# Validating Undocumented Categorical Eligibility Information[1]

When the CE receives a household application that indicates a student is participating in a categorical assistance program or in an other source categorical eligible program, the determining or reviewing official must follow up with the appropriate agency or entity to validate the student's participation in the program before approving the application. Although it is not a new requirement, the USDA's current Eligibility Manual makes a point of emphasizing it and provides the following guidance.

***Validation of Certification for Categorical Assistance Programs — SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR when participation is not directly certified***

For SNAP or TANF participation, the CE may review the DC List in TX-UNPS or contact the appropriate agency's local or regional office to obtain information about the household's participation. For FDPIR, the CE will need to contact the governing tribal organization to confirm program participation.

Once the CE has validated that the household is a participant in one of the categorical assistance programs, the eligibility is now directly certified, and the direct certification replaces the application. A note is recorded, signed, and dated on the application about the direct certification through validation. The CE retains the application but disregards information on the application. This application will not be included in the pool of applications subject to verification.
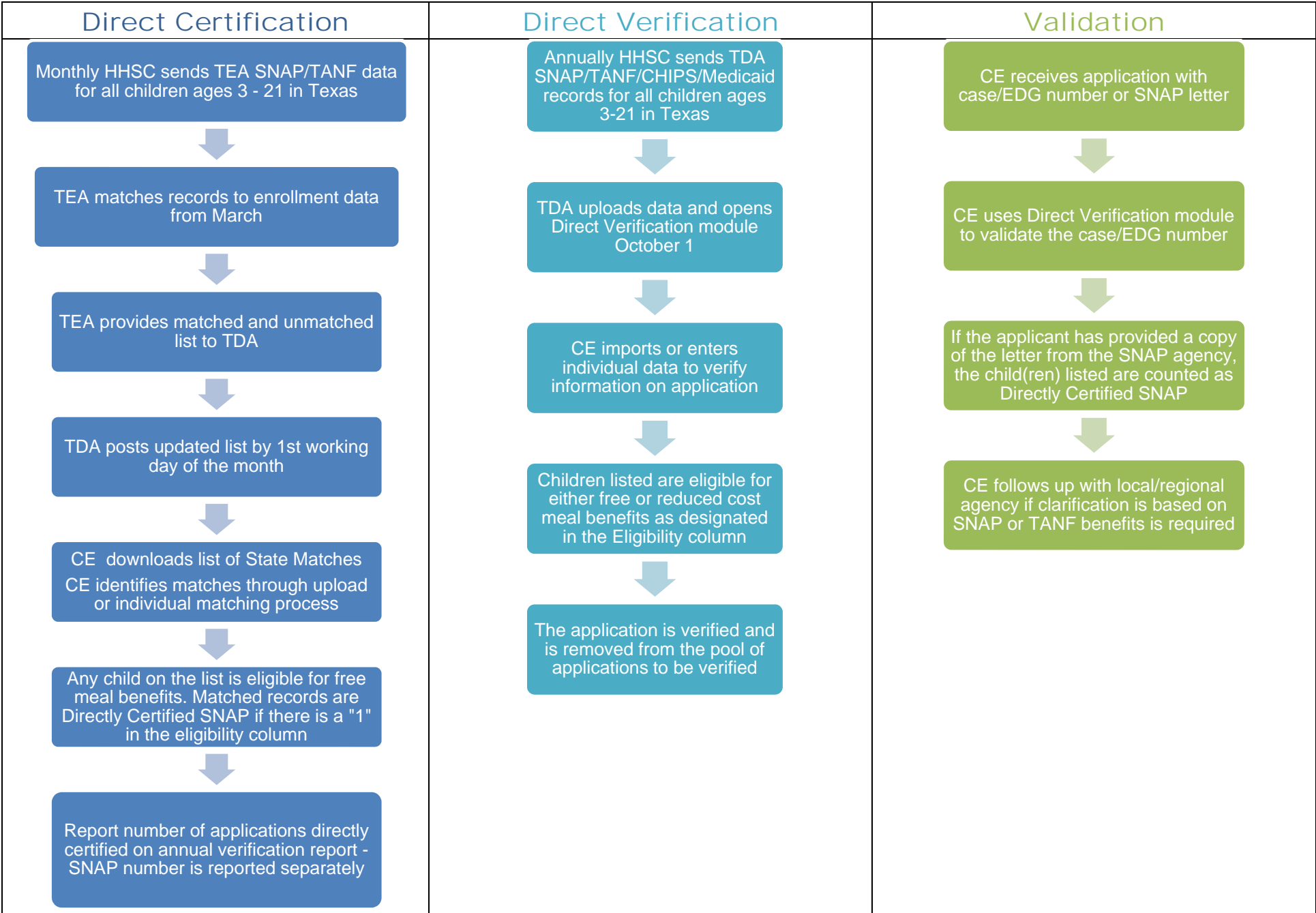
***Validation of Certification for Other Source Categorical Eligible Program Participation — homeless, including runaways and individuals displaced by declared disasters; migrant; designated state or federally funded pre-kindergarten programs, including Early Head Start, Even Start, and Head Start (but excluding foster)***

The CE should reach out to the appropriate program official to validate participation in another source categorical eligible program — with one exception, foster children do not require validation.

