

Child Nutrition Program Waiver Request

Maine Child Nutrition DOE

Submitted May 7, 2020
Site Eligibility

1.State agency submitting waiver request and responsible State agency staff contact information:

Maine Child Nutrition Department of Education, Walter Beesley walter.beesley@maine.gov 207-624-6875

Walter Beesley
Child Nutrition DOE
136 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0136

2. Region: Northeast Region

3. Eligible service providers participating in waiver and affirmation that they are in good standing:

Maine is requesting a state-wide waiver for all Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Sponsors that are in good standing and operate successfully.

Sponsors utilizing this waiver are those who are operating in areas impacted by COVID-19. Governor Mills' plan to safely reopen Maine's economy during the pandemic is statewide, not only in areas that are 50% more free and reduced. There is need statewide, not just in areas that traditionally qualify.

4. Description of the challenge the State agency is seeking to solve, the goal of the waiver to improve services under the Program, and the expected outcomes if the waiver is granted. [Section 12(I)(2)(A)(iii) and 12(I)(2)(A)(iv) of the NSLA]: Maine is requesting to waive the requirement that Sponsors use individual meal benefit applications to determine each sites eligibility. This will be a continuation of a waiver that has already been granted. COVID-19 will impact Maine and its economy through the summer months. The tourism industry which is vital to Maine's economy is going to be severely impacted this summer, which may have immediate and lasting impacts on families' economic status. Stage 3 of the state's safe, gradual plan to restart Maine's economy lasts through July and August. This stage includes a mandatory 14-day quarantine on people entering Maine.

The area eligibility waiver has been in place during the COVID-19 Unanticipated Closures in Maine. Families are benefiting from this program and will continue to benefit through the summer. If granted this waiver, the Maine Department of Education can ensure that any child under the age of 18 can attend any meal distribution location that is an approved area to receive meals. Currently 1 in every 7 is unemployed and with no tourism industry, closing of businesses, and the stay in place order, the expectation of an improving economy is slim. The negative impact of no waiver is a loss of 61% of our current sites. This will also mean an estimated 60% loss of children not getting meals during the summer. This is needed both financially and emotionally for Maine children.

5. Specific Program requirements to be waived (include statutory and regulatory citations). [Section 12(I)(2)(A)(i) of the NSLA]: Area eligibility in SFSP [7CFR 225.6(c)(2)(G)] that defines area eligibility as an area where at least 50% of the children have been determined eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.

6. Detailed description of alternative procedures and anticipated impact on Program operations, including technology, State systems, and monitoring: If approved, this request will waive the requirement that a site meet area eligibility requirements in order to participate in the SFSP this summer. If approved, MDOE will continue to provide technical assistance to sponsors on the process and procedures for

distributing and recording accurate meal counts for meals served to any child 18 years and younger. There are no impacts on technology, state systems, or monitoring.

7. Description of any steps the State has taken to address regulatory barriers at the State level. [Section 12(l)(2)(A)(ii) of the NSLA]: We do not believe there are any regulatory barriers existing at the state level that would impact our ability to implement this waiver. This is a continuation of an existing waiver.

8. Anticipated challenges State or eligible service providers may face with the waiver implementation: MDOE does not anticipate any additional challenges to the State or Sponsors with the implementation of the waiver. This is a continuation of an existing waiver.

9. Description of how the waiver will not increase the overall cost of the Program to the Federal Government. If there are anticipated increases, confirm that the costs will be paid from non-Federal funds. [Section 12(l)(1)(A)(iii) of the NSLA]: Maine has heard that many summer camps and summer schools will not be operating or are shifting to remote models. This will impact overall sponsor participation in the program, reducing reimbursements paid to sponsors who have already notified MDOE that they are not operating.

10. Anticipated waiver implementation date and time period: July 1, 2020 – September 30, 2020

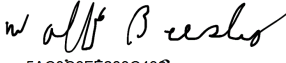
11. Proposed monitoring and review procedures: MDOE will continue to monitor Sponsor compliance as part of the SFSP application process.

12. Proposed reporting requirements (include type of data and due date(s) to FNS): Maine DOE will continue to report as required by federal regulations. In addition, MDOE will report on the number of meals served under this waiver. This data can be submitted within a year of the waiver being obtained.

13. Link to or a copy of the public notice informing the public about the proposed waiver [Section 12(l)(1)(A)(ii) of the NSLA]: this will be shared on the MDOE Child Nutrition web page.

14. Signature and title of requesting official:

Title: Director Child Nutrition

DocuSigned by:


Requesting official's email address for transmission of response:
walter.beesley@maine.gov

TO BE COMPLETED BY FNS REGIONAL OFFICE:

FNS Regional Offices are requested to ensure the questions have been adequately addressed by the State agency and formulate an opinion and justification for a response to the waiver request based on their knowledge, experience and work with the State.

Date request was received at Regional Office:

Check this box to confirm that the State agency has provided public notice in accordance with Section 12(l)(1)(A)(ii) of the NSLA

Regional Office Analysis and Recommendations: