




# State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
DIVISION OF FOOD AND NUTRITION  
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To: School Business Administrators, Charter School Leads; Non Public School Administrators;  
Food Service Directors of Schools Participating in the School Nutrition Programs

From: Arleen Ramos-Szatmary, Coordinator   
School Nutrition Programs

Date: July 8, 2020

Subject: SNEARS 2.0 Updates to the Application Packet for Participation in the School Nutrition  
Programs for School Year 2020-2021

After a successful first year of SNEARS 2.0, the Division of Food and Nutrition is proud to announce the **July 1, 2020** opening of the School Year 2020-2021 Letter to Parent and Application Packet. As School Districts participating in the Seamless Summer Option transition into the school year on or before August 31<sup>st</sup>, please note the following Application Packet reminders:

- **Application Packet Deadline:** The deadline to complete both the Letter to Parent and the 2021 Application Packet remains September 30, 2020, however, **SFAs who operate in July and August must certify both the Letter to Parent and Application Packet and be approved by the State Agency prior to submitting and certifying their July and August 2020 reimbursement claims.**
- **Claiming May or June Reimbursement in SNEARS 2.0:** SFAs that need to enter reimbursement claims for the months of May or June should click on the “Reimbursement” icon on the SNEARS dashboard. Then use the drop-down menu to select the **prior school year of 2019-2020** to access the May 2020 and June 2020 vouchers.
- **Letter to Parent/Application Packet Flow:** In SNEARS 2.0, SFAs will need to certify the *SFA Details, User Management* and *Letter to Parent* sections (in this order) before State Agency approval is granted. Once these three sections are approved, the SFA will be able to access the remainder of the Application Packet. **As a reminder, only submitters and certifiers have access to begin the application packet.**
- **State Payment for Reduced Price Eligible Public School Students:** As New Jersey Senate Bill 4200 allows for state payment for reduced price eligible students attending public and public charter schools, public schools must enter “0.00” into the reduced price category on the Letter to Parent for breakfast and lunch meals.
- **Paid Lunch Equity Tool:** SP 07-2020 states that only SFAs that had a negative balance in the nonprofit school account as of December 31, 2019 **are required** to complete the Paid Lunch Equity Tool for SY 2020-21. If your food service account had a zero or positive balance as of December 31, 2019 and you choose not to use the PLE Tool, you must have documentation available for review upon request that evidences the zero or positive balance at the food service account as of December 31, 2019. In addition, you must enter 0.00 in the box requiring the weighted average price requirement in the “School Programs” section of the Letter to Parent.

Please note: SFAs who are already at the minimum required paid lunch rate of **\$3.05** are not required to complete the PLE Tool.

SFAs will notice several changes that have been incorporated into SNEARS for the 2020-2021 School Year:

- The **SFA Details** section contains a new section on meal contracts. The first question states, “*Are there sites under the SFA that are not a part of the SFA?*”. If the sponsoring SFA has entered into a consolidation agreement with another SFA that is not the same legal entity as the sponsoring SFA, answer “Yes” to this question. The second question states, “*Is the SFA contracting with a Food Service Management Company, a Commercial Vendor, or another SFA to provide complete, reimbursable meals?*” Please check all contract options that apply.
- In the **Site Details** section, SFAs who have a preschool program will also be required to list the meal service model they are utilizing. Options include: *Comingled with other grades, Preschool Meal Pattern – Family Style, Preschool Meal Pattern – Serve Only, Comingled for one meal and classroom feeding for other meal, and Preschoolers do not participate in NSLP/SBP.*
- The Collection method housed within the **Site Details** section now contains “prepayment billing”, which incorporates both the envelope method and payments incorporated into tuition. The “postpayment billing” option has been removed.
- The After School Snack Program section in **Site Details** now accounts for programs who are running an extended day program, which is a school operating at least one hour longer than the minimum number of school days required for the comparable grade levels by the local educational agency in which the school is located. If an SFA running an extended day program would like to apply to provide a snack, the “Extended Day Program” radio button should be selected and all corresponding questions answered.

Other relevant information to note regarding the 2020-2021 School Year Applications for Free and Reduced Price School Meals include:

- If a foodservice contract is missing or has not been approved, the 2020-2021 Application Packet will not be approved.
- SFAs are reminded that, pursuant to FNS 113-1 Civil Rights and Enforcement, Civil Rights training must be provided on an annual basis to all frontline staff and those employees who supervise frontline staff. To this end, the State Agency has provided a self-study guide to provide an overview on Civil Rights requirements for SFAs. A recorded webinar on Civil Rights is also located in the “Trainings” section of SNEARS. SFAs must certify that the Civil Rights Self-Study Guide and/or the Civil Rights Webinar have been reviewed by all frontline staff and those employees who supervise frontline staff.

The SNEARS 2.0 Application Packet and Reimbursement Manuals can be found under the “Resources” section within SNEARS for further information and guidance.

Questions may be directed to the School Nutrition Programs Office at 609-984-0693 or the SNEARS Help Desk at 609-341-3817.