COVID-19 Update

Child Nutrition Program Meal Service during COVID-19 Outbreaks

March 30, 2020, 5:00 pm
Sent by listserv to SNP Sponsors and SFSP Sponsors and posted at www.kn-eat.org, School Nutrition Programs, What’s New and www.kn-eat.org, Summer Food Service Program, What’s New

Continued appreciation for the amazing work happening throughout Kansas to feed children. We are pleased to announce the following waiver opportunities that USDA Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) has provided either nationwide or specifically for Kansas:

**KSDE’s request to waive the area eligibility requirement:** SFSP and SSO sponsors may operate open sites in areas approved by KSDE, but that are not located in areas in which poor economic conditions exist as defined in section 13(a)(1)(A) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act through June 30, 2020 or upon expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier.

- Please contact your area Child Nutrition Consultant to add additional sites or change site locations to better meet the needs in your community.
- Due to this waiver there are no longer any closed enrolled sites so rosters are no longer necessary but remember that meal count sheets by day and meal type must still be completed.
- Since all sites are now area eligible, deliveries can be made as needed to any child with a consent for disclosure form completed by the parent or guardian.

Pursuant to section 2202(a) of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (the Act) (P.L. 116-127), and in light of the exceptional circumstances of this public health emergency, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is establishing additional Nationwide Onsite Monitoring Waivers to help minimize potential exposure to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Please note that to ensure Program integrity during this time, State agencies, school food authorities (SFAs), and sponsoring organizations should, to the maximum extent practicable, continue monitoring activities of Program operations offsite (e.g., through a desk audit).

KSDE has elected the following waivers which do not require any action on your part.

- **Nationwide School Meals Programs Onsite Monitoring Waiver:** FNS is waiving school meals onsite monitoring requirements for all State agencies and SFAs. In instances where a State agency is not able to conduct any monitoring of school meals this year due to school closures, the State agency may postpone the administrative review until school year 2020-2021.

- **Nationwide Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Onsite Monitoring for State Agencies:** FNS is waiving that monitoring must be completed onsite for all State agencies. Additionally, State agencies may postpone required site visits until summer 2020 for SFSP sponsors who operate the Program during normal summer operations (May through August).
Questions & Answers from Town Hall Meeting on 3/27/2020

Meal Pattern Waiver:
Q: Where do I find the meal pattern waiver form?
A: The meal pattern waiver can be found at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SH2F6FS.

Q: Do I need to complete the meal pattern waiver if I am unable to source food items with crediting statements such as CN label a meat/meat alternate? We have been notified by our distributor that they will be subbing items because they have too much in stock because restaurants are not ordering.
A: Yes, a sponsor could complete a waiver for meat/meat alternate if unable to obtain CN labeled products.

Q: Do we need to submit this waiver in the instance where we can meet the component, but maybe not the full amount required? Example: String cheese needed to meet 2 M/MA at lunch to add to PB&J or yogurt, but can’t be sourced in sufficient quantities.
A: Yes, if sponsors are unable to meet the entire meal component a waiver request should be submitted.

Q: If we are having difficulty accessing whole grains can I request a waiver and only serve enriched products?
A: Meal Pattern Requirements for SSO require that only 50% of grains be whole grain-rich. If you are unable to meet the whole grain-rich requirement due to lack of availability, then a sponsor could apply for a waiver. Meal Pattern Requirements for SFSP do not require whole grain-rich items be served.

Q: Can we use the waiver for vegetable sub-groups?
A: If a sponsor is following the SSO meal pattern requirements and is having difficulty getting the vegetables needed to meet the requirements, a sponsor can apply for a waiver.

Meal Pattern Questions:
Q: Can Offer versus Serve be used in the SSO or SFSP?
A: The current guidance says that Offer versus Serve is not allowed at this time. We have asked USDA for clarification since we have a waiver for Offer versus Serve to be available in the SFSP.

Q: I have students with food allergies and I understand we must make a meal for them to meet their needs but what if they have a younger sibling that has the same allergies but isn’t enrolled in our district, are we required to provide a meal for them also?
A: Yes, the SFSP/SSO program requires sponsors to meet meal modification requirements.
Q: Is there a milk variety requirement in the SFSP/SSO?
A: No.

Q: We are needing ideas of how to meet the beans and starchy vegetable sub-group vegetable requirements for the SS0 meal pattern requirements?
A: Sack lunch ideas that meet the SS0 meal pattern requirements, including vegetable sub-groups can be found at https://www.kn-eat.org/SNP/SNP_Menus/SNP_Whats_New.htm.

Waiver Allowing Parent/Guardian to Pick up Meal for Child
Q: Where do I find the waiver request to allow for parents/guardian to pick up meals when a child is not present.
A: Apply for this waiver in KN-CLAIM on the Waiver Application for Non-Congregate Meals Due to COVID-19 - Question #9.

