

## School Lunch Tray Table Talk Transcript: March 3, 2022

00:00:00.000 --> 00:00:30.010

Yearwood, Shannon

Thank you so much for your patience and I I'm Shannon Yearwood would I am the education manager with the child nutrition programs for those Connecticut State Department of Education and I am so excited to welcome you to our every other week School Lunch Tray Table Talk and I am also delighted to be joined by my team members. Today, who are here to help walk you through the content that you have seen in the last 2 Table Talks or in the last 2 School Lunch Tray newsletters and I'm so thrilled you're liking the new.

00:00:30.090 --> 00:00:35.770

Yearwood, Shannon

Right format that we have for you so please keep that feedback coming up in that.

00:00:36.850 --> 00:01:07.020

Yearwood, Shannon

And also, we are going to go through those action items do you need to do the items you need to know and the resource round up so that you know where you can find the information. You need to not have to reinvent the wheel or recreate anything well, we send you will help what we what we point out to you. But we have available in our program guidance will help you stay in compliance. We've already done a lot of the base work for you so if you just use our forms, you should be at least halfway there, so.

00:01:07.280 --> 00:01:30.360

Yearwood, Shannon

Don't forget to tell your friends to join us for Table Talk. We are recording. These and making these available on our School Lunch Tray website where you can easily reference. All of the past issues and be able to find any sort of topics that you may have missed so thank you. For those of you who were able to submit questions ahead of time certainly that link does not go bad so use it. Whenever you can.

00:01:30.420 --> 00:02:04.000

Yearwood, Shannon

Uhm we are keeping in trying to keep our technologies straight. We are keeping the uhm the mic and the camera off for all of the participants so any questions, you have entered those in the chat as we go. We will also correspond with you. We will get to any questions that you have entered in that chat message at the end of this School Lunch Tray Table Talk anything. We run out of time for or that seems like we may need a little bit of time to be able to consider it more deeply or perhaps take USDA guidance.

00:02:04.260 --> 00:02:10.730

Yearwood, Shannon

We may not be able to answer today or if they are very specific questions to your circumstances.

00:02:11.710 --> 00:02:44.060

Yearwood, Shannon

Enter those anyway, and it we may not read those for the good of the group. But we will certainly

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get back to you keep in mind. If you don't tell us what's on your mind. We're not sure how to what? What kind of guidance technical assistance or consideration documents that we need to develop to help you out, so with that uhm. I do want to say next week is a very special week. Indeed, we have National School Breakfast Week to celebrate, and we know a few of you out there are planning some exciting events this year, we have been contacted by USDA our state.

00:02:44.120 --> 00:03:16.370

Yearwood, Shannon

In our northeast region is very, very active and we have helped set the precedent for a lot of ways that policies are implemented around these programs throughout the nation so USDA, loves to visit and they want to come see you on the ground in your schools in the field so if you have any events whether it's for school National School Breakfast Week or if it is for any event that you have coming up, whether it's a summer kickoff event or any other type of event that you are celebrating nutrition, please.

00:03:16.510 --> 00:03:37.470

Yearwood, Shannon

Reach out to your contacts at the end within our unit and let them know those dates and if you are willing to have USDA and or our team come out and see what you're doing, and help you celebrate so with that. I'm going to hand it off to my team and I know Monica is going to cover our first topic so Susan if you don't mind pulling that up.

00:03:38.170 --> 00:03:40.450

Yearwood, Shannon

Thanks so much Monica the mic is all yours.

00:03:41.120 --> 00:04:11.130

Pacheco, Monica

Thank you so much Shannon good afternoon. Everyone Monica Pacheco with the Food Distribution team just some new things happening that we wanna make sure we get right to we had offered last month as most of you are aware some additional funds through the Commodity Credit Corporation CCC additional USDA Foods offerings those who placed orders did a great job of staying within their allotments and and placing those orders, but at this point.

00:04:11.200 --> 00:04:22.910

Pacheco, Monica

We are seeing a balance remaining at the state level. So, we have reopened a new catalog with some new CCC items and that is listed below and.

00:04:24.140 --> 00:04:36.380

Pacheco, Monica

If you could describe the limit there, you go so those are the offerings and each of those are links to the product information sheets. So, some of these are new to us here in Connecticut. So, we want that information available to you.

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00:04:37.730 --> 00:04:43.960

Pacheco, Monica

What we are asking for you to do is in the next week you can go in and place those orders and uhm.

00:04:44.730 --> 00:04:57.940

Pacheco, Monica

These items will be delivered in September 2, HPC to the warehouse so first of all make sure that you are sending these items. These are direct delivery items to the HPC warehouse when you go into order.

00:04:59.900 --> 00:05:03.260

Pacheco, Monica

And also, if you could just scroll back up a little bit Susan.

00:05:04.320 --> 00:05:14.850

Pacheco, Monica

Go back up a little bit. I apologize Susan. Thank you right there, so you will see that we have bolded and highlighted that you need to make sure that you are.

00:05:15.460 --> 00:05:46.210

Pacheco, Monica

Uhm ordering appropriately and what that means is we're not putting we're not giving you any additional allocation numbers. We are asking you to think responsibly of what you think you can use next year and what you will be able to take from the warehouse and please. Consider these requests because we will once again have to make these either into full truckloads or find a match from a region our region here and Nero to get these orders in so there are no guarantees on these, we will do our best believe me.

