



COMMUNITY NUTRITION *conference*

A Guide to the Visit Prior to Approval (VPA)

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TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER



Our Goal for This Session

Provide new applicants helpful information about the VPA process.

- Who is responsible for conducting a VPA?
- Why is a VPA necessary?
- What can you expect during a VPA?
- Where can an applicant seek assistance before, during and after the visit?

VPA Responsibility

The Quality Assurance Quality Control (QAQC) Section of the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) Food & Nutrition Division is responsible for conducting a pre-approval visit for each program applicant as required by the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

Purpose of a VPA

QAQC Specialist will conduct a Visit Prior to Approval (VPA) to assess the applicant sponsor's potential for successful program operation and to verify information provided in the application.

TDA is required
to conduct
pre-approval visits

SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM (SFSP)

7 CFR 225.7 (d)(1)

The State agency shall conduct pre-approval visits of sponsors and sites...to assess the applicant sponsor's or site's potential for successful Program operations and to verify information provided in the application.

The purpose of the visit is to:

- **Assess** the potential sponsor's potential for successful program operations
- **Verify** the information submitted in the application
- Provide **Technical Assistance**

Assessment

The potential sponsor's potential for successful program operations .

How do we do this?

- Review Application.
- Review Financial Records.
- Review Site Applications.
- Review Food Production Facility Information.

Review Application.

What do we review?

- Management Plan
- Budget
- Site Information
- Food Production Facility Information

Review Financial Information

What do we review?

- Budget
- Bank Statements
- Financial Statements

Review Site Applications

What do we review?

- Days and times of operation.
- Proposed Average Daily Population.
- Licenses or Inspection Reports, if required.

Assess Food Production Facilities.

What do we review?

- Agreements
- Leases
- Inspection Reports

Verification

Information submitted in the application and supporting documents

How do we do this?

- Visit applicant, sites, food production facilities.
- Interviews.
- Review Records While On Site.

Provide Technical Assistance

How do we do this?

- Before the VPA, representatives from the applicant's local ESC are invited to attend.
- During the VPA, the QAQC Specialist will provide Technical Assistance.
- After the VPA, the QAQC Specialist may refer applicant to the ESC for additional guidance.

NOTE: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IS NOT ALL INCLUSIVE

What resources are available to applicants?

- USDA FNS Website (www.fns.usda.gov)
- TDA Handbooks (www.squaremeals.org)
- Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)
- IRS
- Local Health Authority

CAUSE FOR CONCERN

NOTE:

Inconsistencies between TDA's observations and the information submitted with the application and/or during the visit could result in the Denial of the Application.

What happens after the visit?

Assess



Evaluate



Determine



APPROVAL

WITHDRAWAL

DENIAL



Approval

Examples of what TDA might see:

- Records are in order.
- Organization appears to be in compliance.
- Few concerns, if any, are identified.
- QAQC may provide limited technical assistance to address something that can be corrected on site.
- May be referred to the ESC for assistance with issues that can be easily corrected.

Withdrawal

Examples of what TDA might see:

- Recordkeeping or operating concerns.
- TDA identified processes that do not comply with program requirements.
- Applicant may need additional time to make modifications to program.
- Applicant needs technical assistance to make modifications.
- Corrections or changes require additional time that would exceed the 30 day decision timeframe.

Note: Decision to withdraw can only be made by applicant

Denial

Examples of what TDA might see:

- Significant deficiencies in recordkeeping or operation are noted,
- Observations identify processes that do not comply with program requirements,
- Applicant may need additional time to make modifications to program
- Applicant needs technical assistance to make modifications,
- Corrections or changes require additional time that would exceed the 30 day decision timeframe.

Note: Applicant has appeal rights, but is also eligible to reapply after areas of concern are corrected.

How can you prepare to become a **SUCCESSFUL CE?**

- Know the SFSP requirements.
- Know your responsibilities as a Contracting Entity (CE)
- Seek continuous assistance from your local ESC



QUESTIONS?

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