



State of Arizona  
**Department of Education**

**Tom Horne**  
Superintendent of  
Public Instruction

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**MEMORANDUM**

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**TO:** Sponsors of the National School Lunch Program

**FROM:** Mary Szafranski, Deputy Associate Superintendent  
Arizona Department of Education, Health and Nutrition Unit

Lynn Ladd, Director  
Arizona Department of Education, School Health and Nutrition Programs

**DATE:** February 22, 2010

**SUBJECT:** Eligibility of Haitian Refugees for the Child Nutrition Programs

*Original Signed*

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This memo is directed at inquiries regarding the eligibility of children who were evacuated to the United States as a result of the earthquake in Haiti. The National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) do not require lawful presence in the United States prior to receiving a federal benefit, and refugee children are eligible for meal benefits if they enroll in a participating school or institution.

**Determining Eligibility for NSLP/SBP**

The local educational agency (LEA) official responsible for determining free/reduced price meal eligibility should contact the LEA's homeless liaison to determine if these children are considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.). If these children have been determined homeless by the liaison, they are eligible for free meals under the NSLP/SBP and are eligible for free meals for the school year and for the first 30 operating days of the next school year.

Households may also submit applications and, on a case by case basis, school officials may submit an application on behalf of a child (see Arizona Department of Education's (ADE) Child Nutrition Guidance Manuals for additional information on this procedure – available at: <http://www.ade.az.gov/health-safety/cnp/nslp/GuidanceManual/>).

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## **Determining Eligibility for Host Families**

This memo will also provide clarification on the policy of certifying homeless children residing with another household and how it impacts the host family. A child or family may temporarily reside with another household and still be considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. In these cases, the household size and income of the host family is not taken into consideration for determining the free meal eligibility for the child(ren) designated as homeless by the LEA's liaison. Additionally, when a host family applies for free and reduced-price meals for their own children, the host family may include the homeless family as household members if the host family provides financial support to the homeless family, such as shelter, utilities, clothing or food. In such cases, the host family must also include any income received by the homeless family. The LEA or summer institution determines eligibility for the host family in the traditional manner. However, free meal eligibility for the homeless child is based on the documentation provided by the homeless liaison or other source, even when the child is included on the host family's free and reduced-price meal application.

## **Determining Eligibility for the SFSP**

Any SFSP institutions that require eligibility information can receive certification of the child's homeless status from the agency that assisted with the evacuation or is providing shelter. If the child is not residing in an emergency shelter, the institution should have an adult living with the child complete an income eligibility form indicating that the child is homeless. No further information is required to certify that child's eligibility.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this memo or any other questions regarding the status of Haitian Refugees, please contact your assigned School Health and Nutrition Program Specialist at (602) 542-8700.

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