

A background image showing a group of children in a school cafeteria. They are standing around a food service counter, looking at various food items. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

MAINE DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION
Child Nutrition Programs

Additional Requirements For School Nutrition Programs

Presented by: Kate Fayle & David Hartley, Child Nutrition



Timing of Meals

- Lunch must be offered between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- Students need “adequate” time to eat

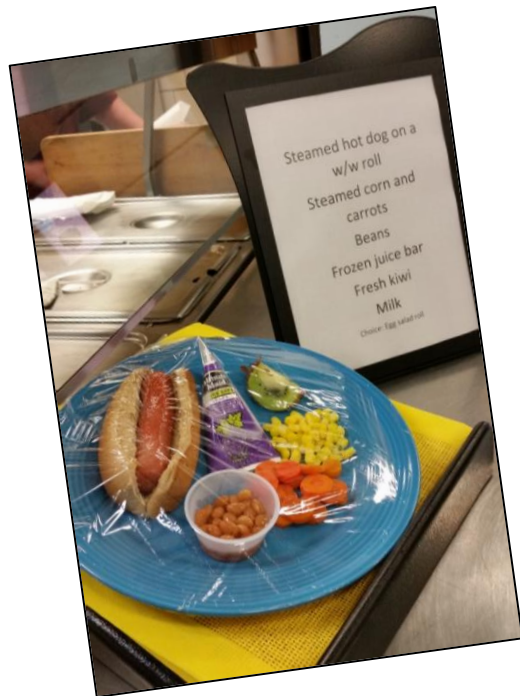


Water

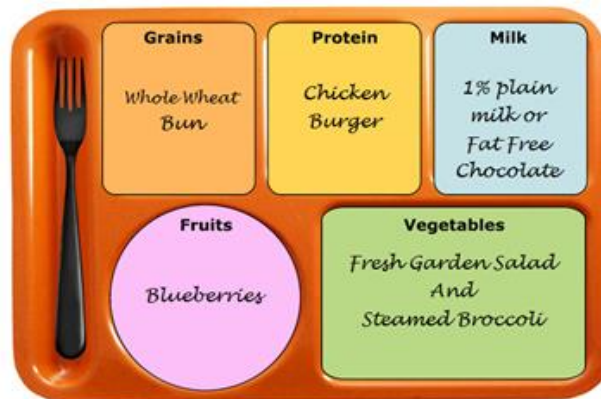


- Free, potable water must be available during meal service (breakfast & lunch)
 - ✓ Water fountain
 - ✓ Cambro with water & paper cups
 - ✗ Bottled water-unallowable cost
- Cannot promote water as an alternative to milk

Meal Signage



Must identify all foods that are part of a reimbursable meal before the serving line (breakfast & lunch)



Unanticipated School Closure With Remote Learning

When school buildings are closed but **remote/virtual learning is taking place, schools may apply for a waiver to offer meals to students.**

- Non-congregate meal service is allowed.
- Parent/guardian pick-up and off-site distribution are permitted.
- *Offer vs. Serve* guidelines still apply

Unanticipated School Closure

- **Reporting Requirements**
- Approved waivers include **mandatory reporting** on:
 - Number of meals served
 - Sites where meals were provided
 - Dates the waiver was used
 - Reason for the unanticipated closure

Waiver Application Process Requests for SY2026 Unanticipated School closers are through a Microsoft Form here: [SY2026 Unanticipated School Closure with Remote Learning Waiver Request](#)

Unanticipated School Closure

- **Can meals be distributed before the actual closure day?**
Yes — meals distributed beforehand can be claimed for the closure *if* the closure occurs as expected.
- **Do meal pattern requirements still apply?**
Yes — all meals claimed must meet the appropriate USDA meal patterns.
- **Can planned remote days (like professional development) use this waiver?**
No — only truly unanticipated closures.
- **What if the school ends up not closing?**
Meals sent home *cannot* be claimed if in-person instruction occurs.


Unanticipated School Closures FAQ

Child Nutrition Resources

- [SUN Bucks](#)
- [Off Site Meal Notice](#)
- [Serving Meals to Students Off-Site in the NSLP](#)
- [SY26 Unanticipated School Closure Guidance and FAQ](#)
- [Thursday Update](#)
- [CACFP Monthly Update](#)
- [Child Nutrition Data Reports](#)
- [Online Free & Reduced Meal Application](#)
- [Community Food Resource Template](#)

<https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/nutrition>

SY2026 Unanticipated School Closures with Remote Learning Waiver & FAQ



Maine DOE has been approved to offer statewide waivers to allow local Program operators to serve meals in a non-congregate setting when congregate meal service operations in schools are limited due to natural disasters, unscheduled major building repairs, court orders relating to school safety or other issues, labor-management disputes, or, when approved by the State agency for a similar unanticipated cause. **This waiver allowance is allowed up to a 10-day approval, after such, an approval from the USDA FNS Regional Office is required.**

Waiver Application Process
Requests for SY2026 Unanticipated School closures are through a Microsoft Form here: [SY2026 Unanticipated School Closure with Remote Learning Waiver Request](#)

To ensure a timely response, please complete the form in its entirety.