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[1] Texas Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Division, ESC Biweekly for September 15, 2014.

Once the CE has validated that the student is a participant in the indicated program, the eligibility is now directly certified, that is, determined to be eligible without application. Direct certification replaces information recorded on the application about the student. A note is recorded, signed, and dated on the application about the student's eligibility determination without application.

- If there are other students on the application who are not participants in other source categorical eligible programs, the application is active for those students only.
- If the only student(s) listed on the application is directly certified without application, the CE retains the application but disregards information on the application. This application is not included in the pool of applications subject to verification.

| Direct Certification | Direct Verification | Validation |
|---|---|---|
| Monthly HHSC sends TEA SNAP/TANF data for all children ages 3 - 21 in Texas | Annually HHSC sends TDA SNAP/TANF/CHIPS/Medicaid records for all children ages 3-21 in Texas | CE receives application with case/EDG number or SNAP letter |
| TEA matches records to enrollment data from March | TDA uploads data and opens Direct Verification module October 1 | CE uses Direct Verification module to validate the case/EDG number |
| TEA provides matched and unmatched list to TDA | CE imports or enters individual data to verify information on application | If the applicant has provided a copy of the letter from the SNAP agency, the child(ren) listed are counted as Directly Certified SNAP |
| TDA posts updated list by 1st working day of the month | Children listed are eligible for either free or reduced cost meal benefits as designated in the Eligibility column | CE follows up with local/regional agency if clarification is based on SNAP or TANF benefits is required |
| CE downloads list of State Matches. CE identifies matches through upload or individual matching process | The application is verified and is removed from the pool of applications to be verified | |
| Any child on the list is eligible for free meal benefits. Matched records are Directly Certified SNAP if there is a "1" in the eligibility column | | |
| Report number of applications directly certified on annual verification report - SNAP number is reported separately | | |

# Validation Process for Categorical Eligibility Information Using the Direct Verification Database

Before contacting the regional or local office to validate a case/EDG number, the CE may use the Direct Verification module. The Direct Verification process provides access to the complete HHSC database, not just the records that are matched to the CE or the pool of unmatched records. Historically, this list has opened to the CEs to use October 1st for verification purposes only. We have requested that this module open early this year due to the change in regulations.

1. **The CE will log-in to TX-UNPS and select Direct Certification/Direct Verification in the SNP Applications list.**

| Item | Description |
|------|-------------|
| Contracting Entity Manager | SNP Contracting Entity's Profile, Site and Hold Information |
| Application Packet | Applications Forms (Contracting Entity and Site) |
| Meal Pattern Compliance Summary | Number of Menu Pattern Certifications by Contracting Entity Summary |
| Verification Report | Mandatory Annual Verification Report |
| Verification Summary | Mandatory Annual Verification Report (FNS-742) Summary |
| Food Safety Inspections | Number of Food Safety Inspections by Site |
| Food Safety Inspections Summary | Number of Food Safety Inspections by Site Summary |
| Annual Audits | Annual Audits |
| Annual Audit Status Summary | Annual Single Audit Status Summary |
| Financial Report | School Food Annual Revenues and Expenditures Report |
| Financial Report Summary | School Food Annual Revenues and Expenditures Report Summary |
| FFVP Grants | Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Grant Information for a specific CE |
| FFVP Grant Overview | Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Grant Information by Site Overview |
| FFVP Grant Allocations | Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Grant Allocations by CE/Site |
| FFVP Summary | Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Invitations and Approvals |
| Summer Nutrition Program Costs | Total Costs Associated with Operating a Summer Nutrition Program |
| Capital Expenditure Request | Request for funds to purchase capital items > $5,000 |
| October Enrollment | October Enrollment and Eligibility by Site |
| Site Enrollment | Site Enrollment and Eligibility |
| Community Eligibility Provision | Enrollment and Eligibility for Community Eligibility Provision |
| Texas Summer Mandate | Summer Nutrition Programs Intent Declaration |
| Texas Summer Mandate Summary | Summer Nutrition Programs Intent Summary |
| Direct Certification / Direct Verification | Direct Certification / Direct Verification screens |
| Download Forms | Forms Available for Downloading |

