

State Agency Waiver
Approved by _____
on _____ (Date) (Initials)

**New Jersey Department of Agriculture
Child and Adult Care Food Program
Waiver Request and Non-Congregate Feeding Implementation Plan to
Serve Meals during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

The USDA has released several updated and new nationwide waivers, seven of these waivers directly impact participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). CACFP Institutions may request a waiver to continue to operate their meal service programs in the event of a facility (center) or day care home closure during the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. State Agency approval of the waiver request(s) will allow New Jersey CACFP Institutions to provide meals to participants (off-site by pick-up or delivery) in a non-congregate setting. *These waivers are effective July 1, 2021 and remains in effect through June 30, 2022.*

**WAIVER REQUEST APPROVAL
PROCESS**

To request to be approved to utilize one or more of the five recent USDA Nationwide waivers available for CACFP:

1. Complete the required waiver request form and provide your detailed non-congregate food distribution implementation plan on the form.
2. Submit the completed waiver request form by email to: NJCACFPCommunication@ag.nj.gov

Please ensure the email includes the following information:

Subject line: CACFP Institution Name, Agreement # _____ COVID-19 Waiver Request.

3. Once your submitted waiver request form information is verified, an email will be sent to the CACFP Responsible Contact Person listed in your CACFP application regarding approval or denial of the waiver request.
4. Please select the reason(s) you requested to utilize the USDA Nationwide COVID-19 Waivers:
 - Improve children’s access to meals
 - Improve access to meal sites
 - Improve safety of children
 - Improve safety of staff
 - Ease meal preparation
 - Ease meal delivery
 - Food item(s) not available for purchase
 - Purchased food item(s) could not be delivered
 - Purchased food item(s) could not be delivered timely
 - Help manage meal service costs
 - Other (specify) _____

WAIVER AND MEAL DISTRIBUTION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN REQUEST

(Check any waiver(s) that your institution is seeking approval to utilize)

USDA Nationwide Waivers available to Child Nutrition Programs due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The recent USDA Nationwide waivers allow CACFP Institutions to:

1. Suspend meal service times, as needed, in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) during this public health emergency.

Under this waiver, Institutions will request a waiver approval for these meal service time requirements, and they can now be met through providing detailed meal pick-up schedules or delivery plans with designated times for distribution for approval.

2. Serve meals through the Child Nutrition Programs in a Non-Congregate setting. Meals are also not required to be consumed by participants on site.

This means all Child Nutrition Programs can provide meals through a Non-Congregate meal service option (pick-up or delivery of meals, etc.). Under this waiver, meals are not required to be served in the classroom, cafeteria, center, or day care home and meals are not required to be consumed by participants on site.

3. Allow the at-risk afterschool meals program with a non-congregate waiver request approval, to serve grab and go or delivery at-risk meals with the requirement to provide an education or enrichment activity.

Under this waiver, CACFP Sponsoring Organizations already approved for participation in the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program may provide one meal and one snack per day, per child, when an educational or enrichment activity is offered virtually, in person, or in other non-congregate ways. *Submit a sample of the remote enrichment schedule.*

4. Serve meals that do not meet the meal pattern due to current disruptions to the food supply resulting from the unprecedented impacts of COVID-19.

Under this waiver, institutions may request approval from the State Agency, on a case-by-case basis, when institutions are seeking to serve meals when they are not able to serve all required meal components, due to food supply chain issues and thereby are unable to meet the required minimum USDA CACFP meal pattern requirements.

5. Allow parents and guardians to pick up and take-home meals from distribution sites, provided that a process is in place to ensure that meals are distributed only to the parents and guardians of eligible children and that duplicate meals are not distributed.

Under this waiver, institutions could serve meals from distribution sites to parents or guardians of their current CACFP eligible participants. The institution would need to have a system or process in place to ensure meals are distributed to parents or guardians of participants currently enrolled in CACFP. All program recordkeeping requirements remain in effect (attendance, meal counts, menu, cost documentation, etc.).

6. Allow at-risk afterschool care programs to operate in CACFP regardless of their location.

Under this waiver of area eligibility, at-risk afterschool programs regardless of their location, to apply to participate in the CACFP and claim all meals and snacks at the free rate. *Institutions must submit a plan for ensuring that new meal sites are targeting benefits to children in need*, for example, children who may be newly eligible for benefits due to the impacts of COVID-19.

7. Allow CACFP sponsoring organization to continue monitoring activities of Program operations off site (e.g. through a desk audit).

