

Getting Meals to Quarantined Students – A Guide

Students who are quarantining due to possible COVID-19 exposure or illness are eligible to receive school meals.

Ways this can happen:

1. **District Provides Meals** - The District ensures quarantined students have access to school meals through meal delivery or pick-up. This approach best supports students and should be used if feasible.
2. **Local Governments/Community Food Banks/Community Based Organizations provide meals** - If the district cannot facilitate getting meals to quarantined students, consider partnering with your local government, a local food bank and/or other Community Based Organization (CBO) to ensure students have access to food. This requires families to voluntarily release information.
3. **Provide Information to Families** – Direct families of quarantined students to local food resources.

Resources that may be helpful to share with families.

- [FoodLifeLine Food Map \(Statewide\)](#)
- [Northwest Harvest Food Map \(Statewide\)](#)
- [WA 211 \(Statewide\)](#)
- [2nd Harvest Food Map \(Eastside of State\)](#)

School districts are not required to deliver meals to quarantined students. However, many students rely on school meals and we encourage district leaders to consider all options available to provide nutritional support to these students.

This guide was created to assist district leaders to better understand available options, as well as the applicable laws and regulations around serving meals to quarantined students.

1. District Provides Meals

Meal Delivery Option for Quarantined Students

Things to consider

- **How to identify quarantined students who want meals**

Having families pre-order school meals through a simple online form will allow you to determine which quarantined students would like school meals.

Think about accessibility – The online form should be available in multiple languages to ensure access for all families. There should also be a way for families who don't have internet access to request meals, such as a phone number to call-in requests

Example forms:

- [Caroline County Public Schools](#)
- [East Baton Rouge Parish School System](#)

- **How to safely deliver meals**

This is ultimately a local decision, but you may wish to utilize existing bus routes, delivering directly to families, or some other solution.

If delivering to families independent of bus routes, consider using a route planning software to help determine the most efficient route possible. Google Maps has this feature up to 10 stops and there are other commercial options available for more stops.

- **Delivering a multiple days' worth of meals vs. single day**

It may be much more feasible to deliver multiple days' worth of meals instead of delivering five times per week. Take into consideration what type of food you're providing in these meal packs.

The weeks' worth of meals should meet meal qualifications and be easy to store.

Waivers, Laws, and Regulations

Districts must have the following waivers in place to deliver meals to quarantined students.

Waivers can be requested by submitting a [Meal Distribution Plan](#).

1. Meal Service Time Waiver
2. Non-Congregate Waiver
3. Parent Pickup Waiver

Confidentiality and Parental Consent

Districts must obtain and retain written parent consent to deliver meals. This can be gathered in-person, via email, or other electronic means.

The district must be the entity that makes the first contact about meal delivery with the households of eligible children, and must notify the household if contact information will be

shared with an external organization, for example, a local non-profit that will provide meal delivery.

Additionally, plan processes to ensure confidentiality of household eligibility status with staff. For example, delivery drivers that are not regular food service staff should only have the student names and household address.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Are we required to deliver meals to quarantined students?**

Although we encourage you to continue providing access to meals, there is no USDA requirement to provide or deliver meals during school or classroom closures. Providing meals to quarantined students is a local level decision.

- **Can we utilize volunteers to deliver meals to quarantined students?**

Yes, as long as they meet the district requirements to be a volunteer. Plan processes to ensure confidentiality of household eligibility status with staff. For example, delivery drivers that are not regular food service staff should only have the student names and household address.

Ensure that food safety regulations are followed.

- **Can we deliver multiple days' worth of meals?**

Yes. It should be noted that under SSO, you may only deliver meals for number of instructional days. Contact your program specialist to get started.

See Question 18 in [USDA Policy Memo SP 22-2021, CACFP 17-2021, SFSP 10-2021](#) for more specifics on providing multiple days' worth of meals during SY 21–22.

- **Can we contract with an outside vendor to deliver these meals?**

Yes. There are additional requirements on top of gathering parental consent to partner with a private vendor.

Under the regulations implementing the National School Lunch Act (NSLA), districts must have a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the vendor concerning the confidentiality requirements. The MOU should include information such as what will be disclosed, how the information will be used, how the information will be protected from unauthorized uses and disclosures, and penalties for unauthorized disclosure.

For further requirements, see 7 CFR 225.15(k)(1)-(2). The school must ensure data is handled appropriately at all times and by all organizations involved with meal delivery to safeguard household confidentiality.

Meal Pickup Option for Quarantined Students

Things to Consider

- **How to identify quarantined students who want meals?**

Having families pre-order school meals through a simple online form will allow you to determine which quarantined students would like school meals.

Think about accessibility – The online form should be available in multiple languages to ensure access for all families. There should also be a way for families who don't have internet access to request meals, such as a phone number to call-in requests.

Example form: [Caroline County Public Schools](#)

- **What location and time/times are best for families to pick up meals?**

Think about where and when you will plan to have families pick up meals. The location should be easy to navigate and drive through.

Waivers, Laws, and Regulations

Districts must have the following waivers in place to deliver meals to quarantined students. Waivers can be requested by submitting a [Meal Distribution Plan](#).

1. Meal Service Time Waiver
2. Non-Congregate Waiver
3. Parent Pickup Waiver

Frequently Asked Questions:

- **Are we required to offer pickup meals to quarantined students?**

Although we encourage you to continue providing access to meals, there is no USDA requirement to provide or deliver meals during school or classroom closures. Providing meals to quarantined students is a local level decision.

2. Local Governments/Community Food Banks/CBOs Provide Meals

Things to consider

- **What is the capacity of your local government and community-based organizations?**

A good first step is to start making calls. Reach out to your local government emergency management to see if there is capacity/funding to start a partnership between the district and organizations that can help.

You can also reach out to local food banks and other CBO's who may be able to provide assistance, funding, or the actual meals.

- **What's needed to release student information to a third-party CBO to facilitate meals?**

Parents or guardians must voluntarily consent to the release of student information, including names, addresses, or other information. School districts may have additional requirements around student information that must be met.

3. Provide Information to Families

Direct families of quarantined students to local food resources.

Things to consider

- **Create a district standard communication to disseminate information to all quarantining students.**
Ensure all school level administration is familiar with information and process to disseminate.
- **You can use OSPI's template communication which provide links to resources.**
Use the [Feeding Students in Quarantine Communications Template](#) for suggested language to share with families. You can use this template as an email or letter to households.

Questions? Please [email the Child Nutrition Services team](#).