

**SFSP Q&A**

**Fall 2020**

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**Fall 2020**



*Working Together for Student Success*

# Fall 2020

## **How do we operate SFSP now through December 31, 2020?**

Sponsors may participate in SFSP meal service through December 31, 2020\* only if:

Step 1: SFSP sites for Program Year 2020 and 2021 are listed and in pending approval status in CNPweb

Step 2: Review the online training now posted on the SFSP website or attend a refresher webex!

While the waivers have been extended beyond the start of the traditional school year, please continue to watch the IDOE website, newsletters and email reminders from field staff for updated guidance from USDA. \*Be aware funding is not currently guaranteed.

# Waivers

Q: When USDA issues a nationwide waiver, are all sponsors immediately able to use the waiver?

No. There are procedures for states to follow before the waiver is actually available to be used in each state. Until states receive written confirmation of approval to use the waiver by their regional USDA office, nothing is official. That is why we ask that sponsors always wait for and read the notifications from our office. The procedures for following the waivers may vary by state.

Q: How do we apply to use the waivers?

Depending upon the waiver requirements, SFAs may be able to opt in or opt out. Please make sure that you are reading and responding to all correspondence from our office.

# Waivers

## **Meal Pattern Exceptions for SFSP - extended through December 31, 2020**

With **prior** approval from your assigned IDOE SFSP Field Specialist, sponsors who are unable to meet meal pattern requirements due to a disruption in food supply can be reimbursed for meals served.

Q: Does this mean menus don't have to meet the meal pattern every day?

**All meals served must meet the meal pattern!** This waiver can **ONLY** be used with **prior** approval and discussion with your field specialist and on an individual basis.

Q: We forgot to order enough of a meal component, can we get the meal pattern exception waiver?

No, the waiver will only be approved on a pre-approved, case by case basis.

# Waivers

## **Meal Pattern Exceptions- Waiver extended to December 31, 2020**

Q: With the nationwide Meal Pattern waiver, can we serve whatever we want?

No, the SFSP meal pattern must always be followed for every meal claimed for reimbursement. Should there be a nationwide or regional shortage of a specific component, discuss and seek approval from your field specialist. Waivers for meal pattern exceptions will be approved on a case by case basis and only when significant shortages are identified.

Q: If bread is not available, can we serve meals without a grain?

No. There are many other foods available in each component. For example, if sliced bread is not available, you could serve a dinner roll, rice, tortillas, crackers, etc.

# Waivers

## Non-Congregate Meal Service approved through December 31, 2020

**Good nutrition is extremely important at this time.** With this in mind, schools wanting to implement this waiver at any time during the school year must offer the same meals to all students, whether attending physically in the school building or participating virtually.

SFAs may choose to only offer one meal type in a noncongregate manner. For example, if SFAs want to only provide noncongregate lunches, they may choose to do so and require all breakfasts to be eaten on site. In this example:

- Only students eating on site would have access to both Breakfast and Lunch

- On-site students and virtual students would both have access to lunch, although lunch for the virtual students could be distributed at a different time.

# Waivers

## **Non-Congregate Meal Service approved through December 31, 2020**

Meals can be taken off-site to be consumed as long as that meal service type is offered to both in-person and virtual students.

Allows sponsors to distribute up to 5 meals at one time.

Q: Does this mean all meals can be taken off-site?

The SFA determines which meal types (breakfast and/or lunch) will be offered for non-congregate consumption. Those meals can be taken off-site to be eaten at home.

Q: Does this mean we cannot serve meals to an enrolled group of children?

No, some meals could be served to enrolled children in congregate meal service setting and others could take the meals home.

# Waivers

## Non-Congregate Meal Service- Approved through December 31, 2020.

Q: How many meals can be distributed? Can we give 5 breakfast meals and 5 lunch meals at one time?

Sponsors should carefully consider how many meals to distribute at one time. Up to 5 meals **of each meal type** can be distributed on one meal service day. Your meal service abilities, such as staffing and food safety, should dictate how many meals to hand out in one day.

Q: Can we package more than one serving of an item in one container?

Yes, you can bulk package menu items into larger serving containers. For example, providing two full cups of fruit in one container to be divided into ½ cup portions. Please provide a menu listing the intended serving sizes of each items.

# Waivers

## **Non-Congregate Meal Service- Approved through December 31, 2020**

Q: Can seven meals be served in a week as long as we do not exceed more than five meals in one day?

Yes, a sponsor can provide meals for all seven days of the week. Distribution will have to take place at least twice in the week so that the sponsor is not distributing more than five meals on one distribution day. Meals can be distributed in any combination, but cannot exceed 5 meals in one day.

