

# STATE OF COLORADO

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Colorado Department  
of Public Health  
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## \*\*\*CDPHE-CACFP PROCEDURE MEMO FDCH-#14-05\*\*\*

**DATE:** November 19, 2014

**TO:** Directors of Family Day Care Home (FDCH) Sponsoring Organizations

**FROM:** Tracy Miller, MSPH, RD, Director  
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment  
Child and Adult Care Food Program (CDPHE-CACFP)

**SUBJECT:** Area Eligibility Using Census Data (Revised 11-19-2014)

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This memorandum provides new information released by the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (USDA-FNS) regarding flexibilities allowed when using census data to establish area eligibility determinations in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Summer Seamless Option (SSO).

### Area Eligibility

When using census data to establish a family day care home provider's eligibility for tier I reimbursement, at least 50 percent of the children residing in the area must be members of households that meet the eligibility requirements for free or reduced price school meals.

Occasionally, a potential CACFP day care home or SFSP or SSO site is determined not to be area eligible, but is located immediately adjacent to an eligible area. This proximity suggests that the children residing in the area from which the homes or site would most likely draw participants would have a likelihood of similar census demographics. In recognizing this likelihood and allowing additional flexibility in the use of census data to establish area eligibility, sponsoring organizations can ensure area eligibility determinations accurately identify areas in which poor economic conditions exist. Therefore, CACFP day care homes and SFSP and SSO sites may be determined area eligible using either Census Block Groups (CBGs) or Census Tracts. Census Tracts are geographical units that consist of one or more CBGs.

To determine eligibility of a family day care home based on the analysis of the proposed location, up to three adjacent CBGs may be averaged using a weighted average to determine

eligibility. In each of the CBGs included in the average, at least 40 percent of children must be eligible for free or reduced-priced meals. Census Tracts may not be combined.

Based on analysis of the proposed location, with both the CDPHE-CACFP and the USDA Regional Office approval, up to three adjacent CBGs may be averaged, using a weighted average, to determine eligibility. In all CBGs in the average calculation, including the CBG for the provider's address, at least 40 percent of children must be eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Census Tracts may not be combined.

Using the new flexibilities, CACFP family day care homes and SFSP and SSO sites are considered area eligible if:

1. 50 percent or more of the children in a CBG are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals;
2. 50 percent or more of the children in a Census Tract are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals; or
3. The percentage of children eligible for free or reduced-price meals in up to three adjacent CBGs when averaged is 50 percent or more, provided that at least 40 percent of children in each of the combined CBGs, including the CBG for the provider's address, are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

#### **When to use Census Data:**

The CACFP regulations 7 CFR 226.15 (f) and CDPHE-CACFP Procedure Memorandum FDCH #12-05 requires FDCH Sponsors to use school data first when determining the area eligibility of a FDCH provider for tier I benefits. If the Sponsor cannot obtain local elementary, middle, or high school boundary information to establish a FDCH's eligibility for tier I benefits, the Sponsor should inform the State Agency of the difficulty. If the elementary, middle, or high school boundary information is unavailable, or indicates the provider is not located in a tier I school attendance area, the Sponsor can then use income eligibility data to establish a FDCH provider's eligibility for tier I benefits. The following three circumstances may warrant the use of census data after using school data, but before requiring income eligibility information:

1. The FDCH is located in a rural area, where geographically large school attendance (elementary, middle, and high school) areas occasionally obscure localized pockets of poverty, which can be identified through use of Census data.
2. School data show an area to be close to the 50 percent threshold for area eligibility (between 40 and 49 percent), and the census data reveals a portion of the school's attendance area in which 50 percent or more of children are income eligible.
3. The local elementary, middle, or high school data does not reflect the surrounding area's socioeconomic condition due to the use of busing or other non-neighborhood bases (e.g.

“magnet schools,” “charter schools,” etc.) for defining school attendance areas. This is the only instance in which census data may be used first, instead of school data.

When census data is used to determine a FDCH’s eligibility for tier I benefits, the determination will remain in effect for five years.

The circumstances when a Sponsor will choose to use census data must be clearly outlined in the Operating Procedures section of the Sponsor’s management plan and be updated annually to reflect current USDA and CDPHE-CACFP policies and guidance.

