COVID-19 Response:
Child Nutrition Programs

Child Nutrition Programs
Policy and Program Development Division
USDA is working with all of our partners to ensure a thorough and coordinated response to this pandemic.
FNS COVID-19 Website

• Find information about Agency-wide efforts to respond to COVID-19
• Includes Child Nutrition Program waivers and guidance materials

Nationwide Waivers
Families First Coronavirus Response Act

- Title II, COVID-19 Child Nutrition Response Act
- Allows Nationwide Waivers to support access to the Child Nutrition Programs
- Waivers apply automatically to all States that elect to use them
Nationwide Waiver: Non-congregate Meals

- Issued March 20, 2020
- Waives the requirement to serve meals in congregate settings
- Effective through June 30, or upon expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier
• Meals do not have to be consumed on-site or in a group setting
• Creative meal service methods are welcome, including meal delivery and grab-and-go
• Includes National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Summer Food Service Program, and Child and Adult Care Food Program
Nationwide Waiver: Meal Service Times

- Issued March 20, 2020
- Allows meals to be served outside traditional times to maximize flexibility
- Effective through June 30, or upon expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier
What does this mean for schools?

- Allows State agencies to adjust the meal service time requirements
- States may collaborate with local operators to determine what adjustments would be the most helpful to staff and children
Nationwide Waiver: Afterschool Activity

• Issued March 20, 2020
• Waives the requirement to provide an enrichment activity with the afterschool meal or snack service
• Effective through June 30, or upon expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier
What does this mean for schools?

• Allows flexibility to serve afterschool meals and snacks without an education or enrichment activity
• Includes afterschool snacks served through the National School Lunch Program, and afterschool meals and snacks served through the At-Risk Afterschool component of Child and Adult Care Food Program
Nationwide Waiver: Meal Pattern

• Issued March 25, 2020
• Allows State agencies to waive meal pattern requirements on a case-by-case basis
• Effective through April 30, 2020, or upon expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier
Local program operators must contact the State agency for approval to use this waiver.

State agencies will consider requests that are:
- Targeted and justified, and
- Based upon disruptions to the availability of food products resulting from COVID-19.

FNS encourages Program operators to meet the nutrition standards to the greatest extent possible.

What does this mean for schools?
Nationwide Waiver: Parent Pick-up

- Issued March 25, 2020
- Allows parents and guardians to pick up meals and bring them home to their children
- Effective through June 30, 2020, or upon expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier
What does this mean for schools?

• When a non-congregate waiver is also in place, program operators may distribute take-home meals to a child’s parent or guardian
• State agencies must develop a plan to ensure:
  • Meals only go to parents or guardians of eligible children, and
  • Duplicate meals are not distributed for any child
Nationwide Waiver: On-site Monitoring

• Issued March 27, 2020
• Waives the requirement for the State agency to conduct monitoring on site
• Effective through June 30, 2020, or upon expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier
What does this mean for schools?

- The requirement for on-site monitoring is suspended to support social distancing.
- FNS encourages, to the maximum extent practicable, State agencies and schools continue monitoring activities of program operations offsite (e.g., through a desk audit).
Nationwide Waiver: 60-day Reporting

• Issued April 1, 2020
• Waives the 60-day claims requirements for States, school food authorities, and sponsors
• Applies to claims covering operations in January and February 2020
• Extends deadlines for 30 calendar days
School food authorities have an additional 30 days to submit claims for January and February 2020. Program operators should continue to complete their 60-day reporting requirements in a timely fashion to the extent practicable. Also applies to the Summer Food Service Program and Child and Adult Care Food Program.
Statewide Area Eligibility Waivers

• Issued to individual States
• Allows non-area eligible Summer Food Service and/or Seamless Summer Option sponsors to operate open sites in areas approved by the State agency
• Effective through June 30, 2020, or upon expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier
What does this mean for schools?

• If approved by the State, sponsors may operate open sites that are not located in area eligible areas
• New meal sites must target benefits to children in need
• States should work with local Program operators in developing their plans
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Guidance

• Issued April 9, 2020 (SP 12-2020)
• Answers questions regarding Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program operations during unanticipated school closures due to COVID-19
• Effective as of January 27, 2020 through June 30, 2020, or until expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier
More Questions and Answers

• SP 11-2020, CACFP 06-2020, SFSP 05-2020: Questions and Answers related to the Child Nutrition Program Monitoring and Reporting Nationwide Waivers (April 9, 2020)
• SP 13-2020: Child Nutrition Program Nationwide Waivers: Questions and Answers (April 11, 2020)
• SP 14- 2020: Child Nutrition Program Meal Service during Novel Coronavirus Outbreaks: Questions and Answers #3 (April 11, 2020)
Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT)

- Authorized by Congress
- Provides assistance to families of children impacted by school closures
- Children who would normally receive free or reduced price school meals are eligible under this provision
- As of April 16, 2 States have been approved for P-EBT
Questions?