Q. Could we distribute a hot meal along with shelf stable meals?

Yes, some SFSP sites are serving a hot meal along with a shelf stable meal and distributing meals more often than once a week instead of doing all 5 meals at once.

# Waivers

## **First Week Monitoring Waiver - Extended to December 31, 2020**

SFSP sponsors may waive the first week monitoring requirement for all sites.

### Q: Does this mean sponsors do not have to monitor at all?

Sponsors should conduct regular desk reviews of all paperwork from all sites, as well as review written site operational practices. When safe to do so, on-site monitoring visits should be conducted.

### Q: Do sponsors have to conduct any monitoring visits?

Yes, the four week site review must be conducted. The racial/ethnic data form can be completed at the same time. Monitoring forms can be found here:

<https://www.doe.in.gov/nutrition/sponsor-monitoring>

# Waivers

## First Week Monitoring Waiver - Extended to December 31, 2020

Q: How Should we complete the Racial/Ethnic Data form in a non-congregate feeding setting?

Just as you do during a congregate setting, sponsors should designate one person to collect the racial/ethnic data on one day of distribution. This data should be compared with your area population data to ensure you are getting the word out about meals to all racial/ethnic groups. Do the best you can!

Q: Can the four week monitoring review be conducted as a desk review rather than on-site?

Yes, although on-site visits are preferred whenever safe and feasible. Please know that Sponsors are responsible for the activity of the site. Sites not operating as required could result in disallowed meals.

# Waivers

## Parent/Guardian Meal Pick-up -Extended to December 31, 2020

Meals can be served to parents/guardians for pick-up without a child present. Sponsors must maintain program integrity ensuring meals are distributed only to adults with children in the household. Sponsors must have written procedures to follow regarding meal distribution. Your field specialist should review and approve your procedures.

Q: Does this mean adults can receive a meal?

No, sponsors must ensure that the adult picking up meals does in fact have a child. Meals are reimbursable only for children 18 and younger. Meals distributed to adults without a known child in the household should not be claimed for reimbursement.

# Waivers

## Parent/Guardian Meal Pick-up- August 31, 2020

Q: If children are not present, does it mean we must verify names of students? Are we required to give meals to adults without children present?

Each sponsor must decide how to enforce this waiver or opt not to use it at all. Sponsors should have written procedures for meal distribution if children are not present. Each sponsor is responsible for maintaining program integrity at their own sites.

# Waivers

## **Closed Enrolled Eligibility Extended December 31, 2020**

Sites that are not area eligible may be approved to operate as a closed enrolled site during COVID-19. Sponsors must show that they are targeting free and reduced price households.

Q: Can we serve anyone who attends the site or must households pre-register to receive meals?

Closed enrolled means that there is a define set of children eligible to receive meals. Sites cannot be Open to the community at large if designated as Closed enrolled. Remember that only those 18 and younger are eligible to receive SFSP meals.

# Waivers

## **Offer versus Serve- December 31, 2020**

With approval from the IDOE, sponsors may utilize OVS at non-congregate meal service sites. **A written plan will be required to be submitted before approval will be given.**

Q: Does this mean we can allow participants to decline only milk?

Depending on the method of distribution, participants should have the ability to decline any meal component. In very rare instances, IDOE may approve on a case by case basis a grab and go meal service where only one component can be declined.

Q: If a participant does not want the milk, can it be donated?

If sponsors have the ability to maintain proper holding temperature, participants can place milk in a donation bin. Sponsors cannot ask the family if they want to decline the milk at the point of service.

# Waivers

## **Meal Serving Times Waiver - Extended to December 31, 2020**

Sites can operate beyond the maximum meal serving time limitations of one hour for breakfast or snack and two hours for lunch or supper. Extended meal serving times must be approved by IDOE.

Q: Does this mean meals can be served for as long as we want?

No, only with prior approval can the meal serving time can be extended beyond 2 hours. Sites will need to show how they will ensure program integrity and prevent households from receiving more than their fair share of meals.

**Additional questions regarding the use of the  
USDA waivers for meal service.**

***Please utilize the chat feature to submit additional questions.***

# Site Operations

Q: Can bus drivers be employed to serve meals?

Yes, the salaries of bus drivers can be paid for with SFSP funds if the drivers are transporting meals to sites or homes. Bus drivers must be trained in all SFSP regulations and civil rights.

Q: Are second meals allowed to be served in non-congregate setting?

No, when utilizing grab and go meal service, second meals are not allowed. Second meals cannot be claimed for reimbursement within congregate settings at schools during COVID.

Q: We want to continue to serve our at-risk meals. Can we be approved to serve breakfast, lunch and a snack or supper?

