



CNS Update: Important COVID-19 Coronavirus Information - USDA Waiver Request

OSPI continues to monitor the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and work in collaboration with health and government officials. Please continue to monitor the situation in your community and work with your local health jurisdiction for information and guidance.

The following outlines options for meal service during interruptions and closures to school days.

- **If a district/school is closed but still “operational”** (i.e. distance learning/certain schools open):
 - Meals may be served through NSLP/SBP.
 - Follow your approved counting and claiming (by name meal counts unless operating CEP or Provision).
 - Grab-n-Go / sack lunches are allowed.
- **If a district/school is closed:**
 - Qualifying schools/site may operate the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) or Seamless Summer Option (SSO).
 - Qualifying school/site: [Area Eligible](#) by school data (F/R $\geq 50\%$) or census data.
 - Refer to the [Unanticipated School Closure reference sheet](#).
 - Congregate (group) meal service is required (i.e. Grab-N-Go is NOT allowable).
- Meal pattern requirements are still in effect. However, strategies to minimize exposure should be considered (CNS is in the process of creating a tip sheet on best practices.)

Waiver requests to USDA

OSPI is seeking two waivers from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Services. The purpose of these waivers is to support schools and communities in providing meals to children in areas experiencing school closures in response to COVID-19.

1. Waiver to allow operation of the SFSP/SSO for emergency school closures in **non-Area Eligible** schools/locations.
This waiver would allow schools in areas not designated as high need to offer meals to students under the Emergency School Closure provision of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) or Seamless Summer Option (SSO). Please note, this waiver has **NOT** been approved by USDA. We will provide this information if/as soon as we receive word.

2. Waiver to allow non-congregate feeding during operation of the SFSP/SSO for emergency school closures.
This waiver would allow for a Grab-N-Go meal service that would limit participants' interaction and proximity to other participants and therefore decrease the risk of COVID-19 exposure. **3/6/2020 This waiver has been approved.**

Additionally, CNS is working with Food Banks and Hunger Advocacy groups to provide support to communities experiencing school closures.

