




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. 02-26 – SFSP
Guidance for Residential Camps and Closed Enrolled Sites

1. Application for Free and Reduced-price Meals

Residential Camps and sponsors with Closed Enrolled Sites located in non-area eligible locations must update and distribute income eligibility applications for free meals for summer 2026. The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) revises and releases the Family Application for Free and Reduced-Price School Meals or Free Milk each year on July 1. Sponsors are required to use and distribute the most current version. This form is available in English and Spanish under "[Income Eligibility Forms](#)" in the "Apply" section of the CSDE's Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) webpage.

2. Income Guidelines for Determining Eligibility for Free and Reduced-Price Meals

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) income guidelines are intended solely for use by sponsors to determine income eligibility categories and should not be distributed to parents or households. Sponsors must use the income guidelines that are in effect at the time the eligibility determination is made. Children who qualify for free or reduced-price meals during the school year are eligible to receive free meals through the SFSP at Residential Camps and Closed Enrolled Sites in non-area eligible locations. However, a child receiving free meals during the 2026-27 school year does not confer automatic income eligibility for free meals. An example is a child who attends a school participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) where all students receive breakfast and lunch at no cost regardless of income.

The current [Income Guidelines for Determining Eligibility for Free and Reduced-Price Meals, effective July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026](#), are available in the "[Income Guidelines for SFSP](#)" section of the CSDE's Income Guidelines for Child Nutrition Programs webpage. The guidelines for July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027, will be available on the same webpage in June 2026.

3. Sample Parent Letter

Sponsors must distribute a letter to parents/households with the income eligibility application. Sponsors must distribute the most current version. Sample parent letters in English and Spanish are available under [“Income Eligibility Forms”](#) in the “Apply” section of the CSDE’s Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) webpage.

4. Documenting Eligibility of Residential Camps and Closed Enrolled Sites, not in area eligible locations in the SFSP.

Sponsors may document eligibility of a Residential Camp or Closed Enrolled Site by:

- obtaining lists of names and eligibility status of enrolled students for free and reduced-price meals from schools where the students receive school lunch or breakfast; or
- collecting completed income eligibility applications from the parent/guardian of each enrolled child.

Note: Federal regulations permit all sponsors to use school-based eligibility information to document eligibility as noted above. The local school food authority does not need parental consent forms to provide this information to SFSP sponsors.

5. Enrollment Information Form

Documentation for Closed Enrolled Sites must show the number of children enrolled and the number of children who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Residential Camps must provide this information for each camp session. All documentation must be provided to the CSDE as soon as it is available, but no later than the date the claim is submitted. Enrollment forms in English and Spanish are available under [“Income Eligibility Forms”](#) in the “Apply” section of the CSDE’s Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) webpage.

Questions regarding this memorandum may be directed to the [Summer Meals team member](#).

SKY: tmm

Attachment

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.

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