



Summary of National School Lunch Program Operations During COVID-19

Arizona Department of Education
Health and Nutrition Services

This is a summary of allowable National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) operations under the applicable USDA waivers for School Year 2020-2021. Some of the guidance is address in USDA waivers and memos; some has been clarified by USDA in communication with ADE.

Applicable waivers through June 30, 2021: Non-congregate feeding, Meal Times, Parent Pickup, Offer vs. Serve, Meal Pattern Flexibility

- NSLP begins when the school year begins. The school year begins when instruction begins, whether that is in-person or distance learning.
- Reimbursable meals can only be claimed for instructional days.
- SFAs must make the NSLP available during all academic school days to all enrolled students in attendance, whether in-person or virtually.
- If operating under the non-congregate feeding waiver, the same meal services must be offered to all enrolled students, whether they are learning in-person or virtually ([SP 24-2020](#), Q1). Meals must be made available to all enrolled students on all instructional days (exceptions may be made for half days when the school day ends prior to the lunch serving time(s)).
- Different menus may be served to in-person learners and virtual learners, as long as all meals served are fully reimbursable meals.
- Meals may be pre-plated/pre-bagged.
- Meals can be delivered to homes.
- OVS is optional for all age/grade groups.
- Meals do not need to be served during specific meal times, and breakfast and lunch can be served at the same time.
- Enrolled students can pick up meals at any site within the SFA as long as the SFA can maintain integrity and properly count and claim meals; meals are claimed at the site in which the student is enrolled, not at the site the meals were served.
- SFAs may distribute up to five days' worth of meals at a time (SFAs must complete a distribution plan prior to distributing meals for multiple days –see [HNS #39-2020](#) for details).
- Parents/guardians of eligible children can pick up meals (SFAs must opt into the use of this waiver– see [HNS #39-2020](#) for details).
- Meal pattern flexibilities are available to address issues with food availability, inability to meet the meal pattern due to the court ruling, or if access to safe and nutritious meals is impacted by the LEA's learning plan/food service model. See [HNS #39-2020](#) for details.
- Serving meals on bus routes is allowable; if serving meals on bus routes, describe this method of service in Section 6 of the CNPWeb Sponsor application (Method of Meal Counting Description AND Point of Service Description).
- When breakfast and lunch meals are being packed and served together (for a single day or for multiple days), students must have the ability to decline any of the meals if they wish.



Summary of National School Lunch Program Operations During COVID-19

Arizona Department of Education
Health and Nutrition Services

- [How Schools Can Serve Online Learners During COVID-19](#)
- [How Entities Can Operate the Child Nutrition Programs at “Safe Places” in SY 20-21](#)

Applicable Memos:

- [SP 24-2020, CACFP 13-2020, SFSP 13-2020: Questions and Answers for the Child Nutrition Programs during School Year 2020-21 – #5](#)
- [HNS #39-2020: Procedures for Opting into National School Lunch Program \(NSLP\) Meal Pattern and Parent/Guardian Pickup Waivers and Providing Meals for Multiple Days in School Year \(SY\) 20-21 – UPDATED](#)