

H1N1-RELATED SCHOOL CLOSURES AND PROVISION OF REIMBURSABLE MEALS BY MEANS OF THE SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Recently, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) identified how School Food Authorities (SFA) and Community Organizations (CO) may continue to provide reimbursable meals through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) during unanticipated school closures related to the H1N1 influenza virus. In an effort to address concerns, regarding the loss of school meals for low-income children, who may not have access to other sources of food due to H1N1-related school closures, USDA has provided added flexibility using program waiver authority. During H1N1-related school closures, USDA has waived the requirement for serving meals in a congregate setting to support social distancing measures necessary during these outbreaks.

1. How is the waiver request approved to provide reimbursable meals by means of the SFSP during H1N1-related school closures?

The SFA must submit a waiver request to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) for review and approval. The SFA is encouraged to submit the waiver request as soon as possible.

2. Is it mandatory for SFAs to participate in the SFSP during H1N1-related school closures?

No, it is not mandatory. The SFA is encouraged to participate in providing reimbursable meals to low-income children that may not otherwise have access to food during H1N1-related school closure.

3. If the SFA has not participated in SFSP can they still provide reimbursable meals during H1N1-related school closures?

Yes. The SFA must submit the Permanent Agreement and Non-Pricing Statement, the School Food Authority/Community Organization Addendum to Summer Food Service Program Agreement for H1N1-Related School Closures, and the Waiver Request for SFSP and H1N1-related School Closures, as directed in the MDE Food Service Administrative Policy #5 School Year 2009-2010 - Summer Food Service Program during a H1N1-Related School Closure.

4. What requirements for operating the SFSP are waived for H1N1-related school closures?

- Requirements to serve in congregate settings.
- Pre-operational training and summer monitoring requirements.

5. What should be included in the *Waiver Request for SFSP and H1N1-Related School Closures*?

The Waiver Request for SFSP and H1N1-Related School Closures is available as a PDF document online at www.michigan.gov/schoolnutrition. Scroll down to Administrative Policy Memos, click on Food Service Administrative Policy #5 School Year 2009-2010 - Summer Food Service Program during a H1N1-Related School Closure. The waiver request form has step by step questions to formulate a plan which includes:

- School Food Authority/Community Organization Information.
- Program Information: Child nutrition programs operated by the SFA and meal service preparation type during H1N1-related closure.
- At what point the meal service will begin following H1N1-related school closure.
- Meal distribution the school will use and how the program will be operated to target the children in the closed schools.
- Meal distribution plan for targeting low-income children, including children that may not have free or reduced price eligibility information readily available if the school does not have 50% or more free or reduced price children enrolled.
- Methods for communicating with families.
- How the SFA or community organization will ensure proper operation of the program including meal content, meal counts, food safety, oversight, etc.

6. Can a parent/caregiver of a child, enrolled in the closed school, pick up meals for the children?

Yes. The meal distribution site must have a way to verify the adult picking up the meals has a child enrolled in the closed school. This arrangement must be described in the *Waiver Request*.

7. Can meals be provided to siblings who may not be in school or who do not attend the closed school?

Yes. All children 18 years of age and under, in a household with at least one child in the household enrolled in the school that is closed related to H1N1 influenza may be provided meals.

8. Do the children that are not free or reduced-priced eligible have to pay for meals?

No. All children that attend the school that is operating SFSP, due to H1N1-related closure, may receive meals free of charge.

9. What entities can operate the SFSP for H1N1-related school closures?

SFA or community organizations that have an agreement to operate the SFSP.

Site eligibility:

- Based on population of the closed school related to H1N1 influenza.
- If the closed school has 50% or greater free and reduced-price eligibility, then all families of enrolled children will be distributed meals, with the focus on low-income students.
- If the closed school has less than 50% free and reduced-priced eligibility, then distribution of meals must be directly targeted to the households of enrolled children who are eligible for free and reduced-priced meals.

10. Is it necessary to complete a *Daily Meal Count Form* at the Point of Service for the SFSP during a H1N1-related school closure?

Yes. A point of service meal count must be taken at each site for each type of meal (breakfast, lunch, snack, supper). The H1N1-Related School Closure Daily Meal Count Form must be used and is available online at www.michigan.gov/schoolnutrition. Scroll down to What's New? Click on How to Provide School Meals During a H1N1-Related School Closure, scroll down to MDE forms, click on H1N1-Related School Closure Daily Meal Count Form.