00:05:46.260 --> 00:05:58.990

Pacheco, Monica

But they they are requests, so we will want to make sure you're monitoring. Some reports so that that's we speak to next you really should be running the requisition status report.

00:05:59.760 --> 00:06:00.160

Pacheco, Monica

Uhm.

00:06:00.920 --> 00:06:02.360

Pacheco, Monica

So you can stay where you are Susan.

00:06:05.670 --> 00:06:35.870

Pacheco, Monica

That's fine right there. Thank you come you wanna run that requisition status report monthly and a tool that we've learned just with the advent of these CCC orders when you go in and there's that first box that asks for the program and we've always taught to you, putting in NSLP leave that blank

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that will allow you to capture NSLP any NSLP bonus that was offered because we did have some in the fall and also the CCC bonus items because that is considered a separate.

00:06:35.930 --> 00:06:42.760

Pacheco, Monica

program and would not be reflected when you run it under NSLP, but if you leave it blank it will show everything.

00:06:43.790 --> 00:07:13.530

Pacheco, Monica

Also, because of the way these orders have changed some items are coming in this year that were from the NSLP bonus. But some of those got bumped out to next year as well. The CCC bonus items are next year. The 22-23 school year. So, our suggestion is also to run it for a 2 year period. So, you would put in the dates of July 1, 2021, through June 30th, 2023, that will capture the 2 school years that these products will

00:07:13.580 --> 00:07:27.630

Pacheco, Monica

Be showing so uhm I know this is a lot and I will be able to demonstrate this tomorrow because we will be doing a training, which I'll speak to momentarily that I can show you if you can move ahead now Susan. Thank you.

00:07:28.530 --> 00:07:42.220

Pacheco, Monica

OK so here again is a screenshot you'll want to go into the CCC catalog under direct delivery. The screenshot was actually from our last one so there are no poultry items, this time as you would notice it is listed again.

00:07:42.280 --> 00:07:55.940

Pacheco, Monica

Well uh we had the items listed but you will see the categories. Send these items to HPC so again. They will come in. In September to the warehouse and then after that time would then be showing on your allocations.

00:07:57.240 --> 00:08:07.170

Pacheco, Monica

Alright and again we have till March 10th and if you move forward so as a reminder. We've married that with our March 10th deadline for our regular orders so.

00:08:08.410 --> 00:08:24.770

Pacheco, Monica

Everything will be closing at the end of the day on March 10 and the regular orders ordering instructions and all the information. You need are still on our food distribution web page. So, any questions, please reach out to Allison and myself were getting lots of them and they're great questions so we're happy to help you out.

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00:08:25.940 --> 00:08:29.360

Pacheco, Monica

Alright so then we go into the need to know so realizing that.

00:08:30.470 --> 00:08:48.490

Pacheco, Monica

This has become all the more challenging these days and I know for many going into web supply is a once a year event normally and and intimidating at times, so especially for our new people who are new to ordering a web supply. We are offering a virtual training session tomorrow morning.

00:08:49.030 --> 00:09:19.290

Pacheco, Monica

Uh from 9 to 10:00 o'clock. It's going to be very casual in that it's not a formal PowerPoint and all that we are going to be taking you step by step through the instructions to place the orders and sharing our screen going in as a test school to show you what it would look like as a school to go in and order what the different dropdowns are and to take you through the process so and certainly anyone who wants to refresh her. And again, I will be showing how to run for those reports as part of the demonstration if you wanna come into.

00:09:19.430 --> 00:09:44.580

Pacheco, Monica

That all are welcome, so the link is below. Their similar to the way this one works and then from 10 to 10:30 depending on when the other session gets over till 10:30. We're available for questions and answers and that could be anything related to the ordering or anything else you have. I know it's you know, sometimes so hard to reach us and and you know doing it over emails can be a challenge at times, so will be there to answer any questions, you have.

00:09:45.930 --> 00:10:09.370

Pacheco, Monica

And I think oh and there was the one question that did come in on the log and it asked whether this would be recorded. It will be, but please remember, these orders are due in a week, and I think there's a bit of processing time to get these recordings up and post it so if at all possible if you can attend. I would strongly suggest it if you have any interest in seeing what we present tomorrow morning.

00:10:10.180 --> 00:10:36.370

Pacheco, Monica

And uhm lastly to if you are a person who is new to your district, and you have not received access to web supply to place these orders. You need to get to either myself or my partner Allison Calhoun White in Food Distribution immediately. So, we can get that going. We need to get you an access ID and password. So, we can get you ordering we have a week left so no problem. We can do it, so just reach out and let us know.

00:10:37.400 --> 00:10:41.830

Pacheco, Monica

And I think that's enough for us, so I'm gonna pass it off. I believe to Teri.

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Dandeneau, Therese

Thank you Monica Hi Everyone.

00:10:46.990 --> 00:11:16.840

Dandeneau, Therese

I just wanted to let you know that some of you may have noticed that the rates for reimbursements for lunch and breakfast were changed in January and for people that normally participate in the National School Lunch Program, which has all of you once the rates are issued in August. They stay the same for the entire school year, however, for the Summer Food Service Program in January revised rates or issued so they were issued, and the operational memorandum number.

00:11:16.890 --> 00:11:47.380

Dandeneau, Therese

8-21 was revised, and it was issued in the School Lunch Tray and that's posted on our website. So, you can take a look at it and no need to worry because Susan Alston behind the scenes automatically updated those rates in the online system so you will see them reflected in your January claim. So, just take a look at that uhm. It gives you some specifics about what the new rates are and if you have any questions. You can certainly reach out to your county consultant and with that. I'm going to turn it over to Susan Fiore.