Q: Is the waiver allowing parents to pick up meals for their children only for children enrolled in the district?
A: No, this waiver would allow for any parent with a child 1-18 that wishes to pick up a meal for their child, without the child being present to do so. Sponsors who apply for the waiver will need to describe the plan to maintain accountability and program integrity, including putting in place processes to ensure that meals are distributed only to parents or guardians of eligible children, and that duplicate meals are not distributed to any child. Sponsors must receive an email approval from KSDE prior to allowing this practice.

Q: Can a daycare pick up meals and be considered the guardian of all the children in their care? Can the daycare have their parents fill out a "permission slip" for their families?
A: No, it would need to be the parent or guardian of the child picking up meals. If you would like to discuss how you might best be able to serve a daycare in your community contact your Child Nutrition Consultant. There are several options available to you.

Q: Can an older sibling (under age 18) pick up meals for their younger siblings?
A: An older sibling could act as a “volunteer” to deliver meals to their younger siblings if a Consent for Disclosure form is on file from the parent/guardian.

Q: Can a grandparent or relative who is caring for children while mom and dad are working be considered a guardian?
A: A grandparent or relative could act as a “volunteer” to deliver meals to the children in their care if a Consent for Disclosure form is on file from the parent/guardian.

Q: Where is the consent for disclosure form found if families are requesting meal delivery?

Q: If our district already has a consent for disclosure on file, do I need to make a new Consent for Disclosure that lists home meal deliveries?
A: Sponsors can add to the current consent for disclosure on file.
Q: If we do not elect to apply for this waiver at this time, can we later decide to apply for the waiver?
A: Yes, waiver applications can be completed or revised at any time. If you need assistance, contact your Child Nutrition Consultant.

Q: Can staff working take a meal home to their student that is home alone?
A: Yes, if the sponsor submits a waiver to allow for parents to pick up meals for students.

Non-Congregate Feeding Waivers
Q: Can we update our waiver request to extend our end date?
A: Yes, a waiver application can be updated and revised at any time.

Q: Can we change the locations of our sites?
A: Yes, sponsors should update their waiver application to include any new sites that you would like to add. If you want to stop serving at a site, email your Child Nutrition Consultant.

Q: How long can we continue to serve non-congregate meals due to the unanticipated school closures?
A: Right now, the COVID-19 waiver will be effective through your last scheduled day of school. We are seeking guidance on how we transition to the SFSP and will provide guidance as we learn more.

Shelter in Place Order:
Q: What happens if our city, county or the state has a shelter in place order?
A: Sponsors will need to review the shelter in place order to determine if school foodservice is an essential operation. If school meals are deemed essential, it is up to the local district if they continue serving meals during the shelter in place order.

Food Safety:
Q: What do you do with leftover sack lunches?
A: It depends. If the meals are held at proper food safe temperatures (cold potentially hazardous foods held at 41 degrees or below and hot potentially hazardous foods held at 135 degrees or above, then cooled properly), and the food has not been served to a customer, the food can be used another day in the program. If Time as a Public Health Control strategies are being used to manage the risks associated with potentially hazardous foods, then the food must be served or discarded within 4 hours of removal from temperature controls. If a decision is made to donate the food, then certain conditions apply. As part of USDA initiatives, Kansas supports donation of uneaten, wholesome food to appropriate nonprofit institutions (501c3). Donated food must be transferred in accordance with state and local health codes to better ensure food quality and safety. Charitable organizations would only want to accept food that is wholesome and handled with food safety in mind. Food pantries, food banks, and food rescue programs all collect food and redistribute it to those in need. The various types of non-profit charitable organizations will be interested in different products based on how they meet the needs of hungry people in the community. The concern over liability can be eased due to the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Act, which provides protection from criminal and civil liability if the food is donated in good faith. In other words, if food safe practices are followed, the child nutrition program would not be held responsible if a product later causes harm to a recipient.
Q: How long should we exclude a staff member who is showing symptoms of COVID-19 but not officially diagnosed?
A: Check with your county health department for guidance.

Q: What should we do if an employee or volunteer is diagnosed with COVID-19?
A: Check with your county health department for guidance and notify school administration.

Other Questions:
Q: Are we still expected to accept and process free and reduced applications?
A: Yes, if received.

Q: We have a student who is in a transitions program, but is actually 19. Is there a way to include her in meals?
A: Since this student is enrolled in the district they can participate and meet the federal definition of a child.

Q: If the students walk up without a parent are we able to serve them?
A: Yes.

Join the KSDE Child Nutrition & Wellness team on Friday, April 3rd for a Town Hall meeting at 8 AM using this link: https://ksde.zoom.us/j/406784562.

Thank you for all you hard work and passion for providing meals for Kansas kids. Share pictures and results of your amazing efforts at #FuelingKSKids.

Cheryl, Jill and Julie

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