### **Using the New Census Data**

There are two tools available to determine area eligibility using Census Data:

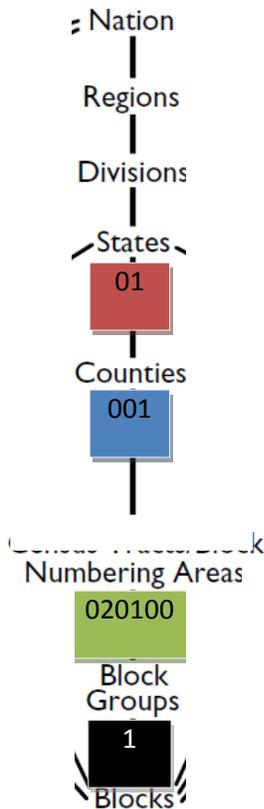
1. The FNS Area Eligibility Mapper: This map includes an address search that will return eligibility information as well as other demographics. This map also includes zoom capabilities and map comparison for identifying areas of need.  
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/areaeligibility>
2. The Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) Maps, which are program specific for CACFP, SFSP and SSO. These tools provide another method of identifying eligibility. There is one map for CACFP and one for SFSP and SSO but either map may be used to determine eligibility for both programs.
  - a. CACFP  
<http://216.55.168.186/FairData/CACFP/map.asp?command=scope&map=0>
  - b. SFSP and SSO  
<http://216.55.182.132/FairData/SummerFood/map.asp?command=scope&map=0>

Detailed instructions for determining area eligibility based on census data, as well as the Colorado data files for the CBGs and Census Tracts are attached to this memorandum.

## Instructions for Determining Eligibility Based on Census Data

### Step 1: Become familiar with the census data format

#### About the 2010 Census Block Group



Every 10 years, the Census updates the area-based measures such as census tracts, blocks and block groups. CACFP, SFSP and SSO use both census tracts and block groups to determine area eligibility.

The ideal size of a CBG is around 1500 homes but vary by region and area characteristics. Contrary to the name, CBGs are not usually shaped like rectangles; rather they can take any shape. The graphic on the left shows the relationship of CBGs to other geographical areas and the components of the GEOID.

Every CBG in the country is numerated, meaning it has a unique number assigned to it. This number is called the GEOID.

#### What information is in the GEOID?

The GEOID contains 12 digits. Each position in the GEOID signifies a different level of geographical area. Every digit is important, even the first zero. This is important to remember when importing these data, because some programs drop the first zero. There is more information below about how to import the data correctly.

Here is an example of a GEOID from Autauga County, Alabama:

010010201001

- **STATE:** The first 2 characters are the State code
- **COUNTY:** The next 3 characters are the county code
- **TRACT:** The next 6 characters are the census tract code
- **BLOCK GROUP:** The last character is the census block group code

## Step 2: Determine eligibility

Below are instructions for allowable options to determine eligibility.

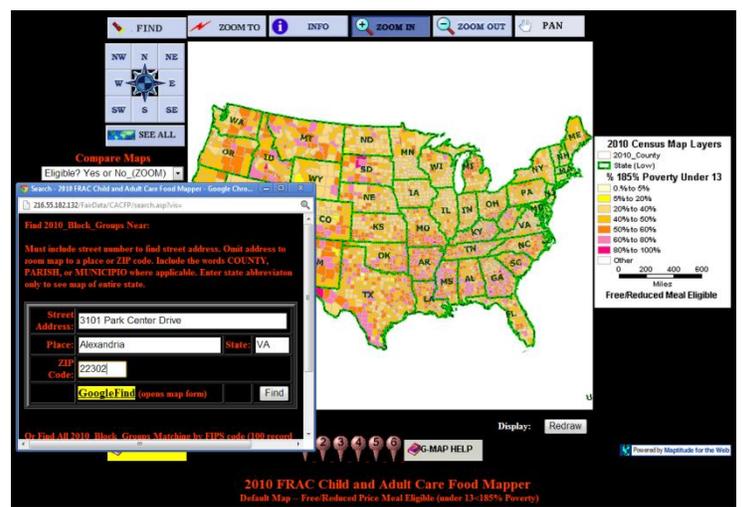
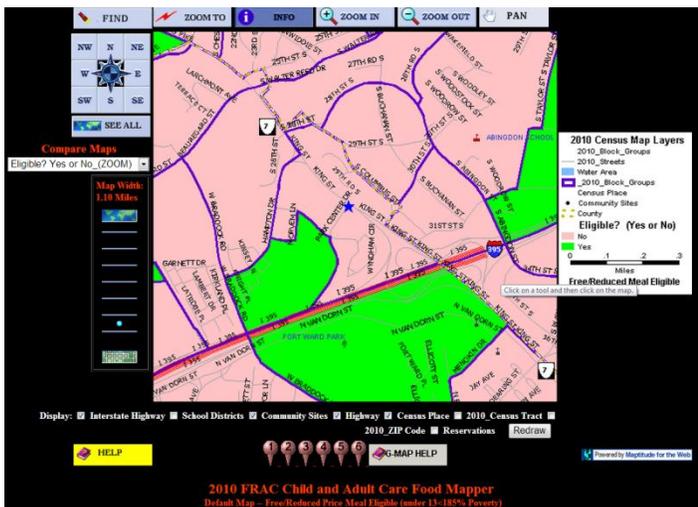
### Option 1: Determine eligibility using the FNS Area Eligibility Mapper

Go to: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/areaeligibility>

1. To find by address, enter the address in the “Find address or place” box in the top right.
2. Zoom in and out of the map using the (+) and (-) signs, respectively.
3. In the resulting map, the red highlighted color indicates eligibility as noted in the map layer key.
4. A larger map is available by clicking “View Larger Map” at the bottom of the screen.