00:11:53.600 --> 00:11:54.600

Fiore, Susan

Thank you Teri.

00:11:56.260 --> 00:12:12.420

Fiore, Susan

So I have a few topics to review today and the first one, is about some updated meal pattern and crediting resources for our Summer Food Service Program. So many of you have been operating the SSO for the last year year to 2 years.

00:12:13.110 --> 00:12:44.620

Fiore, Susan

And as you transition into the SFFP. It's important to remember that the meal patterns for the SFFP are different from the meal patterns for the SSO, which follow the NSLP and SBP meal patterns. So, we've updated a number of resources for you related to those meal patterns as well as some crediting resources and this includes a very long list here. I just wanted to give you a couple highlights that you can see each under each of the topics. There're different resources for you from the meal patterns to the menu forms, production records.

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Fiore, Susan

Crediting commercial process products, foods from scratch, meat/meat alternates and all of the other components as well because there's a lot here. I wanted to show you one quick resource for really getting at the heart of all of these resources and finding what you're looking for and that's the Resources for the SFP Meal Patterns and I'm just going to quickly go in because this document is

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sort of a one stop shop for you to find what you're looking for, for variety of topics related to the meal patterns. So, if you want to go in and find more information.

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Fiore, Susan

On the grain's breads component for example, you click on that link and it's going to list. All of the resources that relate to grains breads for the SFFP and just as an FYI the.

00:13:29.220 --> 00:13:56.070

Fiore, Susan

Uh meal patterns for schools and preschool and Afterschool Snack also have resource lists and you can find those under our on our Program Guidance webpage so this same type of resource list that we have for the SFFP. We have for the NSLP, SBP, and ASP for both grades. K 12 and preschoolers so just as a little head up. That's where you can find those resources if you're working with those other programs as well.

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Fiore, Susan

So related to that we have a new crediting resource for the SFSP.

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Fiore, Susan

Fine. That's the crediting summary charts, and those charts are very handy because they sort of have an in one place. Everything you need to know about how to credit those foods. I'm just going to go in quickly to show you.

00:14:20.900 --> 00:14:50.770

Fiore, Susan

At the beginning of the document. There's an overview of some of the crediting requirements for each of the meal pattern components and you can see here listed each of the components as well as some of the things to consider in terms of what the meal pattern measurement is, the creditable amount, which types of crediting methods, and the required documentation, and then following that are charts for each of the meal pattern components addressing a variety of different foods and beverages and how to credit them in the meal programs.

00:14:51.230 --> 00:15:18.300

Fiore, Susan

So you can see this is the meal component and then meat/meat alternates and so forth and once again for the other programs we have a crediting summary chart for grades K to 12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. We also have it for grades K to 12 in Afterschool Snack and for the preschool meal patterns as well, and you can find all of those documents under C for crediting on the Program Guidance webpage.

00:15:22.630 --> 00:15:54.980

Fiore, Susan

Alright so the next topic is our updated Connecticut Nutrition Standards. Worksheets and these worksheets help you to determine whether foods meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and just

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as a heads up. You don't need to use these worksheets if you're using the lists of foods and beverages for commercial products because all of those products have been reviewed and approved but you do need to use these worksheets if you're making any kinds of foods from scratch. You want to make sure that your recipes comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards before you sell those foods to students.

00:15:55.060 --> 00:16:10.350

Fiore, Susan

So that's where these would be particularly helpful. If you have any new products and you want to screen them, you can also use these worksheets to do that and just please go ahead and send those to me if you do, find any new products so that we can get those included on our lists of foods and beverages.

00:16:13.710 --> 00:16:41.620

Fiore, Susan

The next topic is our Healthy Food Certification Participation for this school year and we send out some updates and we have some very good statistics in terms of the participation in HFC since 2006, when the program first began and one of the things that I just wanted to quickly show you in case you haven't had a chance to look at it. We do have several resources with data on HFC including a list of schools that participate.

00:16:41.670 --> 00:17:10.020

Fiore, Susan

And a color-coded map and I just wanted to quickly. Bring up the map because I think it's just very visually telling where we're at with Healthy Food Certification, which is almost 95 almost 96% of our eligible districts and schools are participating so visually it's just kind of a great representation for where we at and we've come a long way since 2006 and we have most of our districts participating so.

00:17:10.850 --> 00:17:13.720

Fiore, Susan

If you're looking for any information there, it is.

00:17:17.480 --> 00:17:47.410

Fiore, Susan

Alright next, we have a reminder about submitting your comments on the USDA 's final rule for Transitional Standards for Milk Whole Grains and Sodium and we provided information for you on this final rule in the school Lunch Tray a few weeks ago and I just wanted to give you a little bit of a reminder on the timelines. March 24th is the deadline and if you're looking for more information on the.

00:17:47.460 --> 00:17:49.730

Fiore, Susan

Transitional standards and what they entail.



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Fiore, Susan

This is a good infographic from uhm.

00:17:54.290 --> 00:18:24.310

Fiore, Susan

You will see a that includes a little bit of a summary, and they have a lot of other resources well on this Building Back Better with School Meals web page. So, if you have any comments you'd like to submit to USDA. They will consider these they're looking to make another final rule or proposed rule. It will end up being the final rule in terms of updates to the meal patterns for school year 2024-25 and so those comments will be considered for that, so if you want to give input.

