



Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) News from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE)

December 6, 2024

Online Fees for School Meals

November 1, 2024, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued Memo SP04-2025 titled “Fees for Electronic Payment Services in the School Meal Programs”. Students who qualify for free or reduced-price meal benefits must not be charged additional fees for online payments into their school meal account starting in School Year 2027-2028. Sponsors must continue to offer a free and accessible method of making deposits into student meal accounts for all families. The free method also allows people without easy computer access to add funds to the meal account. The free method needs to be communicated to families, as well. The nonprofit food service account, general fund or outside donation may be used to cover online payment fees. New payment processing contracts may need to be negotiated. USDA has not provided guidance on how this applies to a la carte.

Records Retention

It is important that sponsors keep documentation when participating in Child Nutrition Programs. Do you feel uncertain about what exactly should be saved and for how long? MDE has created a new document titled “Records Retention Guidance for School Nutrition Programs”. It has been posted in 2 places on the MDE website. It is under the School Nutrition Programs Compliance Reviews (Administrative and Resource Management) circle and the National School Lunch Program [Forms and Instructions](#).

New Online Training Modules

MDE staff is continually working on adding new [online training modules](#). The newest modules include: Best Practices for Family Style Meals, Feeding Infants, Introduction to Procurement for CACFP and Afterschool Snack Program.

10 Cents a Meal for Michigan's Kids and Farms Updates and Reminders

Food Transportation and Labor task for 10 Cents a Meal is open!

The Food Transportation and Labor task for 10 Cents a Meal is now open in GEMS/MARS. The task is called *"Local Food Transportation and Labor Expenses: The 10 Cents a Meal Submission window for 2024-2025 has been opened. Click here to start a new submission."* If you have the task for local food items in GEMS/MARS, your access to the Food Transportation and Labor task is automatically available.

All Food Transportation and Labor expenses must be reported in GEMS/MARS using the [Food Transportation and Labor Expenses Submission Template](#). Please refer to our [10 Cents a Meal Purchase Submission Walkthrough](#) on how to upload these expenses.

December 2024 Payment

As a reminder, the first reimbursement payment for 10 Cents a Meal in 2024-2025 will be issued in December for approved purchase data submitted through November 18, 2024, and every 2 months thereafter (payments in February, April, June, August, and October/November).

The total December 2024 reimbursement payment amount is \$240,000.00, with 72 grantees receiving reimbursement funds!

Schools will receive reimbursement through State Aid Management System (SAMS). The line is 31j. Sponsors that are not public schools will receive reimbursement via fiduciary agent. This fiduciary is Gogebic-Ontonagon Intermediate School District (GOISD). Contact Jared Stenson jstenson@goisd.org to set up your accounts payable profile.

Please contact MDE-FarmToProgram@Michigan.gov with any questions.

Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards

As part of a cooperative agreement to develop and implement the USDA Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS) [Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative](#) (HMI), Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK) is offering Recognition Awards to celebrate sponsors that have made significant improvements to the nutritional quality of their school meals. The Recognition Awards will spotlight innovative practices, student and community

engagement activities, and strategies schools have used to provide meals that are consistent with the *2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

Interested sponsors can learn more about this opportunity on the [HMI Recognition Awards Webpage](#). Applications are accepted on a rolling basis through June 30th, 2025, via the [My AFHK Portal](#). Before completing an application, sponsors must obtain a State Agency Letter of Support to disclose that they do not have any outstanding corrective actions and that any previous findings have been resolved. Applicants can request a letter of support from MDE [HERE](#).

Sponsors meeting recognition award criteria will receive the following:

- Travel stipends to attend a national Healthy Meals Summit.
- National and local recognition through traditional and social media.
- Awardee toolkit that includes promotional resources for use on the web, social media, and traditional media.
- Access to diverse best practices from recognition awardees, stakeholder engagement, training and technical assistance activities, and Healthy Meals Summits.

Questions about the Recognition Awards and application can be emailed to: award@healthymealsincentives.org.

New MIND 2.0 Dashboard and Features

If you have logged in to the Michigan Nutrition Data System (MIND 2.0) recently, you will notice a new look. The dashboard has been updated with relevant informational cards for the different programs or systems you participate in.

To access the claim sub-systems, simply click on “MIND Legacy” in the left menu bar. The user management and access request function has also been overhauled and is available from the left menu. Same functions, new location.

Resources and Training

Our team has created some training materials to assist you through the transition. See the following links for more information.

- [MIND Dashboard - Help Page](#)
- [MIND Request Access - Help Page](#)
- [MIND User Management - Help Page](#)
- [MIND Year End Report - Help Page](#)

System Access Help

If you have any trouble accessing this or any other system, contact us at MDE-ONS-Access@Michigan.gov. In the meantime:

- If you are unsure of what system you need access to, you can find a summary of each of the systems and what they do [HERE](#).
 - If you need step by step instructions for getting access to a system, you can find instructions [HERE](#).
 - You can find ALL of the system help documents [HERE](#).
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Upcoming Events

Tuesday @ 2

Topic: Food Distribution (FD): General Procurement Frequently Asked Questions

Date: Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Time: 2-2:30 pm

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android:

Or Telephone:

USA 404 443 6397

USA 8773361831 (US Toll Free)

Conference code: 806533

Tuesday @ 2

Topic: School Nutrition Program (SNP): School Food Authority (SFA)-Verification Collection Report (VCR)

Date: Tuesday, January 14, 2025

Time: 2-2:30 PM

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android:

Or Telephone:

USA 404 443 6397

USA 8773361831 (US Toll Free)

Conference code: 806533

ONS Town Hall

Date: Wednesday, January 15, 2025

Time: 2-3 PM

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android:

Or Telephone:

USA 404 443 6397

USA 877 336 1831 (US Toll Free)