### Option 2: Determine eligibility using the 2014 FRAC Summer Food Mapper

1. Go to either FRAC map:
  - a. CACFP  
<http://216.55.182.132/FairData/CACFP/map.asp?command=scope&map=0>
  - b. SFSP and SSO  
<http://216.55.182.132/FairData/SummerFood/map.asp?command=scope&map=0>
2. To find by address, click on “Find” and enter the address.
3. In resulting map, the highlighted color indicates eligibility as indicated in the map layer key.
4. If an address falls on a border between an eligible and ineligible CBG, click on the blue star and then INFO and scroll in the “2010 Block Group Information” window to “Eligible?” (Yes or No).



### **Option 3: Combining CBGs:**

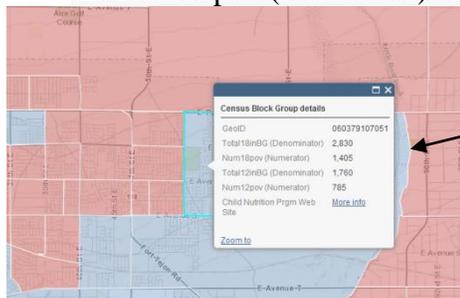
Areas that are ineligible using the methods above may be eligible using a third method. Up to three adjacent CBGs where at least 40 percent or more of the children in each CBG are eligible for free or reduced-price meals may be combined to determine eligibility. If combining the adjacent CBGs results in a weighted average of 50 percent or more free and reduced-price eligible, the CBG can be considered eligible.

To calculate the weighted average, the following are important:

- Only up to three CBGs may be averaged, and one of these must include the CBG in which the day care home or summer site is located.
- All CBGs included in the weighted average have 40 percent or more children eligible for free or reduced-price meals
- The CBGs must be adjacent to, or share a border with the CBG where the day care home or summer site is located.
- Either data for CACFP (0-12 year olds) or SFSP and SSO (0-18 year olds) must be used to determine the weighted average. Either of these numerators and denominators may be used to determine eligibility using the weighted average but the same data set must be used across CBGs.

### Instructions for using the FNS Mapper for Option 3:

1. Follow the instructions above to find the location of the day care home or SFSP or SSO site.
2. Click on the ineligible CBG and determine if at least 40 percent or more of the children in each of the CBGs included in the average are eligible for free and reduced-price meals by dividing either:
  - a. the Num18pov (Numerator) /Total18inBG (Denominator); or
  - b. the Num12pov (Numerator)/ Total12inBG (Denominator)



These fields represent the number of 0-18 year olds and the number of 0-12 year olds in the CBG

3. If at least 40 percent or more of the children in each of the combined CBGs are eligible for free and reduced-price meals, then proceed with the weighted average according to the following instructions:
  - a. Add the numerators for the CBG where the site is located, and up to two additional adjacent CBG's with over 40 percent free or reduced-price eligibility. Add the denominators in the same way.
  - b. Divide the sum of the numerators by the sum of the denominators and multiply by 100%. If the resulting percentage is 50 percent or above the CBG can be considered area eligible.

**Example:**

Palmdale, California				
CBG GEOID	Numerator (Num18Pov)	Denominator (Total18inBG)	Percentage (Numerator/Denominator) x 100%  *must be at least 40%)	
60379107051	1,405	2,830	x 100%	49.65%
60379107131	435	680	x 100%	63.97%
60379107141	855	955	x 100%	89.53%
Total	Sum of Numerators (1405+435+855)	Sum of Denominators (2830+680+955)	Weighted average percent = (Sum of Numerators)/(Sum of Denominators) x 100%	
	2,695	4,465	x 100%	60.36%

When the Sponsor determines a provider's area eligibility using *Option 3: Combining CBGs*, the Sponsors must receive approval from the CDPHE-CACFP and the USDA Regional Office prior to changing the tiering information in the provider's application; or reimbursing the provider at the tier I rate based on CBGs averaging determinations.

Sponsors must submit the following information to the CDPHE-CACFP Program Assistant to begin the approval process.

1. The provider's address.
2. The date the Sponsor made the determination.

3. A copy of the FNS-USDA Area Eligibility Map showing the adjacent CBGs and the CBG for the provider's address used for the determination.
4. A copy of the CBG GEOID chart, which shows the percentage of free and reduced for each block and the weighted average percentage across all CBGs (including the CBG for the provider's address). Refer to the example in the chart above.

The CDPHE-CACFP will verify the Sponsor's determination and if approved, the CDPHE-CACFP will submit the request for approval by the USDA Regional Office. If the provider's eligibility determination is approved by the USDA Regional Office, the effective date of eligibility will remain the date on which the Sponsor made the determination.

Please contact the CDPHE-CACFP office at (303) 692-2330 if you have any questions or need assistance.