00:18:24.400 --> 00:18:30.390

Fiore, Susan

This is your chance and get those in by March 24th at the link indicated in the School Lunch Tray.

00:18:32.840 --> 00:18:55.770

Fiore, Susan

OK and then last but not least I wanted to briefly summarize for you some information in our procedural safeguards handout and this is not new, but the recent procedural safeguards handout summarizes the information that you need to know about making sure you're meeting the USDA civil rights requirements, so I'm just going to quickly go in.

00:18:58.100 --> 00:19:29.810

Fiore, Susan

And this document has an overview of the requirements and just to keep it. Simple there's basically 2 things that you need to know about the procedural safeguards and the first is that USDA 's nondiscrimination regulations and civil rights requirements require you to have procedural safeguards in place and you must inform parents and guardians about how you how they can submit requests or meal modifications for children with disabilities, so that's the first part and then the second part.

00:19:29.860 --> 00:19:42.350

Fiore, Susan

Is what your procedural rights are for filing a grievance if they have any concerns about the way the meal modification process was handled, and you can see that there's a lot of information here regarding those requirements.

00:19:43.370 --> 00:19:44.880

Fiore, Susan

Or procedural safeguards.

00:19:45.580 --> 00:20:15.350

Fiore, Susan

And there's just a couple key things to keep in mind for most of you, your section 504 coordinator, is going to be the person that works with handling any requests for children with disabilities in the district overall and then in many cases, this person also handles meal modification request. So, if

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you're not sure if you have procedural safeguards in place specific to meal patterns. You want to go ahead and try to look up your section 504 coordinator and talk to them to see what you have in place.

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Fiore, Susan

As you're thinking about procedural safeguards one other really important thing to keep in mind is USDA really emphasizes the importance of having written policies in place that address these procedural safeguards. This helps to communicate things clearly to students, to staff, and families, as well, and it also makes sure that you have policies in place so that everyone in the school district is following the same procedures. So as a summary.

00:20:45.550 --> 00:20:58.700

Fiore, Susan

The most important thing to remember is that you must at least notify parents and guardians about how they can request a meal modification and also any processes in place to resolve grievances as a result of.

00:20:59.520 --> 00:21:02.210

Fiore, Susan

My meal modifications for children with a disability.

00:21:05.720 --> 00:21:12.850

Fiore, Susan

And I think let's see that is, it for me, I'm turning it over to.

00:21:13.770 --> 00:21:14.390

Fiore, Susan

Teri.

00:21:16.450 --> 00:21:17.510

Dandeneau, Therese

Thank you Susan.

00:21:17.560 --> 00:21:47.350

Dandeneau, Therese

So USDA issued a new flyer, maintaining integrity in school meals served outside the cafeteria. It's a great refresher for managers and for food service staff to take a look at it. So, I encourage you to check it out. It really gives some good suggestions for ensuring that counting and claiming is done well and accurately, especially in alternative settings, such as class classrooms, hallways when you have kiosks situations.

00:21:47.980 --> 00:22:17.610

Dandeneau, Therese

Uhm it encourages encourages you to provide training, especially for nonfood service staff who may not understand the importance of point of service accounts and serving reimbursables meals and we all know the challenges, especially in situations of in classroom feeding where you might have

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teachers or teacher's aides or substitute teachers who may be providing the meals and then they need to know exactly what to do when they are counting in claiming those meals.

00:22:18.350 --> 00:22:48.540

Dandeneau, Therese

So make sure that you do train on those situations. I have been in schools where they have provided daily and alternative packets so that way. If a substitute was in. They would be able to look at that packet and figure out how to do what they need to do to ensure meals are served accurately it does have some good suggestions for signage for bundling components grab and go service pre ordering mobile service laminated barcodes and class rosters, so please take a look at that.

00:22:48.880 --> 00:22:54.290

Dandeneau, Therese

And share it with your staff and with that I'm going to turn it over to Susan Alston.

00:23:05.120 --> 00:23:05.380

Pacheco, Monica

00:23:05.430 --> 00:23:06.460

Pacheco, Monica

Susan you're on mute.

00:23:08.280 --> 00:23:24.390

Alston, Susan

Always always something right so good afternoon to them to do their Resource Roundup on schedule for submitting the online claims or reimbursement. We thought this was a good time to throw this in as a reminder as where you know almost halfway through the school year.

00:23:25.450 --> 00:23:31.850

Alston, Susan

So I'm gonna talk about some things about claiming about what the schedule is and why you should be referring to it.

00:23:33.250 --> 00:23:41.600

Alston, Susan

So this is a memo and we so that's the wrong memo. Susan. Sorry it's OM 2-22.

00:23:42.330 --> 00:23:45.730

Alston, Susan

There we go I'm like wait a minute did we revise this memo.

00:23:47.390 --> 00:24:17.080

Alston, Susan

OK, so this is the memo so usually this memo comes out and it's the first memo of the federal fiscal year. So, it usually would be one number one of whatever Year this year. PEBT. This memo out so it is 02-22. It's important to always look for this and use it as a resource throughout the year not just

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when we send it out and I'm going to go over a little bit about the claiming process before I actually actually get into this, this schedule.

00:24:17.720 --> 00:24:47.880

Alston, Susan

So as part of the sponsor application that you complete every year in there, you notice that you're always looking to see and updating if necessary. He claims entry person and the two authorized signers. Those drive who has access to the claim module so in that module if you're the claim entry person you have access to the claim module and ability to enter the client if you were one of the two authorized signers listed into the sponsor application. You then would have.