Under this waiver, institutions may request approval to conduct desk audits to meet monitoring requirements.

8. Allow day care homes participating in CACFP to claim all meals served to enrolled children at the Tier 1 rate, regardless of their location.

Under this waiver of area eligibility, family day care homes regardless of their location can receive the Tier I reimbursement rate for all meals and snacks.

*NOTE At-Risk Afterschool Care Programs may only operate in the summer months of July and August with a 12-month school calendar from the school identified as the attendance zone school location with 50% Free and Reduced lunch participation. If operating on a 10 month calendar, those programs must transition to SSO or SFSP for July and August meal reimbursement.

Name of the person completing this form

Date submitted

Email address

Institution Name: _____ Agreement Number: _____

Date Meal Distribution will begin: _____ Date Meal Distribution will end: _____

Name and Address of Facilities or Day Care Home(s) where distribution of meals will take place (add additional below):

Day Care Facilities and Homes Meals to be claimed for reimbursement per day (Up to two meals and one snack, per child or adult, per day).

Check all that apply: Breakfast Lunch Dinner AM Snack PM Snack

At-Risk Afterschool Care Centers meals to be claimed for reimbursement per day (one meal and one snack, per child).

AT RISK Meals ONLY

Check all that apply: Breakfast Lunch Dinner AM Snack PM Snack

1. Is your center currently open, reopened, or closed? _____ The date your facility closed or reopened?
2. If serving school-age children, is the school district providing onsite learning, remote learning, or a combination of the two?

Explain: _____

Please provide a detailed outline the *CACFP Institution's method(s) for meal distribution*. If the *meal distribution plan* is to provide meals for multiple days, please outline the plan below. Include the time(s), day(s), distribution site(s), if your agency is providing grab & go meals, deliveries, onsite meal service, or a combination. Also, explain how all other program requirements (such as, but not limited to meal count records, both regular & non-congregate meal counts, attendance records, etc.), and food safety requirements will be met and how all documented special needs will be accommodated. **Note, reimbursement claims must be submitted and certified in the CARES web-based system.**

Outline for the CACFP Institution’s method(s) for meal distribution *continued*:

(DO NOT GO BEYOND THIS SECTION)

For State Agency Use Only

NPS Approved by: _____ *Date:* _____

AC Approved by: _____ *Date:* _____

*****Your waiver request has been approved for the following USDA Nationwide Waivers extensions:**

The USDA has granted extension of these Nationwide CACFP waivers through School Year 2021-2022. If any meal service updates are made or changes are needed prior to June 30, 2022, you must submit an “amended” waiver request to seek approval of the new meal service changes. ***

CACFP WAIVER REQUESTS HELPFUL TIPS

Before submitting your waiver, please make sure your waiver request and meal distribution implementation include the following:

- Is institution currently approved for CACFP participation in CARES?
- Is the institution currently in good standing?
- Are all facilities and/or day care homes listed as meal distribution sites and the same meal types already approved in the CACFP CARES system?
- Are you distributing meals at the same facilities and/or day care homes *addresses* as approved in CARES for meal distribution? If not, have they submitted alternate address where existing staff will distribute meals?
- Have you identified how you will maintain your process for ensuring all recordkeeping requirements are met?
- Have you identified how you will maintain proper health and sanitation requirements during meal distribution?
- Have you identified what meal types are being distributed?
- If new meal type is requested, not previously approved in CARES, has CARES facility application been changed, submitted, and approved?
- Have you identified any food component that you are experiencing any food or milk supply chain issues with or are unable to obtain? Was specific waiver submitted for this reason?
- What is your method(s) of meal distribution?
- Is the meal distribution by pick-up (grab & go) or did they provide a delivery schedule for delivering to participant homes or bus stop routes, etc.?
- When are they scheduled to distribute meals? Daily or weekly? Once a week or more?
- How often are they distributing meals? Which days and times?
- Are you providing daily meal distribution or a once a week meal distribution of all meals?
- Does their meal distribution plan include providing weekend meals, seven days of food?
- If you selected Waiver #3, did you submit a sample copy of the remote enrichment schedule?
- If you selected #7 (Waiver of Area Eligibility for at-risk afterschool programs), did you include your plan for ensuring that new meal sites are targeting benefits to children in need?

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*NOTE At-Risk Afterschool Care Programs may only operate in the summer months of July and August with a 12-month school calendar from the school identified as the attendance zone school location with 50% Free and Reduced lunch participation. If operating on a 10 month calendar, those programs must transition to SSO or SFSP for July and August meal reimbursement.