



IOWA

Department of Education

Ann Lebo, Director

Kim Reynolds, Governor
Adam Gregg, Lt. Governor

DATE: March 13, 2020
TO: Iowa School Food Authorities
FROM: Kala Shipley, Bureau Chief
Bureau of Nutrition and Health Services
SUBJECT: Child Nutrition Program Meal Service during Novel Coronavirus School Closures

In response to new guidance issued by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in Policy Memo SP-08-2020, SFSP 04-2020 and to assist you in planning should a school in Iowa be closed/dismissed related to a Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, we are providing the following information.

The Iowa Department of Education Bureau of Nutrition and Health Services (Bureau) submitted a waiver request to the USDA on March 12 for qualifying schools/sites to operate the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) during unanticipated school closures related to COVID-19. The waiver will allow non-congregate feeding and additional flexibilities during operation of the SFSP for emergency school closures. The waiver request is available at <https://educateiowa.gov/pk-12/nutrition-programs/summer-food-service-program>, along with the Iowa waiver approved by the USDA in January 2020 for serving meals at school sites during unanticipated school closures.

In order for schools to provide non-congregate, reimbursable meals to students during a school closure related to COVID-19, the Bureau must first receive approval of the USDA waiver request. All schools interested in providing SFSP meals during this type of school closure must complete the Bureau Google Form, [SFSP Unanticipated School Closure Request Form](#). All schools are eligible to submit a request form and further guidance, including the requirement to have a 2020 SFSP application in IowaCNP, will be provided upon form submission. Although additional steps will be required for schools that have not operated a SFSP site in the past two years, the Bureau is making every effort to simplify the process where possible. In summary, claims for meals served during unanticipated school closures due to COVID-19 can only be paid if a school has a 2020 SFSP IowaCNP application that has been approved by the Bureau prior to meals being served during the school closure.

For more information, contact the Bureau of Nutrition and Health Services at 515-281-5356 or idoenutrition@iowa.gov.

Please note: Schools that remain open have meal service options through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program including congregate feeding in the cafeteria, Grab-n-Go or sack lunches in the classroom. Clarification is being sought from the USDA on whether schools that are temporarily providing e-Learning are eligible to provide reimbursable meals through NSLP or SFSP.

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