

Summary of COVID - 19 Information to NH SAUs

Period Covered By This Information: Up to the Last Day of the School Year 2019-2020

Can my SAU offer meals during the school closure?

Yes, any SAU can apply to serve meals through the NH Department of Education (NH DOE) Office of Nutrition Programs and Services (contact: cheri.white@doe.nh.gov). Federal reimbursement can be provided for reimbursable meals served at all approved meal sites. SAUs should select meal service locations that target benefits to children in need, for example, children who may be newly eligible for benefits due to the economic impacts of COVID-19.

What does meal service look like during unanticipated school closure with remote learning?

- Approved sites can serve meals to any child 18 and under and students with an IEP 21 and under.
- Meals can be individually packaged or provided in bulk according to the instructions below and distributed in a grab- and- go format.
- Due to the non- congregate feeding waiver, meals can be consumed offsite to encourage social distancing. Sites may also distribute meals to a parent or guardian to take home to their children.
- “Two meal combinations” can be offered in the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) or Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) per child, per day. For example, most schools will offer breakfast and lunch. Other combinations might be lunch and a snack. The only combination not allowed is lunch and supper.
- Due to the allowance of weekend meals, SAUs may request approval for the distribution of meals for multiple days, including weekends. For example, serving three breakfast and three lunch meals on Friday where the meals are intended as, 1 breakfast and 1 lunch for each day, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. **Weekend meal service at any school or sponsoring organization must be approved by the NH DOE Office of Nutrition Program and Services prior to the implementation of the weekend meal service.**

What are the instructions for providing meals in bulk?

When providing meals in bulk **the SAU office** must be aware of and approve of the activity and:

- Must include the required food components in the proper minimum amounts for each reimbursable meal being claimed.
- Must ensure that food items are clearly identifiable as making up reimbursable meals.
- Are strongly encouraged to provide menus with directions indicating which items are to be used for each meal and the portion sizes.
- Should consider whether households have access to refrigeration, stoves, microwaves, etc. when providing food that requires refrigeration or further preparation such as reheating.
- Should ensure that only minimal preparation is required and that food is not provided as ingredients for recipes that require chopping, mixing, baking, etc.
- Should ensure that all meals are produced and served according to all food safety rules and regulations.

How can I apply to serve meals?

- SAUs need to contact the NH DOE Office of Nutrition Programs and Services (cheri.white@doe.nh.gov, marty.davis@doe.nh.gov, kathryn.hodges@doe.nh.gov) to request approval for USDA reimbursement.

Can I serve the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program during the COVID-19 emergency period?

- FFVP has complex compliance requirements and it is best to contact Alexis Dwyer at alexis.dwyer@doe.nh.gov to discuss your individual circumstances.

Are there resources available to School Food Service to provide guidance on serving meals?

What flexibilities are available to Districts serving meals during this time?

- USDA has the following website where guidance memos and waivers are found:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/disaster/pandemic/covid-19/new-hampshire#cn>

Below is a summary of nationwide and state waivers of Child Nutrition Program regulations that are currently in effect while schools buildings are closed, but remote learning is happening. **It is important to note that all waivers below will end once the school year ends.:**

- **Non-congregate Feeding Waiver** – This allows the Seamless Summer Option (SSO)/Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)/Extended School Year (ESY) programs to provide meals in a non-congregate way in order to allow social distancing during the COVID-19 public health emergency period during the school year.
- **Meal Times Waiver** – Allows meals, such as breakfast and lunch, to be provided to a child at the same time for consumption off-site at whatever time the child or household chooses.
- **Meal Pattern Waiver** – Allows deviations from the meal pattern in certain circumstances for example, during temporary and periodic inability to obtain a particular meal component like milk or an appropriate vegetable. **This waiver requires State agency approval.** Please contact Cheri White at cheri.white@doe.nh.gov
- **Parent Pick-Up Waiver for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program** – Allows the parent/guardian to pick up their child's meals. This waiver does not transfer to the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP). The Office of Nutrition Programs and Services has submitted a waiver specifically for parent pick up for the FFVP. We will notify the Food Service Directors when we have the answer.
- **Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Deadlines Waiver** – This waiver extends deadlines for the Community Eligibility Provision
- **Area Eligibility Waiver** – Allows school sites not regularly area eligible to be temporarily area eligible during the COVID – 19 emergency during the school year.

Area eligible is defined as any school having 50% or more of their enrolled students being free and reduced or the school is within a designated census area, which is area eligible. The USDA Summer Mapping Tool is used to determine whether the school is found within a census area, which is area eligible. The website for the tool is here: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/areaeligibility> **This waiver requires State agency approval.** Please contact Cheri White at cheri.white@doe.nh.gov

- **60- Day Claim Reporting Waiver** – Provides the ability to extend the 60- day deadline for January and February 2020 claims by an additional 30 days.
- **Administrative Review Waiver** – The State agency does not have to do the onsite review portion of an administrative review during the COVID-19 emergency period. However, the offsite portions of the review will be completed during the 2020-2021 School Year.

Can we serve meals during the summer of 2020 the same way we are now?

The NH DOE Office of Nutrition Programs and Services is currently submitting requests for waiver extensions to USDA. We will notify everyone if the requests are approved.

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Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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