00:24:47.950 --> 00:25:18.410

Alston, Susan

Access to certify to close the claim entry person cannot certify the claims and the certifying people designees cannot enter the clients. So, there is a separation of duties. It's very important that passwords and user logins for our system, but also for this aren't shared you shouldn't be this, the authorized signers shouldn't be sharing their usernames and passwords with someone else to certify the claims and the claim entry person shouldn't be sharing their usernames and passwords for someone else other than them.

00:25:18.460 --> 00:25:19.270

Alston, Susan

To enter the claim.

00:25:19.910 --> 00:25:20.320

Alston, Susan

Uhm.

00:25:20.900 --> 00:25:40.670

Alston, Susan

As part of the process for the monthly claims for reimbursement. It is so important to have a formal process and we say this because everyone needs to know what they're doing, and as far as what time frames. You know every month. This system is available and open it only it doesn't close down for claims at all.

00:25:41.710 --> 00:26:10.030

Alston, Susan

And you can enter the train so when the claim entry person enters the claims and it's important that there's a process. After that to notify the authorized signers or whoever is going to certify the claim to make sure that they know that the claim is ready. They provide them. Whatever information is needed. Edit checks right to check that the claim was entered correctly before they certify it. Once the person certifies it. They should let the claims prepare and know that it has been done.

00:26:10.730 --> 00:26:40.780

Alston, Susan

If it hasn't been done someone should follow up to ensure that it has. It's very important so that we they make sure, and everyone involved make sure that those claims are being submitted in a timely

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fashion. And if there are ever any issues with anyone who you can't access the system. You've locked yourself out of the system. The authorized signer, who usually does the claims and certifies the claims isn't in please contact your county consultant you know immediately don't wait till the last minute like the day.

00:26:41.260 --> 00:27:05.420

Alston, Susan

the last day the claim needs to be put in so that we can either send revise your send instructions to the other authorized signer who normally doesn't do it and what their username and password. We can reset passwords. We can let you know how to reset your password if you have errors when you're entering a claim always make sure that you reach out as soon as that happens, so that we are able to help you.

00:27:06.790 --> 00:27:36.560

Alston, Susan

If you have new people that come in write a new food service director. There's a new superintendent and new business official. You wanna make sure that the people are brought up to speed about what happens each month with the claiming process a authorized signature change form would be required to provide access to any new person that will be certifying the claims. So, if you have a new superintendent. You want to get us in authorized signature change form as quickly as possible.

00:27:36.850 --> 00:27:45.000

Alston, Susan

That is the only way that we would then be able to give a user access to the system for that person to certify the claim.

00:27:46.560 --> 00:28:17.140

Alston, Susan

And so again make sure that you know you have a processor written process would be great, so that everyone knows exactly what they're supposed to be doing each month to ensure that the claims are submitted properly and Intune in the fall. We sent out an email. You know with what you should look at when you're putting the claims in when the claim entry person enters in the claim. It will say pending ok pending does not mean that it has been certified so if you're ever in there and you see your claim is.

00:28:17.430 --> 00:28:24.560

Alston, Susan

Think it means your server your authorized signer has not certified it on the claim. Then says certify I mean, not certified.

00:28:25.170 --> 00:28:49.710

Alston, Susan

When the claim says accepted it means that has been certified by one of your two authorized signers and that's where it needs to be in order for us to process it. Once the state has processed it for payment. It will then say processed and it will have a date and that means that we have taken the claims that you have in there and we have forwarded them onto to get ready to pay.

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00:28:50.540 --> 00:28:58.700

Alston, Susan

OK, so having said all that I am going to have Susan scroll down to the actual chart of the different months.

00:28:59.630 --> 00:29:31.360

Alston, Susan

OK, as you know because we use this comes out in November and it. It has the months of October through September. This claiming schedule follows the federal fiscal year, which starts October first and September 30th so if you've ever looked at this and so. Just thought OK. There's all these dates. They all mean something and they're all here to help you make sure that you get your claims in on time so that you get paid promptly and that you know when the final deadline is that you had that last day possible for you to submit.

00:29:31.420 --> 00:30:01.450

Alston, Susan

The claim to reimbursement so we're gonna just kind of look at February. Since that's what you are all be working on right now, so as I said, before the claim never closes or at me. I'm sorry. The system never closes for clients from years and years ago, the system used to lock every month on the 15th and would not open again for claims until the first of the next month with the way the new system is we keep it open all of the time you have or anytime that you want day or night, you could go in.

00:30:01.510 --> 00:30:19.060

Alston, Susan

And enter your claim on the only time that you might ever see that it doesn't. It isn't open and it may save you only and that will be when we are. I'm processing the claims for payment. So, I turn it. We put it in view only mode so that we could do what we need to do to get those claims paid.

00:30:19.750 --> 00:30:47.640

Alston, Susan

Now even though it's open all the time you still want to make sure that you get your claims in by the date. That's listed in column two the due date, so for February. Right, you have. You wanna get your claim in by March 3rd March 15th OK and by getting it by March 15th. It ensures that it will be processed when I process. The claims and that you will get your payments on or around April 29th.

00:30:48.220 --> 00:30:59.100

Alston, Susan

ok so that's what you're always trying to work toward always end by the 15th of the next month, so that you will get paid by column 3, the date that is listed there.

