

# Key Information for Connecticut School Business Officials about School Nutrition Programs

This document provides an overview of important information and resources for Connecticut school business officials regarding the oversight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) school nutrition programs, operated by the district's school food authority (SFA). School nutrition programs include the [National School Lunch Program \(NSLP\)](#), [School Breakfast Program \(SBP\)](#), [Afterschool Snack Program \(ASP\)](#), [Seamless Summer Option \(SSO\)](#) of the NSLP, [Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program \(FFVP\)](#), and [Special Milk Program \(SMP\)](#).

All school business officials who are responsible for overseeing school nutrition programs should receive e-mails from the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) e-mail distribution list for Connecticut's school nutrition programs. This e-mail distribution list provides important notifications regarding the federal and state requirements for school nutrition programs. If you do not receive these e-mails, please contact your assigned county consultant, listed in the CSDE's handout, [County Assignments for School Nutrition Programs](#).



## Annual Calendar for School Nutrition Programs

The CSDE's [Calendar of School Nutrition Program Requirements and Activities](#) assists Connecticut schools and institutions that participate in the USDA school nutrition programs with planning for the school year. SFAs should distribute this calendar to each person responsible for completing tasks related to the NSLP, SBP, ASP, and SMP.

## Connecticut Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System)

The [CNP System](#) is a web-based software solution that provides Connecticut administrators, state users, and sponsors with efficient and immediate access to applications, claims, and related nutrition program functions for the USDA's [Child Nutrition Programs](#). The CNP Online System allows authorized users to submit and approve applications, claims, and miscellaneous forms online, as their security rights permit. It is important that login IDs and passwords be kept confidential and are not shared. For more information, review the CSDE's handout, [Procedures, User IDs, Passwords and Access for School Nutrition Programs](#).

SFAs must submit claims for reimbursements in a timely manner, according to the CSDE's claims submission schedule. For more information, visit the CSDE's [Claim Submission Schedule](#) webpage.

## Meal Counting and Claiming Process

The CSDE's document, [Overview of Meal Counting and Claiming Process](#), summarizes the CSDE's requirements for the meal counting and claiming process in local educational agencies (LEAs), and assists LEAs with meeting the USDA's NSLP regulations. For more information, visit the CSDE's [Meal Counting and Claiming for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

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## CSDE's Operational Memoranda

The CSDE's operational memoranda contain important information regarding federal and state requirements and implementation guidance for the operation of the USDA's school nutrition programs. They are available on the CSDE's [Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

## Indirect Cost Guidance

The USDA's indirect cost guidance describes the federal requirements for state agencies and SFAs NSLP and SBP, reflecting current cost principles in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E. This guidance assists business officials with ensuring that the nonprofit school food service account funds are limited to expenses that are reasonable, necessary, and allocable to provide quality meals for the NSLP and SBP. In general, the full cost of the NSLP and SBP includes both direct and indirect costs. Direct costs are incurred specifically for the NSLP and SBP, and can be readily identified to a particular school food service objective. Allocation of indirect cost is necessary because it identifies the portion of the costs benefitting the school food service. For more information, review the USDA's guide, *Indirect Costs Guidance for State Agencies & School Food Authorities*.

## Professional Standards

Professional standards for school nutrition professionals are a key provision of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA). The USDA's final rule, *Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel as Required by the HHFKA of 2010*, requires a minimum amount of annual training hours for all state directors of school nutrition programs, state director of distributing agencies, school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff. Required training topic areas vary according to position and job requirements. There are also minimum hiring standards for new state directors of school nutrition programs, state directors of distributing agencies that oversee USDA Foods, and school nutrition program directors. For more information, visit the CSDE's [Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals](#) webpage.

## Procurement for School Nutrition Programs

Sponsors of school nutrition programs must ensure compliance with the USDA's procurement requirements. Federal, state, and local laws and regulations specify the methods that SFAs must follow to properly procure goods and services (2 CFR 200 and 7 CFR 210). State agencies are required to ensure that SFAs comply with the applicable regulations through audits, administrative reviews, technical assistance, training, guidance materials, and other means (7 CFR 210.19(a)(3)). For more information, visit the CSDE's [Procurement for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

## Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs Webpage

The CSDE's [Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage provides links to information regarding federal and state requirements and guidance for the USDA school nutrition programs. This webpage is the best starting point to search for information on specific topics related to school nutrition programs.

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## Unpaid Meal Charging Guidance

The USDA's [Unpaid Meal Charges](#) webpage provides policy guidance, best practice resources, and other tools that SFAs can use in their efforts to overcome the challenge of unpaid meal charges. The USDA's guide, *Overcoming the Unpaid Meal Challenge: Proven Strategies from Our Nation's Schools*, helps SFAs explore ways to manage the process of charging meals.

## USDA Food Distribution Program

USDA Foods (formerly referred to as commodity foods) support the NSLP. The mission of the USDA Food Distribution Program is to strengthen the nation's nutrition safety net by providing food and nutrition assistance to school children, and support American agriculture by distributing high quality, 100 percent American-grown USDA Foods. The CSDE's handout, *Overview of USDA Foods Program in Connecticut*, summarizes the options for utilizing the entitlement dollars awarded to districts each year for the purchase of USDA Foods, which include direct delivery, further processed, and USDA Department of Defense fresh produce. For more information, visit the CSDE's [Food Distribution Program](#) webpage.

### Guidance for Districts Contracting with a Food Service Management Company

Sponsors of the USDA's school nutrition programs must ensure compliance with the requirements for contracting with vendors and food service management companies (FSMCs). These requirements apply to the school nutrition programs, the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

Federal, state, and local laws and regulations specify the methods that sponsors must follow to properly procure contracts with vendors and FSMCs (7 CFR 200 and 210). State agencies are required to ensure that sponsors comply with the applicable regulations through audits, administrative reviews, technical assistance, training, guidance materials, and other means (7 CFR 210.19(a)(3)). For more information, visit the CSDE's [Food Service Management Company](#) webpage.

**Note:** When contracting with a FSMC, the LEA must contact Andy Paul at [andrew.paul@ct.gov](mailto:andrew.paul@ct.gov) or 860-807-2048 prior to any solicitation release.

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For more information, visit the CSDE's [School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

*This handout is available at*  
[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/School\\_Business\\_Officials](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/School_Business_Officials).

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To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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