

Office of School & Community Nutrition**Guidance for Developing an Emergency Food Service Plan**

Food Service Directors/Superintendents should sit down and discuss plans in the event of emergency closures or staff shortages. The suggestions below should help get the conversation started.

1. Every school administrator and each of your kitchen managers should have the contact information of your IDOE school nutrition field specialist. Send them an email with this information. Make sure that each kitchen has the field staff contact information by their kitchen phone or desk. The name and contact information of your field specialist can be found in the CNPweb, if needed.
2. Cross train kitchen staff throughout multi-school corporations to ensure that staff could be moved from one kitchen to another in the event it is necessary. Recruit volunteers for each school that could work under the direction of the cross trained kitchen staff.
3. Purchase shelf stable meals*, at least enough to distribute to all students for a couple of days. Don't use them unless necessary. Make sure several people know where they are located and how they are to be used. **TAPE instructions for distribution right on the shelves where the meals are stored. Include your field staff contact information for questions.**
4. Contact neighboring school corporations to see what their plans are; see if they have staff that could assist with meal preparation; help with meal distribution.
5. Develop a team of cafeteria volunteers (from other school staff or even parents/community organizations) that are trained in advance on school nutrition civil rights and meal documentation requirements.
6. Arrange with local food vendors/restaurants a preplanned reimbursable meal to be prepared in the event of emergency due to kitchen staff illness.
7. Contact local food pantries, community groups, church organizations to see if they have food or volunteers to assist in the event of a staff shortage.
8. Contact the local health department to find out what practices might need to be followed in the event a kitchen worker has tested positive during or after their shift.
9. Have your food service director make a list of food vendors/companies to purchase food from.

*Several companies make and sell shelf stable meals that meet/all or part of the meal pattern requirements. In some cases, all sponsors need to do is add an 8 ounce carton of milk. The State of Indiana does not endorse any companies but are aware they may have shelf-stable products available that would assist SFAs in meeting meal pattern requirements. Food service directors should review the crediting information of any products that are being considered. Meals may need to be supplemented with additional foods in order to meet the meal pattern. Keep in mind, fresh fruit and vegetables provide valuable nutrients for healthy nutrition and should be a part of planned meals.