



# Serving Summer Meals During School Closures Due to COVID-19

A fact sheet for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Seamless Summer Option (SSO)

For additional COVID-19 Guidance, please visit the School and Child and Adult Day Care Meals COVID-19 guidance web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/schoolmeals.asp>.

## Meal Service Flexibilities

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has granted a waiver to the California Department of Education (CDE) to allow eligible SFSP and SSO Program Operators to apply for noncongregate meal service during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Program operators must notify the CDE Nutrition Services Division (NSD) and receive approval prior to serving noncongregate meals.

## Summer Meals Checklist

**Sponsors must ensure that the following basic requirements are met:**

Serve meals at the location and time entered in the Child Nutrition Information and Payment System (CNIPS) and approved by the NSD

Follow all state and local health and safety requirements including maintaining an up-to-date temperature log

Keep current menu documentation for all meals and snacks served

Claim only meal types allowed by regulations or through waivers and approved in the CNIPS

Serve meals that meet the requirements for the meal pattern selected or through waivers and approved by the NSD

## Serving Our Communities

Many families rely on school meals for their children during the school year. When schools close, children are at greater risk of food insecurity. By serving summer meals during these crucial periods, program operators are helping families stay healthy and ensuring that children have the energy to learn and play. The work of each program operator is an important part of the community.

Take meal counts at every site for all meals and snacks served;

If serving multiple meals and snacks together, meal counts must be taken for each meal type

Meals are counted only for eligible children ages 1–18 (or participants with disabilities 19 years and older who are enrolled in school programs)

Complete all required site monitoring visits and reviews or request a waiver to complete an alternative review

Train staff on meal pattern and meal service requirements prior to the start of meal service

**Additional requirements may apply.**

For more information:

- SFSP Program Operators, please contact [SFSP@cde.ca.gov](mailto:SFSP@cde.ca.gov)
- SSO Program Operators, please contact [SSFO@cde.ca.gov](mailto:SSFO@cde.ca.gov)

## Noncongregate Meal Service Styles

All meals served in a noncongregate setting must be complete, unitized meals—Offer versus Serve is not permitted by the USDA. However, all Child Nutrition Program (CNP) Operators may request a meal pattern requirements waiver at <https://surveys2.cde.ca.gov/go/mealpatterncovidwaivers.asp>.

Schools and community organizations that are operating SSO or SFSP during COVID-19 can also request approval to offer children shelf-stable meals for multiple days by submitting a request to [SNPINFO@cde.ca.gov](mailto:SNPINFO@cde.ca.gov),



### Grab-and-Go Meal Service

Meals are served at a designated site and children/parents may pick up meals for consumption off-site with an NSD approved waiver.

The Parent Meal Pick-up Waiver, accessible at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/covid-19/parents-and-guardians-waiver>, allows eligible program operators to distribute meals to a parent or guardian to take home to their children. To participate in this waiver, you must have an approved noncongregate feeding waiver. There are no additional requirements to notify the CDE NSD that the waiver has been implemented. However, program operators must have a written plan and retain accurate records of the meals served under the waiver and report to the CDE NSD at the conclusion of the COVID-19 emergency feeding.

If serving meals that must be reheated or kept cold, include simple instructions for families to safely store and reheat food items.

### Bus Delivery Meal Service

Meals are delivered along planned bus stops within eligible school or census boundaries. **Meal service must only take place in approved area eligible bus stops.** Program operators must inform the CDE NSD of the location of all bus stops and have meal counts for each meal type served at each bus stop.

Tip: Use current bus routes that are safe and familiar to families.

### Home Delivery Meal Service

CNP Operators that have been approved for noncongregate feeding may deliver meals directly to student homes with CDE approval. This practice is optional, requires prior written consent from households of eligible children, and a memorandum of understanding if using a third party to delivery meals. CNP Operators that choose to use this option may only deliver meals to enrolled participants due to confidentiality regulations and must document meal count at the time of delivery. Meal delivery:

- Must have designated delivery times.
- Requires the school to obtain written consent from households to receive delivered meals.
- Does not require children to be present to receive meals, but meals can only be provided for eligible children.
- Can include up to one school week (5 days) of meals and/or snacks at one time.
- Must maintain confidentiality of children that are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

Tip: Program operators must contact the CDE NSD for approval prior to initiating delivery service.

**This institution is an equal opportunity provider.**