11. How many meals may be offered each day to each child? Can meals be distributed for more than one day?

During a H1N1-Related School Closure each child can receive the following combination of meals and snacks each day:

- Breakfast and lunch
- Breakfast and snack
- Lunch and snack
- Supper and snack

The only combination of meals and/or snacks that cannot be offered is lunch and supper. Meals for multiple days may be distributed at the same time.

12. What are the meal requirements?

- Regular SFSP menu planning requirements.
- Offer vs. Serve does not apply.
- Unitized meals including milk (may use shelf stable milk).

13. At what rates will the meals be reimbursed?

Programs operating under the SFSP will be reimbursed using the current SFSP rates. Reimbursements are provided on a per meal basis and no additional federal funds, i.e., start-up or administrative, will be provided for this effort.

14. What types of expenses may be paid for from the non-profit school food service account for the SFSP during H1N1-related school closure?

Schools may pay any allowable cost from the non-profit school food service account including any equipment or supplies that may be needed to hold and distribute meals, costs related to meal distribution, and staff wages to prepare and distribute meals. Public or private non-profit organizations, operating under the SFSP, are not required to have a separate non-profit food service account, but all regular program requirements related to allowable costs and recordkeeping will apply. Keep in mind that reimbursements are provided on a per meal basis and no additional federal funds, i.e., start-up or administrative will be provided for this effort.

15. Where can I get additional information about H1N1?

For the most current information about the H1N1 2009-10 Flu Season, go to: The Centers for Disease Control website at: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/season/index.htm>. Click on 2009-10 Influenza (Flu) Season located in the purple box on the left side of the screen. Selected topics include:

- Influenza: The Disease
- What To Do If You Get Sick
- What's New & Updated!

16. Do we need to notify MDE that we activated our approved waiver?

Yes. Upon waiver approval you will be emailed a form that must be faxed to MDE once you have activated your Waiver Request for SFSP and H1N1-Related School Closures. It must be faxed to: 517-373-4022.

17. Do I need to complete a *Child Nutrition Application Program (CNAP) Application for the SFSP?*

Yes. Once you have activated your waiver and are ready to submit your claim, the *2010 CNAP for SFSP* must be completed.

18. Do I need to have security access to the SFSP CNAP?

Yes. If you are a new sponsor to the SFSP, you will have to submit a new security access form for the Child Nutrition Programs to MDE. This form can be found at:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/school_meals_security_form_153987_7.pdf

Please complete, sign, and fax the form to Ruby Zavala at 517-373-4022.

19. Where do I submit my reimbursement claim?

The claim will have to be submitted via the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Claim for Reimbursement form SM-4012-SF, which can be accessed at the MEIS page.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

USDA Memo SP 31-2009, SFSP 05-2009 Responding to School Closings for H1N1 Outbreaks
http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/Policy-Memos/2009/SP_31-2009_os.pdf

USDA Memo SP 33-2009, SFSP 06-2009 School Closings for H1N1 Outbreaks: Questions and Answers
http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/Policy-Memos/2009/SP_33-2009_os.pdf

USDA Memo SP 42-2009, SFSP 08-2009 School Dismissals for H1N1 Outbreaks: Questions and Answers Edition #2
http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/Policy-Memos/2009/SP_42-2009_os.pdf

USDA Webinar: Providing Meals to Needy Children During H1N1-Related School Closures:
<http://www.schoolnutrition.org>, click on Resource Center, scroll down to Running Your Program, and click on H1N1 Swine Flu Resources. Then select [SNF / USDA Webinar Special Webinar - Providing Meals to Needy Children During an H1N1 Related School Dismissal](#).

Other resources, to assist with providing flexibility to schools in cooperation with the community to promote the health of children and families along with minimizing the loss of school meals in the event of school closures related to the H1N1 influenza virus, are available on line at the following federal web sites:

- United States Department of Health and Human Services:
<http://www.flu.gov> or <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/school/index.html>
- United States Department of Education:
<http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/pandemic/index.html>
- Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center: <http://rems.ed.gov>

Questions regarding this document may be directed to the Grants Coordination and School Support, School Nutrition Training and Programs unit by email to: MDE-schoolnutrition@michigan.gov.