00:30:59.830 --> 00:31:26.110

Alston, Susan

Problem for the final deadline, OK and why is it in yellow is because USDA regulations state that all claims must be entered and filed whether it be a revision and new claim 60 days from the end of that

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that that month that you were submitting for so for February. The last day that you can enter a claim to fit into that 60-day guidance would be April 29th.

00:31:26.680 --> 00:31:34.430

Alston, Susan

If you were to go into the system on April 30th and try to submit the claim for reimbursement and had to be certified. The system won't let you.

00:31:35.000 --> 00:32:05.040

Alston, Susan

Yeah, with its cause it knows that your past the deadline and that's why it's so important to follow that up and anytime you miss are claiming deadline so ok of even the 15th so say February 's claim your you enter it in there, but it doesn't get certified until March 28th. It's fine. It's still in the 60-day deadline, but we've already processed our claims. So now your claim won't get processed until the next month. But your claim won't be processed until after

00:32:05.090 --> 00:32:36.720

Alston, Susan

After April 15th, which means you're not going to get paid for February or March. Until May 31st so every time you missed that initial monthly claim deadline. It's going to push your claim payment back that you're gonna receive. We only process claims once a month, so that's why it's so important to always try to get your claim in by the 15th if you do you guarantee that you'll be processed in the batch when we process the claims any day after the 15th it's kind of like you may get it in or you may not it all just depends.

00:32:36.770 --> 00:32:37.100

Alston, Susan

On.

00:32:37.690 --> 00:33:08.800

Alston, Susan

When we go ahead to process the claims now, what happens if you missed the final deadline in column for well. USDA again with the regulations is very specific in the guidance and if there is a claim that missed the 60-day deadline on that is within your control right, so somebody forgot. They just didn't put it in. They know they missed what happened. We are able to offer you a what USDA refers to as a one-time exception one time exception for payment.

00:33:08.850 --> 00:33:35.500

Alston, Susan

Of that claim now that sounds great and you know, lots of people have used it. However, it is only good once every 36 months ok so you could only use and one-time exception once for every 36 months and the guidance is by program till one. One time exception per program so again. You think Oh well. That's great. I do NSLP I do school breakfast. I do Special Milk but.

00:33:36.180 --> 00:34:06.860

Alston, Susan

School nutrition programs is considered one program and the school nutrition programs include,

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NSLP, SBP, Special Milk, Afterschool Snack, and the Seamless Summer Option. So, a one-time exception for any of those programs counts as one program so a few of you as a one-time exception for any of those you cannot then ask for a one-time exception for payment of claims and a 36-month period so if we're using?

00:34:06.920 --> 00:34:21.110

Alston, Susan

February 2022 as an example and you have to use a one-time exception for that claim. You would not be eligible for a one-time exception for those programs until February of 2025.

00:34:21.780 --> 00:34:25.240

Alston, Susan

ok, so that it's 3 years, it's exactly 3 years to that day.

00:34:26.410 --> 00:34:52.740

Alston, Susan

When they say programs again school nutrition programs that counts as one. One-part CSFP is another SFSP is it in another program so if you needed it, one-time exception for schools' nutrition programs that doesn't mean that you couldn't ask for one if you were also doing SFSP in needed one. So those are the 3 programs. You know they each have their own 36, one-time exception 36 months.

00:34:54.090 --> 00:35:23.790

Alston, Susan

As part of the one-time exception if we are able to offer it to you, we would you know the system will let us know if you can do it, we have our own list that we maintain we would let you know what to do, I mean, you would have to submit some corrective action of how this would not happen again, and then we would submit the claim on your behalf in the online system. It's important to know that the one-time exception is only good for one missed claim I'm so if you.

00:35:24.050 --> 00:35:40.580

Alston, Susan

For whatever reason, they missed 2 so say April and May. No one no one placed those certified those claims. They're both passed the 60-day deadline. We would give you the option of what claim you wanted to pay, but the one-time exception is only good for one month.

00:35:42.160 --> 00:36:05.000

Alston, Susan

And then we would be able to process that so it's really important each month that you're following this schedule when you go in for the month that you're entering and if you're the claims prepare and you entering your month but you see the previous month, doesn't say accepted it's still in pending you wanna follow up immediately with your search.

00:36:06.050 --> 00:36:36.050

Alston, Susan

Like their authorized signer whoever is going to certify the claim and say, hey, I just noticed that this claim had never been certified now that's why I talk about the process, making sure there's a process



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in place. You always wanna make sure each time you're putting in a new claim was the old claim from the previous month. Has it been processed, but because the time you go and to enter that next month that claim should have already been processed and in the process state by us if everything was following from following the schedule. One thing that's a little.

00:36:36.120 --> 00:37:06.710

Alston, Susan

You know tricky this year if you're doing Afterschool Snack Program, the Afterschool Snack Program is in its own it's in the SNP claiming module which is different than the SSO claiming module so you're gonna be wanna checking both places. You wanna make sure that you have. You know everyone being all the claims. For every program that you? Are being certified each month and being processed and there should also be a double check to make sure are you getting the money right there are people following up to ensure that the money.

00:37:06.770 --> 00:37:36.880

Alston, Susan

But status ending is making to it to where it goes most commonly the claims of people. Forget to certify or usually you know the December one because of the holiday vacations. People put them in. Then they go away for Christmas and then they come back and then it's already January and they're putting in those claims December gets overlooked a lot of times. June gets overlooked because some people right. They go on the last school is over claims are processed or put in for July.

