



WISCONSIN SCHOOL NUTRITION **IN A NUTSHELL**

Migrant Status and School Meal Eligibility

A household is classified as “migrant” because they are involved in seasonal agricultural work. Children in migrant households often move multiple times per year and experience interrupted schooling in addition to other educational barriers they may face.

Other Source Categorical Eligibility for Migrant Students

Migrant Education Program (MEP) Enrollment

- Children who are enrolled in the MEP as determined by the State MEP recruiter are other source categorically eligible for free meals in the USDA child nutrition programs.
- School food authorities (SFAs) must attempt to obtain MEP enrollment status through WISE early in the school year, prior to a household completing an application.
- Once MEP enrollment documentation is obtained through WISE, the SFA must notify the household of the child’s eligibility for free meal benefits.

Free and Reduced Meal Applications

- Migrant households may apply for meal benefits by checking the “migrant” box on the application
- The Determining Official (DO) must have supporting documentation that proves the student is certified as migrant status in order to process the application and provide the free meal benefit.
- These applications cannot be processed without documentation showing the household’s migrant status

Confirming Migrant Status: Already Certified Students

Migrant Student Enrollment Alert

Whenever a student is newly certified as migrant or an existing migrant student enrolls in a district, a Migrant Student Enrollment Alert will show in WISEdata. LEAs will then be able to view and acknowledge the notice. DPI requires acknowledgement of the alert upon review of the list of migrant students.

WISEdash

- A list of currently enrolled migrant students is available in WISEdash for districts.
- To confirm migrant status, an LEA should log on to WISEdash for Districts through WISEhome and use the Enrollment by Subgroup dashboard to view the list of migrant students currently enrolled in the district.
 - Staff who need to monitor the list of migrant students but need specific access to do so should contact their [District Security Administrator](#) for assistance
 - Whenever a student is newly certified as migrant or an existing migrant student enrolls in a district, a Migrant Student Enrollment Alert will be sent in WISEdata.
 - Eligibility is statewide and active for 36 months. A student certified while living in one school district might later enroll in another district.
- If questions remain about a student’s eligibility, an LEA can verify a Federal certification of eligibility by contacting Samuel Minch at samuel.minch@dpi.wi.gov.
- Once migrant status is confirmed the free meal benefit can be provided.

Notes for Private School Food Authorities (SFAs)

If you operate a Private School and believe one of your families meet the requirements for Migrant status please reach out to [Wisconsin Migrant Education Staff](#) to verify the student’s eligibility for the Migrant Education Program.

Identifying Potential & Uncertified Migrant Students

It is important for SFAs to understand factors that might make a student or family eligible for migrant status, so they can refer those families to DPI for certification. However, no SFA is expected to know all the nuances of certifying migrant eligibility. **Only a [DPI Migrant Education Program \(MEP\) Recruiter](#) can certify a family for eligibility.**

Potentially eligible students for Migrant Status

A child over the age of 3 or an adult under the age of 22 may be eligible for services if

- a parent, guardian, the student, or the student's spouse are migrant agricultural workers, migrant fishermen, work in agricultural processing plants, or work in fish processing plants; and
- have moved school districts, or a greater distance, in the preceding 36 months to obtain temporary or seasonal employment.

Wisconsin Recruitment

- Wisconsin utilizes a statewide recruitment model.
- The Identification and Recruitment (ID&R) Coordinator directs the work of the State recruiters as referrals are received.
- Recruiters meet with families and connect with employers and other partner agencies around the state to learn of migrant farmworker families.
 - They are trained to determine if students are eligible and complete Certificates of Eligibility (COEs).

How Districts Can Help

Learn More About the Family

- The best way for districts to learn whether a family might be eligible is through screening questions provided at enrollment.
- All SFAs are required to have a process for identifying migratory students and [Screening Questions](#) help gather some minimal information to indicate potential eligibility.

Make a Referral

- Anyone can use the MEP referral form to refer students to the MEP Identification and Recruitment Team.
- Referrals go directly to a state recruiter or you can submit a referral to the [MEP Referral System](#) and the DPI MEP team will contact the family to conduct an interview.

More Options:

- Other ways you might learn information about a family's migrant work is through community partnerships, knowledge of local employers, or staff communications with the family.

Additional Resources

- Wisconsin [Migrant Program Coordinators](#)
- [Example Questions for Enrollment to Determine Potentially Eligible Students](#)
- [Eligibility Manual for School Meals](#)