



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

October 30, 2025

Meals During Unanticipated Building Closures

MDE has been granted a series of 12 (l) waivers to serve non-congregate meals during Unanticipated School Closures (USC) for all federal Child Nutrition Programs. USC may only be used during unanticipated events such as natural disasters, unscheduled building repairs, court orders related to school safety or other issues, labor-management disputes or similar unanticipated events. Both School Food Authorities (SFAs) and non-school sponsors may claim meals through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and/or the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) when a school building or day care center is closed due to USC. These waivers are not to be applied for in advance of USC.

Which program should sponsors serve and claim meals through? Claim meals through NSLP when a building is closed and virtual learning is offered, and SFSP when a building is closed and **no** virtual learning is offered. In order to claim in SFSP, sponsors must have participated in SFSP in the last two years, and the site must be eligible to participate. New this year, all programs that claim meals through CACFP may apply for this waiver as well, not just at-risk afterschool programs.

These waivers may be used for:

- Non-congregate (take home) meals service

- Flexibility of meal service times
- Parent and guardian meal pick-up
- Waived for Offer Versus Serve (OVS) for senior high school
- Waived enrichment activities for At-Risk Afterschool in CACFP

USC waivers may be used for up to 10 consecutive days. However, if the USC lasts longer than 10 consecutive days, additional days may be requested.

To serve meals through USC using 12 (I) waivers, sponsors must:

- Watch the Unanticipated School Closure (USC) Webinar located on the Michigan Department of Education's SFSP website under [How to Apply](#) and email MDE-SFSP@michigan.gov stating that you have reviewed the training.
- Complete the [USC Meal Service During Unanticipated School Closure Request Form](#) located on the Michigan Department of Education's SFSP website under [How to Apply](#).
- **USC SFSP only:** Sponsors must amend their 2026 CNP: Coordinated Application in NexSys and update the calendar for days the site served meals. The application must be amended by the end of the month for which the waiver was used.

For additional questions, please email MDE-SFSP@michigan.gov.

Tuesday at 2pm Webinars

- November 4, 2025 - Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Year End Report - [Register here](#)
 - November 18, 2025 - Procurement Series: Food Service Contract Oversight - [Register here](#)
 - November 25, 2025 - Feeding Preschoolers - [Register here](#)
 - December 2, 2025 - Professional Standards - [Register here](#)
 - December 9, 2025 - Production Records - [Register here](#)
 - December 16, 2025 – Special Dietary Needs - [Register here](#)
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10 Cents a Meal for Michigan's Kids and Farms Updates and Reminders

Grant Opportunities

[Lake Michigan School Food System Innovation Hub](#) has released applications for two school food funding opportunities! Funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and convened by the Illinois Public Health Institute, this grant-

making initiative will support innovative ideas that contribute to a more local and nourishing food system right here in Michigan and across Illinois, Wisconsin and Indiana.

Grant applications are now open through January 23, 2026.

Spark Awards fund projects that need a short-term infusion of funds for school food system and product improvements, such as capacity-building, planning, and product-testing projects. (\$30K - \$100K per year)

Innovation Collaborative Awards fund projects that promote systems-level change of the school food system, such as scaling up of programs, forming regional partnerships, or developing or integrating new programs or products. (\$250K - \$500K over 2 ½ years)

Those interested in applying — including farmers, food producers, School Food Authorities and others working to improve school meals — can reach out via the [Michigan Interest Form](#). Staff from Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems are offering [weekly drop-in office hours](#) to answer questions, and a launch webinar date is coming soon. Michigan's State Lead, [Julie Lehman](#), is available to answer questions and help guide you through the application process, as well as connect you with partners and resources to bring your ideas to life. Grantees will receive free grant writing support and ongoing support tailored to their needs and goals.

This initiative is a bold, collaborative effort that will strengthen our Michigan food system while offering students meals that reflect the best of our region's communities. You can find more information about the [Innovation Hub HERE](#).

Pre-Conference Session During the MDE-SNAM Annual Conference

Are you paying your students to eat? Are you using all of the dollars available to you?

This session will cover seasonal menu planning, testing new menu items, how to evaluate your Partnership Agreement Liaison (PAL) report, Financial Information Database (FID) school meals report, and how to manage your USDA foods allocations to best use your budget in order to provide high quality meals for your students.

Register now for a fun interactive pre-conference session at the [MDE-SNAM- 2025 Annual Conference](#); part of our Local First philosophy.

[REGISTER: Playing in Perfect Harmony: Strategic Sourcing of Local and USDA Foods for Better Cost Control](#)

This session is taking place Thursday, November 6, 2025 from 1 – 4 pm.

School Meals Overview Workshop Available

Registration for the first School Meals Overview Workshop for the new school year is open. This hands-on, activity-based workshop covers menu development, recipes and labels, production records, meal component tool, 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 20 and Wednesday, January 21, 2026

Location: Oakland Schools, 2111 Pontiac Lake Road, Waterford Township 48328

Registration: [Day 1 – Oakland Schools – January 20, 2026](#) and [Day 2 – January 21, 2026](#)

Ongoing Social Media Campaign: What's for Lunch?