00:37:36.940 --> 00:38:07.320

Alston, Susan

In August by the time they came back in September, they've missed that 60-day deadline, so please always kind of use. This information get a good system in place make sure that everybody has aware of what they should be doing and that will then you know ensure you're getting your money and we do wanna pay everybody every month. You know one-time exceptions create extra work for us. And for you guys and we don't want to be at a point where we can't pay sponsors or schools.

00:38:07.380 --> 00:38:12.950

Alston, Susan

For claims that they've you know rightfully given meals reversible meals to students.

00:38:14.540 --> 00:38:17.190

Alston, Susan

So with that I think that's it.

00:38:17.900 --> 00:38:20.200

Alston, Susan

So I think we can open up for questions.

00:38:26.020 --> 00:38:26.280

Yearwood, Shannon

ok.

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00:38:27.160 --> 00:38:28.420

Yearwood, Shannon  
Thank you so much.

00:38:27.210 --> 00:38:27.830

Fogarty, Sean  
Hi everyone,

00:38:29.490 --> 00:38:29.900

Yearwood, Shannon  
Uhm.

00:38:31.140 --> 00:38:46.580

Yearwood, Shannon  
We're having a little bit of technical challenges where the behind the scenes here. So it's going to try and Sean are you able to join and I don't know if you're up already. I came only see a few people at a time right now.

00:38:47.090 --> 00:38:52.990

Fogarty, Sean  
Yep, I'm here I was a read off some of our questions. We got 3. So far today and our first question.

00:38:52.140 --> 00:38:52.460

Yearwood, Shannon  
Thanks.

00:38:53.840 --> 00:38:55.020

Fogarty, Sean  
So good traction.

00:38:55.510 --> 00:38:56.710

Yearwood, Shannon  
Yeah, that sounds great.

00:38:57.130 --> 00:39:06.970

Fogarty, Sean  
Thank you now first question came in today from Sherry Lynn. Now the question is, is there a limit to the offering dollar amount per district. I think that came in during Monica 's presentation.

00:39:08.130 --> 00:39:38.020

Pacheco, Monica  
Sure, so what I believe you referred to Sherry is the for the CCC bonus orders. There is no limit on this round. We are trying to utilize these X extra dollars. We had remaining. However, again stressing that please only order what you truly think you can utilize and understand. These are requests. We are probably going to have to do a lot of manipulating to get that at the state level. We do have a final total dollar amount that we still have to maintain and again. We also have to have truck loads that are.

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00:39:38.080 --> 00:39:42.990

Pacheco, Monica

Evenly, you know filled and or able to share so it is a bit. I will say of about

00:39:44.070 --> 00:39:50.500

Pacheco, Monica

a request and a hope for the feature items and we will do our best to get you what we can.

00:39:52.970 --> 00:39:53.730

Fogarty, Sean

Thank you Monica.

00:39:54.400 --> 00:40:06.990

Fogarty, Sean

Another question coming from David he asks are the mixed nuts or the mixed dried fruit. The same pride from 3 years ago. Now we see roads here right, so we had to throw out due to 5 to 6 allergens.

00:40:07.340 --> 00:40:37.480

Pacheco, Monica

OK, good question, yes, it is the same product. This was a mixed fruit product. However, the problem with it. Last time was that some of the allergens were just undeclared by that current manufacturer or difficult to get that information. We are adding it back in because, with the advent of the allergen ingredient information system, which should be released. Anytime now the vendors are required to input all that information in have that available in the system.

00:40:37.770 --> 00:40:50.500

Pacheco, Monica

So it is a local decision whether you want to try and use it again. You know, or if that product should come into your district, but we were hopeful that this would help this product move. We do know it is very popular and well used in other states, so we wanted to give it another chance.

00:40:52.410 --> 00:40:53.130

Fogarty, Sean

Thank you Monica.

00:40:53.950 --> 00:41:00.420

Fogarty, Sean

And we've a 3rd question that came in from Jeff. Jeff asked there any updates on HFC payments and state match payments?

00:41:01.860 --> 00:41:02.560

Yearwood, Shannon

I'll take this one.

00:41:03.720 --> 00:41:06.250

Yearwood, Shannon

Thanks so much for the question, we are working on.

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00:41:06.300 --> 00:41:18.840

Yearwood, Shannon

And uhm HFC the Healthy Food Certification payments. The state match and also this date severe need school breakfast grants. So, I just wanted to throw that 3rd one and even though I wasn't part of the question.

00:41:19.910 --> 00:41:43.960

Yearwood, Shannon

So the state match payments. We those will probably be the first ones to go out. We are in the process of getting all of the internal clearance and our approvals that we need to be able to initiate those payments. So, I am optimistic you will see those soon for the ones for the healthy food certification and for the state school breakfast severe need grants those are in statute.

00:41:44.010 --> 00:42:15.390

Yearwood, Shannon

Uhm the language is very specifically tied to the National School Lunch Program and the federal School Breakfast Program last year. We ran into this challenge as well. In that the majority of sponsors were not operating those programs. They were operating either. The summer food service program last year or the seamless summer option of the National School Lunch Program because the statutory language is so very specific. We were able to last year, getting executive.

00:42:15.440 --> 00:42:45.800

Yearwood, Shannon

Order to be able to reasonably interpret those statutes in order to get those payments out in a way that we felt was equitable and meant the intent of the statute this year. The Executive Order had already expired from last year. So, it did not cover this year. We did seek an executive order but instead of that route succeeding we have been able to move forward with looking at.

