

Requirements for Field Trip Meals in the Summer Food Service Program

Effective October 1, 2022, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) [Final Rule: Streamlining Program Requirements and Improving Integrity in the Summer Food Service Program \(SFSP\)](#) redesignated Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (7 CFR) [Section 225.6\(i\)\(7\)\(v\)](#). This section allows Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors to claim reimbursement only for meals specified in the state-sponsored agreement at an approved site, unless the requirements in [7 CFR 225.16\(g\)](#) are met. SFSP sponsors that provide advance notice to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) are allowed to receive reimbursement for meals served away from an approved site, such as meals served during field trips.

Meals Served Away from Approved Locations

SFSP sponsors may be reimbursed for meals served on field trips that meet the conditions below.

1. SFSP sponsors must notify the CSDE in advance of meals being served away from the approved site ([7 CFR, 225.16\[g\]\[1\]\[i\]](#)). A site field trip request for each field trip must be submitted to the CSDE for prior approval using the [Connecticut Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Program \(CNP System\)](#).
2. SFSP sponsors must meet all requirements in [7 CFR 225.16\(g\)](#), including applicable state and local health, safety, and sanitation standards (refer to the CSDE's [Food Safety for Field Trip Meals in the Summer Food Service Program](#)). SFSP sponsors must ensure that complete reimbursable meals are served (refer to "[Meal Pattern Compliance](#)" in this document) and counted at the point of service during the field trip (refer to "[Meal Counts](#)" in this document) and that meals served are supported with proper documentation, such as [meal count forms](#), delivery receipts, and [menu production records](#).
3. SFSP sponsors of open sites must continue operating at the approved location on the day of the field trip. If continued operation is not possible, the CSDE may permit an open site to close, in which case the SFSP sponsor must notify the community of the change in meal service and provide information about alternative open sites ([7 CFR 225.16\[g\]\[1\]\[iv\]](#)).
4. SFSP sponsors must click "Submit for Approval" to submit a field trip request in the CNP System's online SFSP application packet and email their [CSDE Summer Meals staff member](#) to indicate that the field trip request has been submitted. This will ensure timely CSDE approval of the field trip request.



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All SFSP meals for field trips must be served at the meal service times approved by the CSDE, unless the CSDE approves a change in advance of the meal service ([7 CFR 225.16\(c\)\(1\)\(iii\)](#)).

Notification Requirements for Field Trips

In accordance with [7 CFR 225.16\(g\)\(2\)](#), the CSDE requires SFSP sponsors to provide the following advance notice for field trips:

- If an open site remains open on the day of the field trip the SFSP sponsor must notify the CSDE **two business days** prior to the day of the field trip. This also applies to closed-enrolled sites.
- If an open site needs to close on the day of the field trip, the SFSP sponsor must notify the CSDE **seven business days** in advance of the field trip to ensure the community is properly notified of the site closure.

If the SFSP sponsor does not provide the required advance notice listed above, the CSDE may determine that meals served on the field trip are not reimbursable ([7 CFR 225.16\[g\]\[2\]](#)). To prevent loss of reimbursement, SFSP sponsors must submit field trip requests to the CSDE through the CNP System by the deadlines indicated above.

Meal Pattern Compliance

SFSP sponsors must ensure that all field trip meals meet the [SFSP meal pattern](#) requirements. Field trip meals must contain all meal components in the minimum required amounts, including milk. For guidance on the meal pattern requirements, visit the “[Meal Patterns for the SFSP](#)” and “[Crediting Foods in the SFSP](#)” sections of the CSDE’s SFSP webpage.

Meal Counts

The USDA requires that SFSP meal counts must be determined at the point of service. For field trips, the point of service is the point in the meal service at the field trip site where staff can accurately determine that the child has been served all required components for a reimbursable meal. The USDA does not allow any other methods to determine field trip meal counts, such as field trip attendance, orders for field trip meals, the number of meals sent on the field trip, or the number of meals returned from the field trip. Meal counts must be taken by trained staff. SFSP sponsors must develop a local process to obtain accurate point-of-service meal counts for field trips.

For additional guidance and technical assistance on implementing field trip meals, contact the CSDE’s [Summer Meals](#) staff.

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Best Practices

- Develop a standard operating procedure (SOP) with clear written procedures for field trip meals, including how to identify reimbursable meals, instructions for conducting field trip point-of-service meal counts, food safety requirements (refer to the CDE’s *Requirements for Field Trip Meals in the Summer Food Service Program*), and a plan for informing substitutes of the requirements for field trip meals.
- Disseminate the SOP to food service staff and all applicable field trip staff (including volunteers) and post it on the SFSP sponsor’s website.
- Provide regular training for all staff involved with field trip meals.
- Include point-of-service meal count instructions for field trip staff with the delivery of the field trip meals. For example, laminate the meal count instructions and attach them to the food transport containers.
- Use clear signage on the transport containers to help field trip staff identify the required meal components.
- Reinforce proper procedures for field trip meals through various communication channels, such as staff meetings, emails, employee handbooks, written instructions, and the SFSP sponsor’s website.

Resources

Crediting Foods in the SFSP (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program/documents>

Final Rule: Streamlining Program Requirements and Improving Integrity in the SFSP (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/fr-091922>

Food Safety for Field Trip Meals in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/Food_Safety_Field_Trip_Meals_SFSP.pdf

Meal Count Forms (“Apply” section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program/apply#MealCountForms>

Meal Patterns for the SFSP (“How To” section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program/how-to#MealPatterns>

Production Records (“How To” section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program/how-to#ProductionRecords>

Program Guidance for the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/program-guidance-for-the-summer-food-service-program>

Requirements for Field Trip Meals in the SFSP

For more information on Summer Meals, visit the CSDE's [SFSP](#) webpage or contact the [Summer Meals 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/SFSP/Field_Trip_Meals_SFSP.pdf.

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1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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