



Georgia Dept of Early Care and Learning

BRIGHT FROM THE START

December 28, 2022

Greetings Nutrition Program Operators,

On May 17, 2021, USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) issued the Policy Memorandum, **Collection of Race and Ethnicity Data by Visual Observation and Identification in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Food Service Program – Policy Rescission**.

This policy advised that visual observation and identification by CACFP institutions and facilities and SFSP sponsors is no longer an allowable practice for CACFP and SFSP program operators to use during the collection of race or ethnicity data. **The requirement to end the practice of visual identification was effective May 17, 2021.**

FNS Policy Memorandum, **Questions and Answers Related to Collection of Race and Ethnicity Data by Visual Observation and Identification in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Food Service Program – Policy Rescission**, issued on June 13, 2022, advised that State agencies and Program operators should use methods that are based on self-identification and self-reporting; and further advised that a best practice for this would be obtaining the information from parents or guardians or adult participants.

FNS provided a grace period for CACFP and SFSP program operators and state agencies to develop other data collection methods. This grace period began May 17, 2021, and will come to an end on **December 31, 2022**. During this grace period, program operators were not to receive a finding of non-compliance during reviews; however, it was to be noted as an observation and could have become a finding if alternative means were not implemented before the end of the grace period.

By **January 1, 2023**, program operators must have alternative means to capture the data or they may be issued a finding of non-compliance on their next review. Nutrition Services has issued the following guidance to aid Program operators in the development of alternate means to capture this data. The information below is applicable to both CACFP institutions and SFSP sponsors:

- A new DECAL Memorandum, **Collection of Race and Ethnicity Data in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Food Service Program**, provides guidance to CACFP institutions and SFSP sponsors on allowable methods to collect race and ethnicity data, required

- documentation, and best practices.
- **The CACFP/SFSP Racial and Ethnic Data Individual Collection Form for Families** has been developed to assist CACFP and SFSP programs in the gathering of race and ethnicity data from parents and/or guardians.
 - **The Combined Racial/Ethnic Data Collection Form for Institutions and Sponsors** is a new DECAL required form that CACFP institutions/facilities and SFSP sponsors must use to document the collected racial and ethnic information received.
 - **The Income Eligibility Statement's** Part V regarding Ethnic and Racial Identities that may be completed by parents and/or guardians has been revised so as CACFP institutions and facilities may use the Income Eligibility Statement as a form of race and ethnic data collection.

Program operators are invited to attend the January 23, 2023, Memo Monday Webinar on the new DECAL memo, Collection of Race and Ethnicity Data in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Food Service Program.

Institutions may register for the Memo Monday Webinar by clicking [here](#). Nutrition Services encourages all CACFP institutions and facilities to begin the actual process of collecting racial and ethnic participant information as soon as possible.

For questions regarding the new memorandum on race and ethnicity data collection, please contact Robyn Parham, Policy Administrator, at Robyn.Parham@dec.al.ga.gov.

Regards,

Nutrition Services

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