00:42:46.150 --> 00:43:11.980

Yearwood, Shannon

Putting actual changes within the statutory language that would allow us to more nimbly respond to public health and civil emergency preparedness situations. And so, what that means is that if we continue under this public health emergency into next year or if there is another one in the future. It would allow us to be able to.

00:43:12.040 --> 00:43:22.860

Yearwood, Shannon

uhm interpret those statutes within our ability to look at at how we can get them out based on the intent of the law and the.

00:43:24.180 --> 00:43:38.490

Yearwood, Shannon

And the regular the statute. So, we're hopeful that we'll go through that would allow us to be able to respond more quickly and get those payments out more quickly. But I don't have any sort of update on the timing for when that will be.

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00:43:38.540 --> 00:44:02.730

Yearwood, Shannon

Yeah, if it will succeed and when it will succeed so we do have everything ready to go should it succeed. So I think it's really, really kind of a wait and sprint game at this point, so thanks for your patience. It's definitely on our radar. We have prepped everything we can now we just need to wait for the authority to be able to send those payments out.

00:44:04.600 --> 00:44:34.740

Fogarty, Sean

Thank you Shannon, another question came in from Elizabeth any updates for the NSLP Equipment Grant. So, I can take that one great question. I think for our team, you know with the Grant Committee is still reviewing and moving through there were a lot of grants. This year, a lot more than last year. It's pretty impressive and we're glad to see that kind of turn out. We know the need is definitely there. I anticipate that the committee will be through with reviews and Brielle to make announcements probably by later in March later this month, possibly the end of the month.

00:44:34.930 --> 00:44:39.580

Fogarty, Sean

So I hope that's helpful will definitely keep you up to speed everything changes in happen sooner.

00:44:42.920 --> 00:45:17.320

Yearwood, Shannon

Thank you so much dad and we are, we are preparing to send out on the heels of that as soon as we can. The next equipment assistance grant as well. So, this is another area that has also changed due to the pandemic. And so, the criteria around the equipment assistance grant and who's allowed to be eligible for it changed this year, so that took a little bit longer to go through all of the approval processes and they're going to make that available to you and it has also changed the scope of how we are able to score them and what that committee looks like so.

00:45:17.470 --> 00:45:17.900

Yearwood, Shannon

uhm

00:45:18.810 --> 00:45:28.450

Yearwood, Shannon

The public health emergency has a lot of ripple effects and impacts on all of our programs. So certainly, we are working on these things internally, they're just.

00:45:29.070 --> 00:45:43.580

Yearwood, Shannon

Little bit trickier than they have been in the past, so thanks so much for that update, Sean, we are having some strange technology today to be true to our our challenges, sometimes with our School Lunch Tray Table Talk so.

00:45:43.640 --> 00:46:14.390

Yearwood, Shannon

Uh we keep getting a message saying that the meeting chat is muted. And since we have everybody

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else here muted. We're not sure if you're actually able to enter chat messages right now, so if you are not able to enter chat messages. Then, please go ahead and use that that link that is in the school in the school lunch trades who allow you to submit questions to us and that will allow us to either answer those at the next School Lunch Tray Table Talk Table Talk.

00:46:14.440 --> 00:46:17.670

Yearwood, Shannon

Or be able to provide you additional assistance in the meantime.

00:46:22.560 --> 00:46:23.070

Yearwood, Shannon

alright.

00:46:29.280 --> 00:46:37.020

Yearwood, Shannon

And not sure so Sean I'm not sure if we'll have more questions with this strange new warning that we have for today.

00:46:37.690 --> 00:46:38.220

Yearwood, Shannon

uhm.

00:46:37.820 --> 00:46:40.530

Fogarty, Sean

Yeah, that might be on the questions we have for today.

00:46:42.030 --> 00:46:50.250

Yearwood, Shannon

So we will definitely be reaching out to our IT team and see if we can iron out some of these quirks for next for next round of Table Talk.

00:46:51.820 --> 00:47:06.160

Yearwood, Shannon

So, in the meantime, do not forget to let us know if you have some exciting School Breakfast Week events coming up. We always love to see pictures videos. If you share those with us. Certainly, just share them with us because they make us happy.

00:47:06.210 --> 00:47:31.330

Yearwood, Shannon

They let us know which ones. We are able to share with USDA or potentially have USDA include in one of their national or regional newsletters. We love seeing Connecticut highlighted if you want. Some VIP folks from USDA out at your breakfast events. You want some of us out there or even if you have events coming up that are outside of breakfast week. Let us know that as well.

00:47:31.700 --> 00:47:52.070

Yearwood, Shannon

Uhm the following week is the National Child and Adult Care Food Program Week. So we are certainly in a week or in a month of being able to look at all of these programs and highlight all of

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the great work that everybody is doing to make sure that there is at nutrition access all around our state through these programs.

00:47:52.790 --> 00:47:56.080

Yearwood, Shannon

So with that I just also want to thank my team again.

00:47:56.770 --> 00:48:02.090

Yearwood, Shannon

We know team awesome. That's what we that's what I call him, so we have a tremendous crew here.

00:48:03.560 --> 00:48:18.480

Yearwood, Shannon

Let us know if you have any questions and use that link and then we will hopefully have a smoother sale next Table Talk with our technology challenges. Thank you so much, everybody and I hope that all of you have a wonderful rest of your day and a great weekend ahead.

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For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's [School Lunch Tray and Table Talk](#) webpage, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

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