

Child Nutrition Program Meal Service During Coronavirus (COVID-19)



Best Practices for Parent Pick-Up of Meals and Snacks

It is a Federal requirement that Child Nutrition Program operators provide meals and snacks directly to eligible children. However, given the current health crisis, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) issued a nationwide waiver that allows local Program operators to distribute meals and snacks to parents and guardians to give to their eligible child. USDA does not have the legal authority to reimburse Program operators for meals provided to ineligible adults. Learn more: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/covid-19/parents-and-guardians-waiver>

State agencies are working with local Program operators to ensure that meals and snacks are distributed to parents or guardians of children eligible to participate in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, Summer Food Service Program, and Child and Adult Care Food Program. The nationwide waiver allowing parents to pick-up meals for children at non-congregate sites does not apply to the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP). However, States may submit individual waivers to FNS requesting permission to allow parent pick-up under the FFVP.



<https://www.fns.usda.gov/resource/covid-19-nationwide-waiver-allow-parents-and-guardians-pick-meals-children>

Questions To Consider

- Would an alternative method of meal distribution meet needs while ensuring program integrity (e.g., mail delivery or bus delivery along regular bus routes)?
- What is the plan for ensuring meals go to eligible children?
- What is the strategy for preventing the distribution of duplicate meals (e.g., a person claiming the same meals from multiple sites)?

Meals picked up by mom and dad for kids to eat and enjoy!



Tips and Helpful Suggestions

Below are ideas that may work for your site. Be sure to follow your State and local requirements.

For open sites:

- Ask parents or guardians how many children (under the age of 18) in the household need meals.
- Indicate who is eligible to pick-up and receive meals on advertisements and promotions of the meal distribution site.
- Post signage at meal distribution sites indicating who is eligible to pick-up and receive meals and snacks.

For closed, enrolled sites:

- Ask parents and guardians to provide student school meal personal identification number (PIN) when picking up meals. Have a backup method of verifying student eligibility in the event parents and guardians do not know their child's school meal PIN.
- Send a unique Quick Response (QR) code out to the parents and guardians of eligible participants. The code could then be scanned at each meal pick-up.
- Ask parents to present a copy of their student's report card, student identification card, or school correspondence when picking up meals.
- Provide parents and guardians with rear view mirror hangers or placards showing the number of meals to be picked up.
- Post signage at meal sites indicating who is eligible to pick-up and receive meals and snacks.

Safety Reminders

Use meal distribution strategies that maintain social distancing and avoid the formation of groups or tight lines. Consider "drive-through" style meal pick-up or staggered pick-up times.

Provide parents and guardians with food safety information related to the safe transportation, storage, and re-heating of foods provided.

Follow Federal, State, and local food safety requirements and guidelines. Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html> for more information on how to:

- Encourage staff to clean their hands often.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces.
- Remind staff not to work if they are sick.
- Remind parents and guardians not to come to meal distribution sites if they are sick.

