

Commissioner's Memo
5/21/2021

Child Nutrition Nationwide Waivers for SY 2021-2022

Memo Information

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Memo Type Informational

Unit Child Nutrition

Regulatory Authority COVID-19: Child Nutrition Response #84 - #96

Response Required YES

Attention Superintendents; Principals; General Business Managers; Child Nutrition Directors/Managers

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Memo Text

ATTENTION: Co-op Directors; Principals; Superintendents; Child Nutrition Directors; Business Managers

The purpose of this memo is to provide guidance on the Child Nutrition Program nationwide waivers and flexibilities to support a successful school year in 2021-2022.

School nutrition professionals across the nation have engaged in a heroic effort to connect children with nutritious meals throughout the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. On the frontlines since March 2020, school nutrition professionals have worked hard to adapt their meal service to meet the needs of children in their communities. To support their efforts, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) established nationwide waivers to streamline access, enhance program flexibility, and reduce administrative burden.

As we look ahead to next school year, we know that even as the nation recovers, school nutrition professionals will continue to face challenges in their work. State and local officials are working hard to plan for the new school year, and FNS recognizes that providing flexibility will support their extraordinary efforts.

Arkansas Child Nutrition Unit (CNU) has opted-in to the following waivers and flexibilities to increase funding, support access, and balance operational needs with the goal of providing nutritious meals for school year 2021-2022. School Food Authorities (SFAs) have the option to opt-in to these waivers with a submitted Schedule D. The Schedule D is an addendum to the 2021-2022 Agreement between CNU and the SFA.

- [Nationwide Waiver to Allow the Seamless Summer Option through School Year 2021-2022](#)

- [Nationwide Waiver to Allow Summer Food Service Program Reimbursement Rates in School Year 2021-2022](#)
- [Nationwide Waiver to Allow Non-Congregate Meal Service for School Year 2021-2022](#)
- [Nationwide Waiver of Meal Time Requirements for School Year 2021-2022](#)
- [Nationwide Waiver to Allow Parents and Guardians to Pick Up Meals for Children for School Year 2021-2022](#)
- [Nationwide Waiver to Allow Specific School Meal Pattern Flexibility for School Year 2021-2022](#)
- [Nationwide Waiver to Allow Offer Versus Serve Flexibility for Senior High Schools in School Year 2021-2022](#)
- [Nationwide Waiver of Area Eligibility in the Afterschool Programs and for Family Day Care Home Providers in School Year 2021-2022](#)

It is important to ensure all students in Arkansas receive high-quality, nutritious meals that help them succeed in the classroom. For school year 2021-2022, schools will continue the school meal pattern, which emphasizes healthy eating with a focus on fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and sensible calorie levels. We expect that the flexibilities provided for this school year will only be utilized as needed, and that schools will seek to meet the nutrition standards to the greatest extent possible.

The [Schedule D Addendum](#) will be required by each SFA. Please email to ADE.CNU-A-PS@ade.arkansas.gov by July 9, 2021. Enclosed with the Schedule D is summary of the waivers to support the SFA in making decisions for the upcoming school year.

Arkansas CNU understands that many questions may come up while making plans for school year 2021-2022. USDA guidance will be shared as soon as it is received. In the absence of guidance, a [Questions and Answer](#) document has been developed and will be edited as needed.

Please contact the district Area Specialist for more information.