Important Waiver Information
Application to use waivers is to be at the time of the unanticipated closure, and not prior to an event or in preparation of an event.

National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) - School buildings are closed with virtual learning

- Non-Congregate Meal Service
- Meal Service Times
- Parent Guardian Meal Pick Up
- Offer vs Serve

Child and Adult Care Food Program At-Risk Only (CACFP)

- School buildings are closed with virtual learning
- Non-Congregate Meal Service
- Meal Service Times
- Parent Guardian Meal Pick Up
- Enrichment Activity

Mandatory reporting will be included in this year's waivers, if issued. Requirements may include reporting the number meals served, site locations, dates the waiver was used, and reason for the unanticipated closure. Information requested will include: a description of how the waiver impacted meal service operations at participating sites; a description of whether the waiver resulted in improved services to children; a description of how the waiver reduced the quantity of paperwork necessary to administer the Program; and a summary of benefits and challenges associated with the waiver. Please call the Child Nutrition Office at 207-624-6842 with any questions.

October 2025 1 | Page
This institution is an equal opportunity provider

Off-site Meals

When Can an SAU Serve and Claim Meals off site?

School meals may ONLY be served and claimed when:

- ✓ Student is enrolled in the SAU
- ✓ Meal is served at an approved Maine DOE-recognized school building within that SAU
- ✓ If it is an in-person academic school day
- ✓ Meal is consumed in a congregate setting

Examples: Regional programs, CTE, field trips

Off-site Meals

Public Pre-K Eligibility for NSLP/SBP

Public Pre-K may participate if:

- The program operates in a building on school grounds under the legal authority of a Maine DOE-recognized SAU
- Students are enrolled and in regular attendance
- Students meet Maine age eligibility requirements
 - four years old on October 15 of the school year

Off-Site meals

Childcare programs are not eligible to participate in the NSLP or SBP

- If a pre-K program is not operated under the school or SAU, regardless of being in the same building, they are not eligible to participate in the NSLP or SBP.
- “Serving Meals to Students Off-site in NSLP FAQ”
- <https://www.maine.gov/doe/sites/maine.gov.doe/files/inline-files/Child%20Nutrition%20-%20Serving%20Meals%20to%20Students%20Off-Site%20in%20the%20National%20School%20Lunch%20Program%20FAQ%20%20-%2009.30.2025.pdf>

Breakfast after the Bell LD 359

- Public schools where at least 50% of students qualified for a free or reduced-price lunch during the previous school year must operate an alternative breakfast delivery service that provides breakfast after the start of the school day.
- Schools with only grades 9-12 are ***exempt***.
- Schools with 70% or greater participation of free/reduced students in the breakfast program are ***exempt***.
- *Schools under 70% participation must demonstrate at least an annual 10% increase in their school breakfast participation. If an increase in participation has not occurred a plan to increase participation must be submitted to the state*

Breakfast after the Bell

- A school administrative unit may opt out of the alternative breakfast delivery service if the governing board of the school administrative unit holds a public hearing.
- The opt-out must be reviewed by the board and documented to the state every 2 years.

Alternative Breakfast Models

Some schools use alternative methods to offer breakfast to increase participation

- Grab and go carts in the hallway
- Delivered to the classroom
- 2nd chance breakfast
 - One breakfast per student per day



Breakfast After the Bell

- Maine Child Nutrition website:
 - SY 2026 Breakfast After the Bell Required Schools
 - Opt-out guidance
- <https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/nutrition/programs/breakfast>
- Currently SY 2025. After October survey will be updated.