Conference Code: 806533

Tuesday @ 2

Topic: Food Distribution: Food Service Contracts

Date: Tuesday, January 21, 2025

Time: 2-2:30 PM

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android:

Or Telephone:

USA 404 443 6397

USA 8773361831 (US Toll Free)

Conference code: 806533

Tuesday @ 2

Topic: School Nutrition Programs: Program Monitoring

Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025

Time: 2-2:30 PM

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android:

Or Telephone:

USA 404 443 6397

USA 8773361831 (US Toll Free)

Conference code: 806533

Updates, Guidance, and Regulation Information from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)

Updated Resource

Team Nutrition's "[Offering Meats and Meat Alternates at School Breakfast](#)" training guide has been updated to be consistent with the Final Rule, "**Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary**

Guidelines for Americans." The Final Rule allows schools the option to offer grains, meats/meat alternates, or a combination of both at breakfast. This 20-page training guide shows school nutrition professionals how to offer meats and meat alternates at school breakfast by providing menu planning ideas, crediting information, sample menus, and more.

Policy Memo Updated

A Child Nutrition (CN) label and a Product Formulation Statement (PFS) are documents that provide a way for a manufacturer to demonstrate how a processed food product may contribute to the meal pattern requirements in CNP

USDA has released an updated policy memo, [Guidance for Accepting Processed Product Documentation for Meal Pattern Requirements](#)

The updated memo provides important information for both State agencies and CNP operators about acceptable manufacturer documentation for meal pattern contribution crediting information. Of note, the memo clarifies the difference between the date of authorization found on the CN label and the "Valid Until" date on the CN Label Verification Report. Additionally, the memo confirms the use of the CN Label Verification System to check if a CN label is valid. CNP operators and State agencies can find additional guidance on manufacturer documentation online at [Manufacturer Documentation: Child Nutrition Labels and Product Formulation Statements](#)

CNP operators are also encouraged to review the [Tip Sheet for Accepting Processed Product Documentation](#), which guides CNP operators through the process to determine if a CN label or PFS is acceptable.

The [CN Label Verification Report](#) is available to assist CNP operators and State reviewers in verifying the status of a CN label as well as the meal pattern contribution crediting information. During the State agency monitoring process, reviewers are encouraged to use these reports to verify crediting information and the validity of the CN number on a CN label.

Food industry partners are encouraged to review the CN Labeling Manual, policies and procedures, PFS templates, and other helpful links at [CN Labeling and PFS Guidance for Food Manufacturers/Industry](#).

Training Corner

10 Cents a Meal for Michigan's Kids and Farms Purchase Submission and Reporting Training Reminder and Virtual Option Added!

This is a reminder that 10 Cents a Meal has several upcoming in person purchase submission and reporting trainings for 10 Cents a Meal. Based on feedback from our grantees, there is now a virtual option on December 9, 2024,

at 9-10am via Zoom. This has been added to the full list of upcoming sessions below. Attendance is free, but registration is required.

- **Virtual option - Monday, December 9** 9-10 am via Zoom
- **Muskegon and Grand Rapids Area – Monday, December 9** 2-4 pm at the Muskegon Area Career Tech Center
- **Kalamazoo and Battle Creek Area – Monday, December 16** 2-4 pm at Kalamazoo Valley Community College
- **Flint and Thumb Area - Tuesday, December 17** 2-4 pm at the Erwin L. Davis Education Center

Please contact MDE-FarmtoProgram@Michigan.gov with any questions.

School Meal Overview Workshops Offered

The staff of the Michigan Department of Education’s (MDE) School Nutrition Programs Unit is pleased to announce a hands-on, activity-based workshop for food service personnel titled “School Meals Overview Workshop.” This training is targeted to several specific areas: menu development, recipes and labels, production records, meal component tool, cycle menus, application processing, counting and claiming, direct certification, and verification. The workshop will provide active sessions where food service personnel can interact with MDE staff to resolve any issues that would result in findings during an Administrative Review.

The workshop consists of two days – Day One will cover nutrition related information and Day Two will cover administrative information. There is no cost for the workshop and participants are welcome to come one or both days.

Dates: Tuesday, January 14, 2025, and Wednesday, January 15, 2025

Location: Wayne RESA 33500 Van Born Rd, Wayne, MI 48184

Registration links for [Day 1](#) and [Day 2](#) (each day must be registered for separately)



Frequently Asked Questions

Question: May I purchase Christmas gifts for food service staff out of the food service fund?

Answer: Gifts, gift cards, promotional items, giveaways etc. are not an allowable use of restricted Child Nutrition Program (CNP) funds. In addition to the federal restrictions on CNP funds, see the

Contact Us

Email: MDE-SchoolNutrition@Michigan.gov

If you or someone you know is interested in receiving the Child Nutrition Programs News and Updates and Bulletins, visit [Child Nutrition Programs News and Updates Subscription](#).

Support

School Nutrition Programs

www.michigan.gov/schoolnutrition

Email: MDE-schoolnutrition@michigan.gov

Summer Food Service Program

www.michigan.gov/sfsp

Email: mde-sfsp@michigan.gov

Child and Adult Care Food Program

www.michigan.gov/cacfp

Email: mde-cacfp@michigan.gov

Food Distribution

www.michigan.gov/mde-fdp

Email: mde-fmfd@michigan.gov

Fiscal and Administrative Services

www.michigan.gov/mde-fast

Email: MDE-Fiscal@michigan.gov

Procurement and Contracts

www.michigan.gov/mde-foodservicecontracts

Email: mde-fsmc-vended@michigan.gov

School Health and Safety

www.michigan.gov/cshsp

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To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), from any USDA office, by

calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted 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; or
2. **fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
Program.Intake@usda.gov

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