CACFP Updates January 2026



CACFP Updates is the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) electronic newsletter for sponsors of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), including child care centers, family day care homes, emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, and adult day care centers.

This month's topics are listed below. Please review and share with appropriate staff members. For previous versions of CACFP Updates, visit the CSDE's CACFP Updates webpage.

- CSDE Relaunches CACFP Updates
- New CSDE Webpage: CACFP Updates
- CACFP Administrative Review Notice
- New CSDE Resources for CACFP Sponsors: Steps for Uploading Administrative Review and Corrective Action Plan Documents to Compliance Module
- CSDE Launches CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program

CSDE Relaunches CACFP Updates

The January 2026 issue relaunches CACFP Updates. CACFP Updates informs CACFP sponsors of important program requirements and updates. These communications include essential guidance, policy changes, deadlines for completing required activities, and relevant resources from the USDA and CSDE. Please review the important information below.

- **Communication schedule:** After today's issue, CACFP Updates will be issued on the first Wednesday of each month. If the USDA releases urgent guidance, the CSDE will provide immediate notification outside of the regular schedule to ensure timely compliance.

- **Identifying program-specific topics:** Some topics in CACFP Updates will apply only to specific programs, such as guidance for child care centers, a deadline for adult day care centers, or a requirement for family day care homes. When the topic is program specific, the topic title will indicate the applicable program, such as "Updated CACFP Menu Planning Forms for Child Care Programs" or "Updated Income Eligibility Forms for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers." In addition, topics with different links for different programs will include titles before the links to indicate the applicable programs, for example "child care programs" or "adult day care centers."

- **Sharing information with program staff:** The CSDE encourages all sponsors to carefully review each topic and share applicable information with all relevant staff members. This will help sponsors maintain compliance with CACFP regulations and support successful program operations.

- **Request for topics of interest:** Sponsors may request topics for inclusion in future editions of CACFP Updates by emailing the CSDE's CACFP staff. Some examples include additional guidance, questions and answers, and resources on specific CACFP requirements.

- **Questions and assistance:** For questions or assistance with any topics, please contact the CSDE's CACFP staff. The CSDE's CACFP team is committed to supporting all CACFP sponsors in meeting program requirements and achieving excellence in meal service.

The CSDE would like to thank all CACFP sponsors for their dedication to promoting healthy eating habits and improving the nutritional quality of meals served to participants.

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New CSDE Webpage: CACFP Updates

The CSDE's new CACFP Updates webpage will include PDF versions of each month's CACFP Updates, starting with the January 2026 edition. The webpage includes a list of each month's topics to help sponsors easily find specific information and resources. Links to this webpage are also available from the CSDE's webpages below.

- **Child care programs:** Program Guidance for CACFP Child Care Programs
- **Adult day care centers:** Program Guidance for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers

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CACFP Administrative Review Notice

It is time to begin the CACFP administrative review process. As part of this process, members of the CSDE's CACFP staff will contact institutions that are due for an administrative review. The administrative review evaluates program operations and ensures compliance with the USDA requirements outlined in 7 CFR 226, as well as all applicable state policies and procedures. The CACFP team appreciates CACFP sponsors' continued cooperation and looks forward to a collaborative review process.

New CSDE Resources for CACFP Sponsors: Steps for Uploading Administrative Review and Corrective Action Plan Documents to Compliance Module

CACFP sponsors must now upload all administrative review documents and Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) to the Compliance Module in the Connecticut Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System). The two new resources below provide step-by-step instructions for both processes.

- **Administrative Review**: Steps for Uploading Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Records to the Compliance Module
  This document describes the steps for Connecticut CACFP sponsors to upload required documents to the Compliance Module of the CNP System.

- **Corrective Action:** Steps for Uploading a Corrective Action Plan for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) in the Compliance Module
  This document outlines the steps for Connecticut CACFP sponsors to upload their required Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to the Compliance Module of the CNP System.

These documents are available in the "CACFP" section of the CSDE's Connecticut Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System) webpage.

These new processes ensure secure document submission, improve efficiency in reviews, and provide a centralized system for tracking compliance. Sponsors should have login credentials, access permissions, and all required files ready before uploading. Sponsors may contact their CSDE Lead Reviewer for assistance.

CSDE Launches CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program

The CSDE is pleased to announce the launch of the CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program. This program provides funding to eligible USDA Child Nutrition Program sponsors to support the purchase of locally and regionally sourced unprocessed and minimally processed foods, strengthening local agriculture while supporting nutritious meals statewide. For more information, refer to Operational Memorandum No. 2-26: CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program and the CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program section of the CSDE's CT Fresh Ed website.

Note: The application for the CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program is not yet available for the CACFP. The CSDE will implement the CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program in three waves. The first wave will open to sponsors of the NSLP and SBP. The second wave will expand to include the CACFP, followed by a final wave supporting the SSO and SFSP. The CSDE will notify sponsors of the CACFP, SFSP, and SSO when their application to participate in the CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program is available.

For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's CACFP Updates webpage or contact the CACFP staff at the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841. This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfpupdates/2026/cacfp_updates_2026_01.pdf.

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