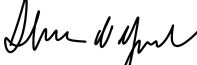




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: 2026 Sponsors of the Summer Food Service Programs (SFSP)

FROM: Shannon K. Yearwood, Bureau Chief 
Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, Connecticut State Department of Education

DATE: April 27, 2026

SUBJECT: Operational Memorandum No. 01-26 – SFSP
2026 SFSP Reimbursement Rates and Schedule for Submitting Online
Reimbursement Claim Data

Reimbursement Rates for 2026

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) released the 2026 SFSP reimbursement rates in January 2026. The new rates reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index as required by federal regulation. The attached 2026 SFSP reimbursement rates apply only to the regular SFSP. They do not apply to sponsors participating under the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

Claim Submission Schedule

The Code of Federal Regulations for the SFSP ([7 CFR 225.9](#)) details specific requirements for submitting claims for reimbursement to state agencies by SFSP sponsors. These requirements are summarized in the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) Claim Submission Schedule on page 2 of this Operational Memorandum. The recommended timeframe for submitting claims is the 15th of the month following the month covered by the claim (column 2). Original and revised claims **must** be submitted no later than 60 days following the last day of the month covered by the claim (column 3).

Sponsors must adhere to the Claim Submission Schedule to ensure timely payment of claims. All SFSP sponsors will submit claims in the [Connecticut Online Application and Claiming System for Connecticut Child Nutrition Programs](#) (CNP System). The CNP System allows sponsors to enter and submit claims throughout the month. Claims may be submitted by the date in Column 2 for timely reimbursement by the CSDE.

Claims must be submitted by the date in column 3 to ensure compliance with the required time frame (60 days). Although sponsors may prepare and submit a claim in the CNP System at any time, a claim that is reaching the final deadline date for submission (column 3 of the Claim Submission Schedule) **might not be paid** if it is not submitted by this final deadline date. The CSDE reserves the right to deny payment if the claim is not filed or corrected by these dates.

Sponsors must therefore make every effort to submit timely and accurate information. “Submitted” means 1) claims for reimbursement are prepared by the sponsor’s designated claims preparer; and 2) then subsequently certified (i.e., submitted) by the authorized signer in the CNP system.

CSDE Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs Claim Submission Schedule

Column 1: Claim Month	Column 2: Due Date for Prompt Payment	Column 3: Deadline for Final Payment
June 2026	July 15, 2026	August 31, 2026
July 2026	August 17, 2026	September 29, 2026
August 2026	September 15, 2026	October 30, 2026

Failure to Submit Claims/One-time Exception

The CSDE has the authority to approve a one-time exception over a 36-month period for reimbursing a valid, late monthly claim. The one-time exception must be from the federal fiscal year (October 1 through September 30) to which the claim applies. To be considered for payment, one of the two approved authorized signers must submit a request for the one-time exception (including a corrective action plan) no later than December 15, 2026. For additional guidance, contact your [Summer Meals team member](#).

Important Information for Submitting Claims

Sponsors must keep full and accurate records to substantiate the number and type of SFSP meals claimed for reimbursement.

- All meal counts must be supported by adequate documentation that is kept on file by the sponsor. The claim must be limited to actual numbers of reimbursable meals served. Estimates cannot be included. Claiming of meals is designated as “Self-Prep and/or Vended-Rural Meals Served to Children” or “Vended-Urban Meals Served to Children.” Please note that the USDA uses specific criteria to determine if a site is designated as rural or urban. State agencies and sponsors should use the USDA Rural Designation Tool to determine if a proposed site is designated as rural for purposes of SFSP.
- Per USDA regulations, all sponsors contracting with a food service management company (FSMC) must select “Vended-Rural or Vended-Urban Meals Served to Children” on their site applications for all sites under their sponsorship agreement.
- Sponsors with 10 or fewer operating days in June may submit a combined claim with July. *

- Sponsors with 10 or fewer operating days in August may submit a combined claim with July. *
- Sponsors that operate in three consecutive months may submit combined claims if the combined claim only includes 10 or fewer operating days from each of the first and last months of operation (June and August). *

* **Note:** Sponsors that submit a combined claim must also submit a breakdown of the meal counts for each month by meal type for all months covered by the combined claim in the CNP system.

Required Documentation of Program Expenses

While sponsors are not required to report their costs to the CSDE on an ongoing basis, they must continue to maintain records of their costs for the CSDE's review and for audit purposes. Sponsors must continue to account for any income that accrues to the SFSP. However, this income will not be deducted from the combined operating and administrative costs to determine the amount of reimbursement the sponsor is entitled to receive. Reimbursement is based solely on the per meal reimbursement rate without comparison to actual or budgeted costs.

Requirement for Separation of Duties

The CSDE reminds sponsors that submitting claims requires a separation of duties. The CNP System is an online (internet-based) system that includes security measures to support adequate internal controls through separation of duties. This separation of duties involves having more than one person involved in completing a task. When adequate internal controls or separation of duties are in place, one person is prevented from having control over all aspects of a particular transaction, thereby minimizing the opportunity for errors and unintended reporting. For more information, refer to the CSDE's document, SFSP User IDs and Passwords for Accessing Connecticut's Online Application and Claiming System.

For questions regarding the claim filing process, including authorizing online system access for claims preparers and submitters, please contact Caroline Cooke, Education Consultant, at (860) 807-2144 or caroline.cooke@ct.gov.

SKY: tmm

Important: This is a numbered Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) operational memorandum that contains important program information. Please read carefully and retain for future reference. All CSDE operational memoranda are posted on the CSDE's [Operational Memoranda for the SFSP](#) webpage.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer.

Reimbursement Rates for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

Effective Date: January 1, 2026

Sponsors receive reimbursement that is determined by the number of reimbursable meals served, multiplied by the combined rates for food service operations and administration. However, the combined rate is based on separate operating and administrative rates of reimbursement, each of which is adjusted differently for inflation.

The 2026 reimbursement rates are presented as a combined set of rates to highlight simplified cost accounting procedures. The new operating rates represent a 3.75 percent increase in the *Food Away from Home* series of the Consumer Price Index for the period from November 2024 to November 2025.

2026 Combined Operating and Administrative Rates

Type of meal	Self-preparation or rural sites	Other types of sites (vended)
Breakfast	\$ 3.1975	\$ 3.1375
Lunch/Supper	\$ 5.6000	\$ 5.5100
Snack	\$ 1.3250	\$ 1.2950

For information on the SFSP, visit the CSDE's [SFSP](#) webpage or contact the [Summer Meals staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.



Reimbursement Rates for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

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Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted 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; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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