This resource provides important dates associated with the free and reduced-price school meal program, verification and direct certification.

April – May

* Receive updated free and reduced school meal application, income eligibility guidelines, letter to households and notification templates
* Any non-School Nutrition/USDA templates must be approved during the renewal application process (including online applications)

May - August

* Complete first required direct certification upload on July 1, or no later than the first day of school
  + Mail notification letters to eligible directly certified families
* Contact McKinney-Vento, Runaway, Foster and/or Head Start liaisons for list of approved students (ensure contact with liaisons is on-going throughout the school year)
* On, or after, July 1 - Distribute letter to households/instructions/free and reduced-price school meal applications
  + Publish a district specific, or share the state-wide, public release
* Begin processing and approving free and reduced-price school applications
* Flag error-prone applications

October

* October 1 - Begin verification; Count approved applications and select sample size
* Send verification notification letters to selected households
* Collaborate with October count coordinator and other district staff to ensure accuracy of October 1 Count submission
* Last operating day in October -count students; continue verification
  + Send follow-up attempts
* Complete second required direct certification upload by October 31
* Complete the point of sale (POS) direct certification validation

November – December

* November 15 - Verification must be completed
* Complete the third required direct certification upload by Mid-December

February – March

* Complete the fourth required direct certification upload by Mid-March
* February 1: Verification Collection Report Due