- a) What type of validation or quality control checks do you conduct, if any?
- b) What type of follow up, if any, do you do with the SFAs,?
- c) What type of training, technical assistance, and/or resources are provided to SFAs to ensure accurate and complete submissions, if any?

2. To securely upload your data file(s), click on “Upload.”
3. Click on the “Browse...” button to navigate to the location of the data file on your computer, and click the “Open” button.
4. Next, click on “Submit File” to upload your data file.
 - The data file(s) must be in Excel or CSV format.
 - You can upload multiple files; however, only one file can be uploaded at a time.
 - A confirmation thank you message displays when your file is uploaded
5. You can confirm the upload of your file by clicking “Check Your Submission Status” located on the left side of the screen. This action opens the Data File Status screen for your State.
6. After submitting your answers the two questions about your meal claiming processes, and uploading your data files, click on “Logout” located on the top right side of the page.

QUESTIONS / COMMENTS?

Please contact us at [INSERT NUMBER] or email us at [INSERT EMAIL] if you have any technical questions or issues using the Web Portal.

This information is being collected to provide the Food and Nutrition Service with key information on the annual error rates and improper payments for the school meal programs. This is a voluntary collection and FNS will use the information to examine school meal error rates and inform future APEC studies. This collection requests personally identifiable information under the Privacy Act of 1974. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0530. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 4 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information.