



Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) Bulletin

Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) Bulletin No. 27 - Ramadan Waiver - December 9, 2024

Meals for Ramadan in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

On November 27, 2024, the Michigan Department of Education was approved by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to offer a waiver to allow sponsors to serve non-congregate meals to children who celebrate Ramadan. During Ramadan, students fast or refrain from eating during typical daylight hours, including when school breakfast and/or lunch is served. The National School Lunch Act (NSLA), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) regulations require schools to operate a congregate lunch service between the hours of 10:00 am and 2:00 pm, and breakfast to be served at the beginning of the school day. Sponsors that serve meals to students who observe Ramadan experience a significant drop in meal service participation and would benefit from having alternative meal service options. As a result, these sponsors can request waivers for alternative means of meal service to promote this population's access to nutritious school meals during Ramadan. These waivers include:

- **Non-Congregate Meal Service (NSLP and SBP):** Under the NSLA, 42 U.S.C. 1753(b)(1)(A), and the Child Nutrition Act, 42 U.S.C. 1773(b)(1)(A), NSLP and SBP meals must be served in a congregate setting and must be consumed by participants on site.

- **Meal Service Times (NSLP and SBP):** Under program regulations at 7 CFR 210.10(l) and 7 CFR 220.8(l), meals served in the NSLP and SBP must follow meal service time requirements.
- **Offer Versus Serve (NSLP)** Under the NSLA, 42 U.S.C.1758(a)(3), and program regulations at 7 CFR 210.10(e), program operators of senior high schools (as defined by the State education agency) must participate in offer versus serve at lunch.

Please note that there is not a waiver available for parent and guardian meal pick-up. This part of the MDE waiver request was not approved. Under program regulations at 7 CFR 210.10(a), 7 CFR 220.2 (Breakfast), and 7 CFR 220.8(a), meals must be served directly to eligible children. To participate in the non-congregate meals, **children must attend school on the day non-congregate meals are offered**. Only one breakfast and one lunch can be provided at the same time. A week's worth of meals cannot be provided at one pick up.

These waivers are effective February 28, 2025, through March 30, 2025.

For approval to use these waivers, please complete the [online form](#). Sponsors who complete this form will be contacted by a Michigan Department of Education, Office of Nutrition Services, School Nutrition Program staff member in 1-3 business days.

Completing the [online form](#) does not require you to serve meals for the whole month of Ramadan. It is allowed to only serve a few days during the month. If Spring Break is included during Ramadan, you may not serve non-congregate meals on those days.

Things to consider:

- In January, start promoting the option to families in your school. Make information available in multiple languages, as needed.
- Inform administration, teachers and staff of the opportunity, in case they get questions.
- Create a survey to gauge interest in participating.
- Create a pre-order system for meals, but be sure to have extra meals available each day.
- Develop point of service counting method so that duplicate meals are not distributed to any participant.
- Consider food safety and refrigeration.

- Include instructions for safe food handling at home.
- Those who follow the Muslim faith categorize foods as Halal or non-Halal. No pork or alcohol is allowed and no animal derived products. Animals are slaughtered in a specific way to be Halal. Families may differ in how strictly they follow the dietary laws. Enzymes in cheese may be eaten by one family and not another. Talk with your community to know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable.
- [Culturally Inclusive Recipes Toolkit for School Nutrition Programs](#) can help start the conversation in developing menus.

For additional information please contact MDE-SchoolNutrition@michigan.gov.

Contact Us

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