Pre-K Meal Pattern

- When served separately from K-12 students, CACFP Pre-K Meal Pattern must be followed.
- Key differences:
 - White milk only (1% or fat-free only)
 - 100% juice offered only once a day
 - No “grain-based desserts” (breakfast bars, granola bars, cereal bars, toaster pastries, cinnamon rolls & common dessert items)
 - Sugar limits



<https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/nutrition/cacfp/resources>

Food Safety & Storage Requirements









Food Safety: HACCP Plan

- HACCP-based food safety standard operating procedures (SOPs) at each site/kitchen
 - Written practices and procedures that reflect each site
 - Reviewed annually
 - Revised as needed

Food Safety: HACCP Plan

<https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/standard-operating-procedures>

The screenshot shows the website for the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN). At the top left is the ICN logo with the text "INSTITUTE OF child nutrition" and "RESOURCES • TRAINING • RESEARCH". To the right is a blue "iLearn" button with the text "...ANYTIME, ANYWHERE". Below the logo is a green navigation bar with links for Home, Child Nutrition Resources, Training, ICN Sites, ICN Consultants, i-Bites News, and Contact ICN, along with a search icon. The main content area is titled "Standard Operating Procedures" and features a "Download all" button with a checkmark. Below this is a section titled "FOOD SAFETY STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES" which contains a table of resources.

Title	Date added	Download	
 Assembling a Body Fluid Cleanup Kit	March 06, 2018	Download 	
 Cleaning and Disinfecting Body Fluid Spills	March 06, 2018	Download 	
 Cleaning and Sanitizing Food Contact Surfaces	March 06, 2018	Download 	
 Communicating During a Foodborne Illness Outbreak	March 06, 2018	Download 	

Food Safety: HACCP Plan

If you use the sample SOP's from the Institute of Child Nutrition web site, review and adjust.

I can guarantee you; you do not follow what they say completely

Your SOP can be more restrictive than the Maine 2013 Food Code, however it cannot be less restrictive.

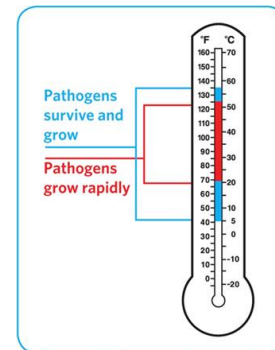
Food Safety Inspections

- USDA requires schools to receive at least two food safety inspections a year
- State of Maine only does one (State letter)
- Most recent health inspection must be posted and available for public view



Food Safety: Temperature Logs

- Documented food temperatures
- Documented equipment temperatures
- Maintain documentation for at least 6 months
- Record temperatures of all refrigerators and freezers every day. This is so you can see if the temperatures are changing and the appliance might need to be checked



Food Safety: Temperature

- Appliances with an outside thermometer must also have a thermometer inside.
- Where do you place a thermometer in your freezer/cooler?
- Check your dish machine temperature. Dial reads 180 and does not move, machine needs service.

Food Storage

- Food stored 6 inches off the floor
- Facility is clean & neat
- Canned goods free from bulges, leaks, and dents
- Chemicals labeled & stored away from food and food-related supplies
- Open bags of food are stored in food grade containers with fitted lids
- FIFO method of inventory
- Keep a written inventory, makes ordering easier.



Certified Food Protection Manager

- Required at each site
- Supervisory and managerial position
- Obtained through:
 - ServSafe certification
 - The Always Food Safe Company LLC
 - Other listed on DHHS Health Inspection website :
 - Training
 - Certified Food Protection Manager Courses

Food Safety: Ghost Trays

- Sampling of the food & milk offered at meal service
- Including salad bar
- Including milk
- Date and keep for 48 hours

- Any foods/milk still usable may be put back in usage



Administrative Reviews & Procurement Reviews

- SFAs that participate in the NSLP will receive an Administrative Review and Procurement Review at least once every 5 years
 - Ensure Compliance with program regulation
 - Meal Pattern
 - Meal Counting
 - Claims for Reimbursement
 - General Areas-storage, cleaning...
 - Purchasing

Administrative Reviews & Procurement Reviews

- Districts are notified in July/August
- Assigned a reviewer
- Administrative Reviews completed in CNPweb
- Conducted Off-site/On-site
- Review Training: September 11, 2025 – Augusta – live only.

- Procurement reviews completed off-site

Sponsor Onsite Monitoring Reviews

Required for any district with two or more sites (schools):

- Purpose: to assess the accuracy of meal counting system
 - NSLP - Review each site
 - SBP - Review 50% sites
 - FFVP – Review each site
 - Completed prior to February 1 of each year.
 - NSLP After School Snack –
 - Review within the first 4 weeks of program start
 - Review again in the second half of the year
- Sample Review Forms on our webpage
- Maintain documentation – DO NOT SEND TO US!!!

