

Waiver Request from the Connecticut State Department of Education to the U.S. Department of Agriculture

Operation of Child Nutrition Programs during COVID-19 Outbreaks

Extending the Nationwide Area Eligibility Waiver for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) through September 30, 2020

Summary

In response to the current COVID-19 public health emergency, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is requesting a waiver of the area eligibility requirements for SFSP and SSO sites. This will allow SFSP and SSO sponsors in good standing to provide meals at sites operating in July and August 2020 and until school is in session in areas that do not meet area eligibility requirements.

Waiver Request

During the current COVID-19 public health emergency, the CSDE requests a waiver of area eligibility in SFSP regulations [42 U.S.C. 1761(a)(1)(A)(i)(I)] that define area eligibility as an area where at least 50 percent of the children have been determined eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. This waiver would apply to any CSDE-approved SFSP or SSO sponsor in good standing, operating during September 2020 until the start of school year 2020-21.

The USDA's nationwide area eligibility waiver for SFSP and SSO sponsors expires on August 31, 2020. School reopening plans are continually and rapidly changing in response to the exceptional circumstances created by this public health emergency and many school districts across Connecticut are planning a delayed opening for mid-September or later. Connecticut sponsors cannot continue serving children in the areas made eligible through the nationwide area eligibility waiver unless the waiver is extended to allow SFSP and SSO sponsors in good standing to continue their operations in September and until school begins.



This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/COVID-19/Public_Announcement22_Waiver_SFSP_SSO_Area_Eligibility.pdf. For more information, visit the CSDE's [Operation of Child Nutrition Programs during Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Outbreaks](#) section of the CSDE's Child Nutrition Programs webpage.

Waiver Request from the Connecticut State Department of Education to the U.S. Department of Agriculture

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter 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;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of age, ancestry, color, criminal record (in state employment and licensing), gender identity or expression, genetic information, intellectual disability, learning disability, marital status, mental disability (past or present), national origin, physical disability (including blindness), race, religious creed, retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, sex (pregnancy or sexual harassment), sexual orientation, veteran status or workplace hazards to reproductive systems, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes.

Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Levy Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director/Americans with Disabilities Coordinator (ADA), Connecticut State Department of Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 505, Hartford, CT 06103, 860-807-2071, levy.gillespie@ct.gov.