

**Alabama State Department of Education
Child Nutrition Programs
Child and Adult Care Food Program
Food Distribution Program
School Meal Program
Summer Food Service Program**

Alabama Business Entity Record Requirement for Private Organizations

The Child Nutrition section of the Alabama State Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that any organization that applies to or currently operates a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) or Food Distribution (FD) program is a legitimate business entity and not an individual. A legitimate business name ensures transparency and accountability by allowing federal funds to be traced.

Business Entity Record (BER)

1. The legal name of a business is on the Business Entity Record (BER) issued by the Alabama Secretary of State and must be used consistently on all documents in the application package.
2. The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) requires all private organizations to submit a current Business Entity Record (BER) to verify:
 - a. Legal name
 - b. Status (ex., exists, dissolved, previous name)
 - c. Type of entity (ex., limited liability companies, for-profit corporations, and nonprofit corporations)
 - d. Mailing address
 - e. Place and date of formation
 - f. Nature of the business
3. The BER is required to enter into the contractual permanent agreement with the Alabama State Department of Education Child Nutrition section to operate a USDA program.
4. Applications from new and renewing sponsors that do not have a BER or do not consistently use the legal name of the business in all documents in the application packet cannot be approved.

Trade Names or “Doing Business As” (DBA)s

1. A trade name or DBA is used by a business to operate under a different name from its registered name.
2. A trade name or DBA is not a separate legal entity.
3. If any part of the business involved in operating a USDA CNP or FD program operates under a different name, the sponsor must provide evidence that the trade name or DBA is registered with the Alabama Secretary of State.

Approval date: 4-20-2026

APPENDIX: Links to Resources

Alabama Secretary of State

[Home](#) | [Alabama Secretary of State](#)