MDE is running a social media campaign that highlights the great lunches being served throughout our state. It highlights lunches being served in the National School Lunch Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, and the Summer Food Service Program. Get involved by showing off the great lunches being served. Please share your pictures and story by filling out the form at the link below. Pictures will be shared on [MDE's Facebook Page](#). MDE appreciates all who have submitted photos. Please watch this video from the Georgia Department of Education on [How to Take GREAT School Meal Photos](#). We want to ensure the photos that you submit are appealing and representative of all the healthy and innovative lunches served across the state.

[What's For Lunch?](#)

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.

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

MDE-School Nutrition Association of Michigan (SNAM) Annual Conference

The MDE-SNAM Annual Conference and Exhibit Show is November 6-9, 2025, at DoubleTree by Hilton in Battle Creek, MI. This is a great opportunity for professional development, networking, and fun. There are several Thursday pre-conference options available. Friday is focused on content from MDE for all Child Nutrition Programs. On Saturday, SNAM provides breakout sessions and an exhibit show. [Learn more and register today!](#)

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

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)

The USDA has extended the Fiscal Year 2026 FFVP funds to the Michigan Department of Education. These funds have been awarded and made available to [Fiscal Year \(FY\) 2026 FFVP grantees](#) in NexSys – Next Generation Grant, Application, and Cash Management System. FFVP funds are only allowed to be claimed after the FFVP snacks have been served and related expenditures have been paid. Grantees can start drawing down funds in November to reimburse program expenditures. For more information, please reference the [FY 2026 FFVP Claim Schedule](#). Questions can be emailed to MDE-FFVP@michigan.gov.

Updated Dual-Enrollment Information

Do you have students that go to another building for part of the school day and miss mealtimes? The USDA is allowing more flexibility in serving these students. MDE has updated their guidance to reflect the change in the [Guide to Serve Meals to Dual Enrollment Students](#).

Training Corner

RESCHEDULED: CACFP Thinking Thursday Webinar on October 30, 2025, from 2:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m.

Attendees will learn how to gain access to the new MIND 2.0 system, how to submit a claim in MIND 2.0, and the resources available to support CACFP sponsors with this new platform.

Training Topic: MIND 2.0 Training for CACFP. Registration is required.

Click this link to register:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_GixSmLWjTGKse5hNKUPP5A

Guidance for Food Handlers and the Management of Halal Food

Michigan State University Extension is hosting the training, "Guidance for the Food Handler and Management of Halal Food," this fall. This training is for food handlers and educators with responsibilities related to nutrition and food. Participants will increase their knowledge and confidence in how to properly handle halal food for consumers requiring a halal diet and will be able to incorporate with relevant food safety knowledge.

[Registration:](#)

- Tuesday, December 9, 2025; 3 - 4:30 p.m. ET
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Online Training Modules Updates

Many [online training modules](#) have been updated for the new school year. They are a convenient way to train staff throughout the year. Some new topics have been added also and include the following:

- [Is it Whole Grain-Rich \(WGR\)?](#)
- [How to Use Exhibit A Grains Chart and Tool](#)

- [Procuring a Vended Meals Contract: The Bid Process for CACFP and SFSP Non-School Sponsors](#)
 - [Procuring a Vended Meals Contract: The Bid Process for School Sponsors](#)
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Frequently Asked Questions

Question: Can I provide take home meals/backpacks during the school week or over the weekend?

Answer: Yes, and no. It will depend on who is paying for the food in the backpack. Yes, it is allowable when a third party financially supports the backpack program. However, School Nutrition Program funds cannot be used to pay for food and/or supplies used in a backpack or take-home meal program.

Question: What can we do to support families impacted by the stoppage of Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits?

Answer:

- Promote The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), which helps supplement the diets of income-eligible individuals and households by providing them with USDA foods at no cost.
 - You can find participating agencies in the state of Michigan on this interactive map: [Where can I get TEFAP.](#)
 - Foods are distributed in every Michigan county through community action agencies, food banks, pantries and mobile distributions, to name a few.
 - USDA foods distributed include canned, frozen, dried and fresh fruits and vegetables; meat; poultry; fish; nuts; milk and cheese; and whole-grain and enriched grain products including rice, cereal and pasta.
 - Eligibility is based on income and residency. Households must meet the current income guidelines and reside in Michigan. See

information on income eligibility [on The Emergency Food assistance Program website](#).

- Eligibility is self-declared by the participant. You do not need ID or proof of income. At each distribution you will be required to provide your name, state in which you live, how many people reside in the household, and how you are eligible.
- Encourage your students to access free breakfast and lunch through the [Michigan School Meals program](#) in your schools.
- If you currently operate Breakfast After the Bell, Second Chance Breakfast, or Child and Adult Care Food Program At-Risk After-School Suppers or Snacks programs, now is the time to encourage students and families to participate.
- If you do not currently operate Breakfast after the Bell and Second Chance Breakfast in your schools, consider adding it to increase opportunities for participation in breakfast program.
- Lastly, consider adding the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-risk After-school Suppers or snacks if your school is eligible and hasn't yet.

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

[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

Child and Adult Care Food Program
www.Michigan.gov/CACFP
Email: MDE-CACFP@Michigan.gov

Email: MDE-FSMC-Vended@Michigan.gov

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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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