**2. Click on Direct Certification/Direct Verification at the bottom of the page.**
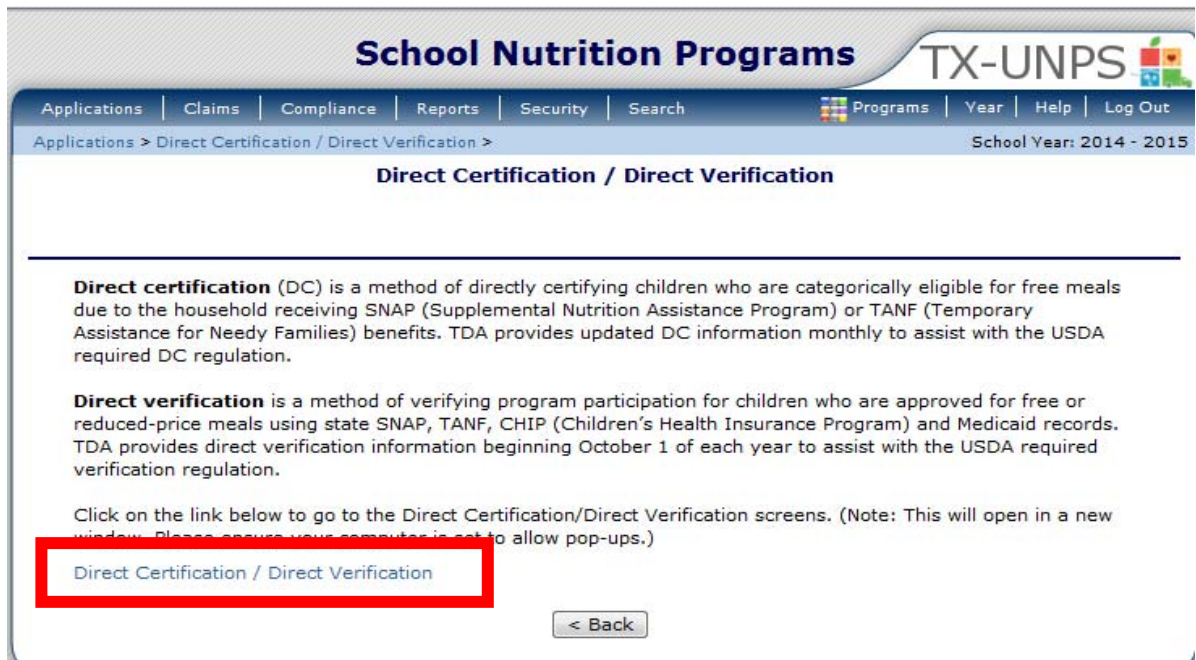


Note: This page still has the message that *Direct verification* opens October 1. We don't have access to this page; it is in TX-UNPS. The actual Direct Certification/Direct Verification is a TDA function that is just accessed using TX-UNPS security rights.

**3. Click on Direct Verification link.**
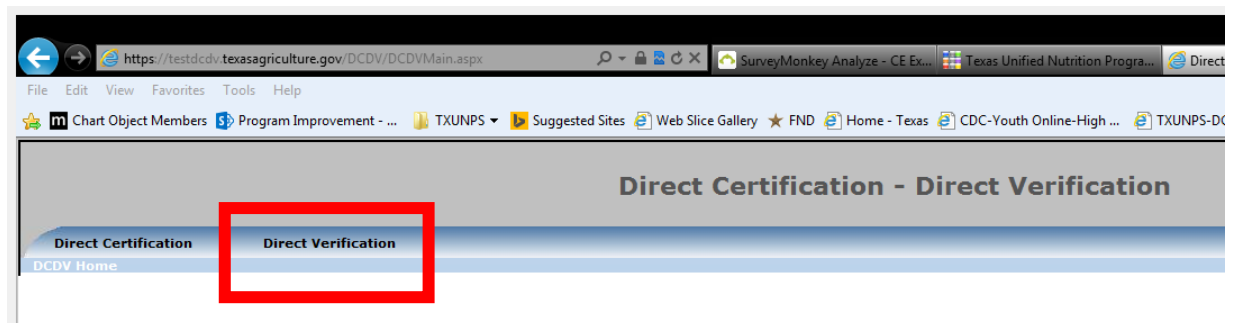
## Search by Individual Case/EDG Number

4. **Select Search Page for Direct Verification**



5. **Select Search Criteria > Case/EDG Number**
   **Select Search by Case/EDG Number > All**
   **Enter the Case/EDG Number in the text box**
   **Select > Search**



The search results will display all of the students associated with that case/EDG number.

6. **Click on the View link to see the individual student's information and select MATCH if this student is enrolled in your district. Then select RETURN to return to the list.**

   **Select RETURN if the student is not enrolled in your district**.



If the CE has a letter that states this is a SNAP EDG number, then the child(ren) are Directly Certified SNAP. If there is no confirmation about SNAP, the child(ren) are still Directly Certified.

## Validation by District Upload

The CE can validate case/EDG numbers through a district upload similar to the process for the Direct Certification CE Upload.

Prepare a CSV file with the following columns. (See page 22 in the DCDV Supplemental Manual.)