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Take Out Meals Guidance for the School Nutrition Programs: NSLP, SFSP and CACFP

1. NSLP Reimbursable meals can be offered at school and consumed at school in all cases. Reimbursable meals must be offered on educational days only. Reimbursable meals cannot be offered on non-educational day unless funded from a source other than Food Service. Meals must meet the NSLP meal pattern in all cases. **CACFP guidelines and regs are different**
2. We are following all guidance of encouraging in school learning. We encourage schools look at alternative serving methods and places in the school other than sending them home.
3. **Meals offered and consumed on the same day:** Meals/**Snacks** can go home for same day consumption. The meal is offered and consumed the same day and reported on that day as served. This may be early release days, testing days or many other examples. Meals may be offered to students for same day consumption at an alternative location for students. A checklist by student name would be helpful for accountability. Siblings for example may pick up a meal if open site. Open site would allow this but school must ensure adequate product for enrolled students. **Virtual Education/Enrichment activities are required for CACFP meals being eaten off site, as well as accountability is required by child's first and last name (enrolled or walk-in).**
4. **Meals offered prior day to planned consumption:** Meals offered at school for consumption at home the next day is allowable under current USDA waivers. We encourage students to have their meals at school during the appropriate time. Take home meals considerations: they do not ensure the student is the one that eats the meal, meals must be properly stored for health and safety and there is a risk that meals will be consumed prior to intended day leaving the student hungry. The accountability system must be able to ensure students do not get two breakfasts, one that went home day before and another when they get to school. The best method is parents/students sign up ahead of time for meals and distribution at the school checking names to ensure enrolled students. Offering means for example to a sibling not in school could be done under an open site. Again, they would sign up and be checked off. Please email child.nutrition@maine.gov for permission to offer take home meals.
5. **Bulk meals** provided to children is discouraged this year. Bulk meals means a box of food the is a loaf of bread instead of premade sandwiches. Waivers from Child Nutrition DOE are needed prior to beginning. There have been several complaints about these meals and it does not project the true image of your program. There are food safety issues and concerns that consumption is not by the student. These will be approved in unique conditions. This must be a detailed request. Please email child.nutrition@maine.gov for permission to offer bulk takeout meals.

Please be aware at year end USDA may be requesting information about meal methods that your district will need to supply to State Agency.

Seamless summer allows two type meals daily (breakfast and lunch).

NSLP can offer NSLP after school snack on educational days

CACFP can offer after school snack and supper.

If you offer snack it must be NSLP or CACFP not both.

CACFP offers the ability to offer a meal and snack, afterschool, on weekends and holidays (so long as required enrichment is offered).

Please keep in mind this is accurate as of 8/23/2021. CDC, DOE and USDA are always making updates.
Updated 9/9/2021

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