



Completing the Application Process for Healthy Food Certification (HFC)

Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes

 Connecticut State Department of Education
Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs

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Module Topics

- Application Requirements
- Steps for Completing HFC Statement
- Requirements for Food and Beverage Exemptions
- Resources

Resources and websites are listed in the yellow bar

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Overview of HFC

- Section 10-215f of Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.)
 - Began in school year 2006-07
- Applies to all public schools participating in National School Lunch Program (NSLP)



https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_169.htm#sec_10-215f

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State HFC State Requires

- Each board of education or governing authority (BOE) must certify annually to CSDE whether they will or will not follow Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS)



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CNS Applies To

- All foods available for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals
- All foods served in USDA's Afterschool Snack Program (ASP)



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CSDE Webpage

Healthy Food Certification (HFC)



<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/healthy-food-certification/hfc-training-program>

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HFC Application Requirements

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Annual HFC Completed through HFC Statement

- **Addendum to Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs (ED-099)**



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HFC Dates

- Certification period
July 1 2026, through
June 30, 2027
- Submission deadline
July 1, 2026



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Completed Online

- **CSDE's Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System)**



<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/cnp-system>



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Online Submission Includes

1. **HFC Statement**
 - Completed and certified by authorized signer
2. **Final BOE-approved minutes that reflect required HFC votes**



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HFC Statement Available in CNP System by Mid-May

- CSDE emails school food authorities when available
- Cannot complete prior to CSDE's email



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Steps for HFC Application Process

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Importance of Advance Planning

- Allow sufficient time to obtain final BOE-approved minutes by July 1

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Step 1: Review CSDE's HFC Operational Memorandum

- Specific application requirements
- Important steps to ensure timely submission and CSDE approval

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/memos/om2026/om03-26.pdf>

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CSDE Webpage

Annual HFC Application section of HFC webpage

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/healthy-food-certification/annual-hfc-application>

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Step 2: Schedule required HFC votes at BOE meeting

- Plan ahead
- Use required motion language



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Plan Ahead

- Allow sufficient time for July 1 deadline
- Account for when BOE will approve final minutes

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Use Required Motion Language

- CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 03-26
 - Healthy food option
 - Food exemptions
 - Beverage exemptions

BOE-approved minutes must include required language

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Vote 1: HFC Participation

- Required for all NSLP Public Schools

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If BOE votes “yes” to HFC

- Vote 2: food exemptions
- Vote 3: optional beverage exemptions *
- OR
- Vote 2: combined food and beverage exemptions

* Beverage exemptions are not part of annual HFC Statement

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Food Exemptions

- If BOE votes to allow, sales of noncompliant foods must meet three exemption criteria of HFC statute

https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_169.htm#sec_10-215f

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Three Exemption Criteria

- The sale is in connection with an event occurring after end of regular school day or on the weekend
- The sale is at location of the event
- The foods are not sold from vending machine or school store

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If BOE votes “no” to HFC

- Vote for food exemptions not required
- Vote 2: optional beverage exemptions *

* Beverage exemptions are not part of annual HFC Statement

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CSDE Resource

Exemptions for Foods and Beverages in Public Schools



https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/hfc/exemptions_food_beverages_public_schools.pdf

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CSDE Webpage

Complying with Healthy Food Certification Training Program

- **Module 2: HFC Requirement**
- **Module 6: Fundraisers**



<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/healthy-food-certification/hfc-training-program>

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Step 3: Conduct required HFC votes at BOE meeting

- Prepare BOE minutes
 - Specific motion language
 - Results of HFC votes
- Approved by BOE as final



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Step 4: Complete HFC Statement and upload BOE minutes

- Begins in May 2026
- Wait for CSDE email and instructions



<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/cnp-system>

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CSDE Resource

Instructions for Submitting Connecticut's Healthy Food Certification Statement for School Year 2026-27



https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/hfc/app/instructions-submitting_connecticut_healthy_food_certification_statement.pdf

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If BOE Minutes are Not Final by July 1

- Upload draft minutes by July 1
- Upload final minutes as soon as available



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HFC Statement Overview

- Section 1: Background
- Section 2: Certification Statement
- Section 3: Exemption Statement
- Section 4: Amendment to
Agreement for Child Nutrition
Programs (ED-099)
- Section 5: Board Meeting Minutes



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HFC Statement Overview, continued

- Section 6: Contact Information
 - HFC contact person
 - Superintendent
 - Food service director
 - Business manager
 - Interschool agreements
 - School stores
 - Culinary arts programs



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HFC Contact Person



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HFC Contact Person =

The point person responsible for
coordinating the day-to-day
implementation and monitoring of
HFC under Section 10-215f of the
Connecticut General Statutes

Terms to Know

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HFC Contact Person Responsibilities

- Completes required HFC trainings
- Ensures all competitive foods comply with requirements



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Who is HFC Contact Person

- Typically, food service director but can be anyone that district designates
 - Business manager
 - Food service director from food service management company



Successfully meet responsibilities

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/hfc/hfc_district_contact_responsibilities.pdf

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CSDE Resource

Responsibilities of District Contact Person for Healthy Food Certification



https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/hfc/hfc_district_contact_responsibilities.pdf

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Resources

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CSDE Webpage

Healthy Food Certification Webpage



<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/healthy-food-certification>

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CSDE Webpage

Connecticut Nutrition Standards



<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/connecticut-nutrition-standards>

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Questions?

Contact the CSDE's HFC coordinator or school nutrition programs staff

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/healthy-food-certification/contact>

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cnstaff/countysign.pdf>

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Thank you for participating!

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