



Staying on Track: Questions & Answers

Answers to the questions asked in HNS' **June 2025 Staying on Track webinar**.

Please note, operators are responsible for remaining up-to-date on program guidance/regulations. The following answers reflect the information available at the time of the live webinar and may be subject to change.

JUNE 2025

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q: Is the new Paid Lunch Equity Tool available for use?

A: Not yet. This tool is released yearly by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Once USDA releases the PLE guidance, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) Health and Nutrition Services (HNS) will provide the guidance and resources to the field. ADE HNS is eagerly awaiting this guidance from USDA and hopes it will be made available soon.

Q: Do CEP operators have to fill out any other application to continue?

A: This depends on when your CEP cycle began. An approved CEP cycle is four years. Those operators in the last year of their CEP cycle will either need to reapply for the following schools year or return to regular counting and claiming. All CEP operators must evaluate the current Identified Student Percentage (ISP). If the ISP has increased, an operator may wish to reapply with the higher ISP. Please contact your specialist to help determine if your specific program will need to reapply or continue on your current cycle.

Q: Will the Reduced-Price Meal Subsidy be available for next school year or does this mean that schools will need to charge for reduced-price meals in School Year 2025-2026?

A: The Arizona legislature appropriated one-time funding to reduce or eliminate copayments that would otherwise be charged to children eligible for reduced-price meals during the 2024-2025 school year (SY). At this time, ADE HNS has not been notified of funding in SY 2025-2026 and is waiting for the state budget appropriations for state fiscal year 2026 to be finalized.

Q: If summer school ends on June 26th, when can the June reimbursement claims be submitted?

A: Operators are able to submit claims for reimbursement starting on the first day of the month proceeding an operating month. This means, a June claim can be submitted as early as July 1. It is best practice to submit claims for the previous month between the first and tenth of the following month. Therefore, June's claim ideally should be submitted July 1 to July 10. For more information on claiming deadlines, please review the [Claiming Deadlines Calendar](#).

Q: Does ADE offer in-person trainings for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)?

A: ADE HNS currently offers multiple in-person workshops for School Food Authorities operating the National School Lunch Program throughout the year. When available, these opportunities are highlighted in the HNS Events Forecast and in the monthly Staying on Track webinar. Attendance for in-person offerings has been low. We hope to see you in one of our sessions next school year!