



FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE
Request for Applications to Participate in Demonstration Projects to Evaluate
Direct Certification with Medicaid

Questions and Answers

October 26, 2011

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is providing the following answers to questions submitted regarding the Request for Applications (RFA) to Participate in Demonstration Projects to Evaluate Direct Certification with Medicaid (issued by Memorandum SP 47-2011, September 2, 2011). This list will be updated throughout the application period (ending December 5, 2011) as questions are submitted.

1. **QUESTION:** On the RFA Appendix A-Application Template, page 2, data is requested for each local educational agency (LEA) concerning the number of students certified for free and reduced priced meals during the school year (SY) 2010-2011. Should applicants use counts from specific months or the highest number for the SY?

ANSWER: The numbers of students that the LEA certified for free and reduced price meals should reflect the data as of October 2010, which will coincide with information aggregated for the State agency's FNS-742 (Verification Summary Report) and annual FNS-10 (Report of School Program Operations for October). This will keep the data in sync with the national data for comparison to help FNS ensure that the 2.5% project participation requirement for demonstration category DC-M1 is met in the first year.

2. **QUESTION:** Are State agencies allowed to use Direct Certification grant funds for the purpose of activities related to the direct certification demonstration projects with Medicaid?

ANSWER: Please refer to the 2010-2012 Direct Certification Grants Request for Applications, amendment and Question and Answer documents at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/grants.htm>. Eligibility for the Direct Certification grants is based on the State agency's direct certification rate with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), as reported in the 2009 and 2010 Reports to Congress—*Direct Certification in the National School Lunch Program: State Progress in Implementation*. The grant funds are intended for the purpose of improving direct certification rates, with a focus on children who are members of households receiving SNAP or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits. However, funds may be used to improve direct certification in other public programs where there is



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statutory authority for direct certification. Therefore, it is possible, with prior FNS approval, for State agencies to use the grant funds for activities related to direct certification with Medicaid. Use of grant funds for this purpose will be restricted to State agencies that meet **all three** of the following criteria:

- 1) Are eligible and apply for a 2010-2012 Direct Certification grant to improve their SNAP/TANF direct certification rates and include the demonstration project activities in their grant project application narrative and budget; **or** have already been awarded a 2010-2012 Direct Certification grant and submit an appropriate request to amend their agreement to include activities and costs specific to the demonstration projects with Medicaid, as long as the total grant amount, including amendments, does not exceed the \$1 million grant cap;
- 2) Are selected to participate in the demonstration projects to evaluate direct certification with Medicaid; and
- 3) Receive FNS headquarters approval to use a portion of the grant funds for activities related to the demonstration projects with Medicaid.

In the coming weeks, FNS will issue separate guidance to States on the process for requesting to use Direct Certification grant funds for Medicaid demonstration project activities. The guidance will be issued in the form of an amendment to the 2010-2012 Direct Certification Grant Application at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/grants.htm>.

If you have additional questions concerning the Request for Applications to Participate in Demonstration Projects to Evaluate Direct Certification with Medicaid, please contact Vivian Lees (Vivian.Lees@fns.usda.gov), or Jacqueline Mitchell (Jacqueline.Mitchell@fns.usda.gov).