Recordkeeping

- Records must be kept for three years plus the current year (or longer if audit findings or operating Special Provisions)
 - Eligibility Documentation
 - Verification
 - Meal Counts used for the Claim
 - Sponsor Monitoring Forms
 - Menus & Production Records
 - Health Inspection
 - Financial Records
 - Special Provision (CEP, SP2) – duration of cycle plus 3 years (7 years)



Charging Policy

- Federal Requirement:
 - SFA's must have a policy for student's not eligible for free meals and do not have money to cover the cost of the meal at the time of service.
- State Requirement:
 - Public schools cannot-
 - deny a reimbursable meal to an eligible student who requests it;
 - require a student to throw away their meal after it has been served;
 - require a student to perform work as a means of paying for meals or as punishment for not paying;
 - refuse a meal as a form of or as part of a disciplinary action; or
 - openly identify or stigmatize a student who cannot pay for a meal or has payments due for a meal.

Charging Policy

- *The previous screen information only applies to reimbursable meals*

Adults and A la carte food items sold-

Refusing a la carte and adults a meal is allowed with no money on account or cash in hand.

Worker meals

- Only staff paid out of the nutrition account can receive a “worker meal” at no charge.

Local Wellness Policy

- Written plan that helps establish a school environment that promotes students' health, well-being, and ability to learn.
- Includes:
 - Specific goals nutrition promotion, education, physical activity, and other school-based activities
 - Sets standards and nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages *sold*
 - Sets standards for all foods and beverages *provided*, but not sold, to students
 - Policies for food and beverage marketing
 - Description of public involvement, public updates, policy leadership, and evaluation plan

Local Wellness Policy Triennial Assessment

- Triennial Assessment: every three years the wellness team must assess the wellness policy for compliance
 - Triennial Assessment form on our website
<https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/nutrition/programs/nslp>

Smart Snacks

- The selling of snacks is allowed as long as they meet the USDA Smart Snack guidelines
 - Specific to items allowed for specific grade groups
 - Specific to calories, sodium & fat

- Best way to be Compliant is to use the SMART CALCULATOR;
<https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/calculator/>
If allowable, print and save the screen showing this.

✔ Your product is compliant!

Your whole grain product meets all nutrient standards for entrees or snack foods.

Brand

belviat

Serving Size

28.00 g

Product

Snack Pack

First Ingredient

WG

The person or group responsible for the point of sale to students on campus should verify a product's compliance and print their own Calculator results for documentation intended for compliance purposes. Results from this calculator have been determined by the USDA to be accurate in assessing product compliance with the Federal requirements for Smart Snacks in Schools provided the information is not misrepresented when entered into the Calculator.

START OVER

NEXT STEP

Posting Calories – A la Carte

The number of calories in items that are being sold as a la carte must be posted at “point of decision”

- Vending machines
- Coolers
- Carts

Purchasing Equipment

- Purchasing equipment and the process to complete this process needs specific requirements be meet.
- Replacing equipment for Child Nutrition Purposes, can be either:
 - Purchased without prior ME DOE CNS approval, less than \$10,000.00
 - Or if over \$10,000.00 request approval from ME DOE CNS prior to purchasing
- [https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/nutrition/programs/equipment assist](https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/nutrition/programs/equipment_assist) has information about the steps to follow

Purchasing Equipment – Approved list

Prep Equipment

- Mixers
- Slicers
- Food Processors
- Buffalo Chopper
- Produce Wash Sink
- Work Tables

Cooking Equipment

- Ovens (combi, convection, conventional)
- Ranges
- Steamer
- Tilt Skillets
- Steam Kettles
- Toasters
- Griddles

Storage Equipment

- Refrigerators (reach-in, walk-in, under the counter, mobile, pass thru)
- Freezers (reach-in, walk-in, chest)
- Milk Coolers
- Display Case
- Can Racks

Serving Equipment (mobile)

- Salad Bar
- Steam Table
- Sneeze Guards
- Heated Transport Cart
- Insulated Transport Cart
- Holding Cabinet
- Proofing Cabinet
- Ice Machine

Cleaning Equipment

- Dish Machine
- Water Heater Booster
- Pot/Pan Sink
- Hand Sink

- Normal bid requirements are still in effect even if the product is on the Pre-Approved list.
 - Bids
 - Scoring
 - Purchasing
 - Installation.

Questions: michele.bisbee@maine.gov.

ANNUAL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- Directors – 12 hours annually
- Managers – 10 hours annually
- Full Time staff – (20 hrs. or more per week) – 6 hours annually
- Part Times staff – 4 hours annually
- New employees hired after January 1st would require half the hours shown above

- Hours counted are completed between July 1 – June 30 each year

Professional Training Areas

- Must be Child Nutrition subject areas.
 - Nutrition
 - Operations
 - Administration
 - Communications/Marketing



Questions



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