SFSP regulations allow for only two meal types to be claimed on SFSP. During COVID 19, At Risk Suppers can continue to be served and claimed through CACFP.

# Site Operations

Q: Do we still complete a count sheet as we serve meals ?

Yes, the daily meal count form must be completed at the point of service. Each site must have a meal count form for each meal type being served and staff must mark off the meal count individually for the number of meals distributed.

Q: Do we need to wear gloves and masks when serving meals?

IDOE recommends following state and local health department guidelines for serving meals when determining what type of protective gear to wear. Please contact your local health department to ensure you are meeting local regulations.

# Site Operations

## Q: Why does the neighboring SFSP sponsor operate differently?

- Each sponsor can choose how to operate their program within the regulations.
- Sponsors can choose to use waivers as they are written or opt out of using a waiver all together.
- As long as meals are served within USDA guidelines, meal service may vary from sponsor to sponsor.
- Some School Food Authorities are operating using the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) for meal service. SSO has different requirements from SFSP.
- For operational questions always contact your field specialist for further guidance.

# Site Operations

Q: Are Sponsors required to keep a separate meal count form for each mobile route?

Yes, meals must be counted at the point of service. Each location where meals are handed out must count meals when they are distributed. Because CNPweb is set up for site-based claiming, sponsors must maintain separate meal count forms for each stop along the mobile route.

Q: Are Sponsors required to advertise Open sites?

Yes, all open sites must be advertised to the general public. Keep in mind that all open site meal service information is pulled from CNPweb and posted to public information websites. Open sites must have visible from the street signage indicating which door to enter for meals.

# Civil Rights

Q: Do we have to offer menu substitutions for Special Dietary Needs?

Yes, sponsors must provide menu substitutions when needed. USDA considers a food allergy to be a disability, so this can become a civil rights issue or complaint.

Sponsors can request that households needing a substitution contact them to pre-order so that the food is ready when the household arrives. In the event that a household does not notify the sponsor before arriving at a site, the sponsor should work to their best ability to provide a meal for that child that day. Sponsors are allowed a reasonable amount of time to provide a meal substitution. If you cannot provide an accommodation on the spot, you could deliver a meal package to the house or ask the household to return the following day.

**Sponsors cannot tell a household that menu substitutions are not available.**

# Civil Rights

Q: Does the civil rights statement need to be included on social media posts?

Yes, the non-discrimination statement must be included on all program materials. This includes flyers and social media images and posts.

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# CNPweb Site Info Pages

Helpful hints for completing the site information page in CNPweb.

**Operating Dates**

(56) Begin Date: 3/16/2020 **first day of meal service** (57) End Date: 7/30/2020 **last day of meal service**

Number of Operating Days

(58) Oct: 0 (59) Nov: 0 (60) Dec: 0 (61) Jan: 0 (62) Feb: 0 (63) Mar: 3  
(64) Apr: 4 (65) May: 4 **actual number of days of operation** (66) Jun: 5 (67) Jul: 0 Aug: 0 (69) Sep: 0

Total Operating Days: 16

Feeding Sessions (if > 1)		(A)	(B)
(70)	Feeding Session	Begin Date	End Date
(70-1)	1		
(70-2)	2		

adding session information is only needed if the site will close temporarily for a week or more

Click the "Add Lines" button if there are multiple Feeding Sessions.

**Meal Service**

**only select the actual days of operation here**

**ADP may need to be adjusted to allow for bulk meal distribution.**

Enter in Column A the actual time the meal service will conclude. Site personnel are expected to re-prepare meals for the duration of the meal service distributed prior to the end time. Meal times will be published nationally for all Open Sites.

Meal	Begin Time	End Time	Days Meals Served							ADP	Est. # Eligibles (Camps Only)	CAP
			M	T	W	T	F	S	S			
(71) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Breakfast:	11:00 AM	12:00 PM	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3,250		3,500					

Type: (G) Self-Prep on site Shift: (H)  Yes  No  Offer vs Serve?

# Claims

Q: A claim error says the days of operation are not correct.

The claim for reimbursement compares the number of operating days on the site information page to what is submitted on the claim. By selecting only the days of operation on each site information page, the number of operating days may only be 4 or 5 for the month. The number of operating days has to match the actual serving days.

Q: A claim error says my Average Daily Participation is not high enough. Why?.

Site ADP may fluctuate and should be monitored and updated regularly. The ADP may also need to be increased based on the number of meals distributed each serving day. Do not wait until submitting a claim to adjust site ADPs.

# **Additional questions?**

***Please utilize the chat feature to submit additional questions.***

# Thank You.

With additional questions contact your  
field specialist or  
[summermeals@doe.in.gov](mailto:summermeals@doe.in.gov)

