



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

March 31, 2020

MEMORANDUM

TO: Child Nutrition Directors
Public and Private Schools
Residential Child Care Institutions
Summer Food Service Program Sponsors
Child and Adult Care Food Program Sponsors

FROM: June Barrett Owen, Program Coordinator
Child Nutrition Programs

RE: Non-Area Eligible Meal Sites

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), Child Nutrition Programs waiver request for the restrictions on site eligibility requirements in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Seamless Summer Option (SSO). With this waiver school food authorities and community organizations, in good standing, may operate in non-area eligible locations to provide children safe, nutritious meals during the emergency school closures due to COVID-19.

Meal sites in non-area eligible locations must target benefits to children in need by public notifications. This could include signage, emails, or contacting parents of children that are eligible for meal benefits, for example, children who may be newly eligible for benefits due to the economic impacts of COVID-19.

This waiver is effective from March 27, 2020 until June 30, 2020 or until expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier.

Should you have any questions concerning this guidance and participate in SSO, please contact your assigned area School Program staff member. If you participate in SFSP, please contact Ben Guthrie, bguthrie@alsde.edu. Thank you for your cooperation.

JBB/JB/JR

Attachment:
ALSDE Waiver Approval for Non-Area Eligible Meal Sites

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of Education

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United States Department of Agriculture

Food and
Nutrition
Service

Braddock
Metro
Center

1320
Braddock
Place
Alexandria
VA 22314

March 30, 2020

June Barrett Owen
Child Nutrition Program Coordinator
Alabama State Department of Education
Gordon Persons Building
P.O. Box 302101
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-2101

Dear Mrs. Barrett Owen,

This letter is in response to the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) waiver request to maintain children's access to meals during the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, submitted March 27, 2020. ALSDE requests a waiver of the restrictions on site eligibility requirements in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Seamless Summer Option (SSO). Specifically, ALSDE requests to waive the requirement that open sites must be located in areas where at least 50 percent of NSLP participants are eligible for free or reduced price meals. Instead, ALSDE requests to allow school food authorities and community organizations, in good standing, to operate in non-area eligible locations to provide children safe, nutritious meals during the emergency school closures.

In its request, ALSDE asserts that due to the economic impact of COVID-19 and school closures, many Alabama communities are having difficulties finding ways to feed high-need students in non-area eligible schools. ALSDE anticipates this waiver will alleviate a significant financial and administrative burden on schools and community organizations. ALSDE states that this waiver will maintain children's access to the SFSP and SSO meal service during school closures related to the pandemic. To maintain children's access to meals, and to support families experiencing financial hardship, ALSDE requests to waive 7 CFR 225.6(c)(2)(i)(G).

Pursuant to the waiver authority granted under Section 2102(b) of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (P.L. 116-127) (the Act) to approve waivers that may increase cost to the Federal Government and have the purpose of providing meals and meal supplements, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) approves this request. However, State agencies must have 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 economic impacts of COVID-19. State agencies should work with local Program operators in developing their plans as local Program operators are best situated to determine how to provide these assurances. This approval applies to sites operating during temporary school closures related to COVID-19. Additionally, FNS reserves the right to withdraw this approval subject to availability of funding.

Therefore, effective as of March 27, 2020, this waiver allows SFSP and SSO sponsors in good standing to operate open sites in areas approved by ALSDE and consistent with the

Mrs. June Barrett Owen
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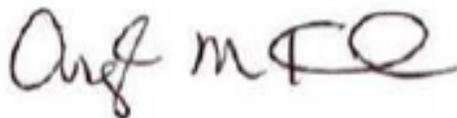
State plan, but that are not located in areas in which poor economic conditions exist as defined by the NSLA at section 13(a)(1)(A) and regulation at 7 CFR 225.2, 225.6(c)(2)(i)(G), 225.6(c)(3)(i)(B), 225.6(d)(1)(i), 225.14(c)(3), and 225.16(b)(4). This waiver remains in effect until June 30, 2020, or until expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier. FNS recognizes that there may be a continued need for this waiver, and will carefully assess the situation on an ongoing basis.

As required by this waiver approval, ALSDE must submit a report to the Secretary not later than 1 year after the date such State received the waiver. The report must include:

- A summary of the use of this waiver by the State agency and local Program operators,
- A summary of how new meal sites were targeted to benefits for children who were previously eligible or newly eligible for program benefits due to the economic impacts of COVID-19, and
- A description of whether and how this waiver resulted in improved services to Program participants.

FNS appreciates ALSDE's commitment to work with sponsors to meet the nutritional needs of children during a challenging time. If you have questions, please contact the FNS Southeast Regional Office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angela Kline". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Angela Kline
Director
Policy and Program Development Division