

Additional Requirements in the National School Lunch Program

Mealtimes

- **Lunch:** Must be offered between **10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.**
- **Breakfast:** May be served up until lunch service begins, but **breakfast and lunch service times may not overlap.**

Breakfast After the Bell

- Public schools with **50% or more of students qualified for free or reduced-price lunch** in the previous school year must provide an **alternative breakfast service after the start of the school day.**
- **Grades 9–12 are exempt.**

At-Risk After-School Meals (CACFP)

- A school administrative unit with at least one public school where **50% or more of students qualified for free or reduced-price lunch** in the previous school year must participate in the **CACFP At-Risk After-School Meals Program**, unless an applicable exception or opt-out applies. For more information, contact Kobi.L.Chase@maine.gov.
- Meals or snacks are provided to eligible students participating in after-school programming.

Pre-K Meals and Meal Pattern

- When Pre-K students are served separately from K–12 students, follow the CACFP Pre-K Meal Pattern.

A La Carte / Smart Snacks

- Foods and beverages sold to students outside the reimbursable meal must meet Smart Snacks standards.
- Use the Smart Snacks calculator to determine compliance.
- Calories must be posted as required.

Professional Standards

Training hours must be tracked for each school nutrition employee:

- Directors: 12 hours annually
- Managers: 10 hours annually
- Staff working 20+ hours/week: 6 hours annually
- Staff working less than 20 hours/week: 4 hours annually

Required Annual Training

As applicable to staff duties:

- **Civil Rights:** All staff

- **Procurement:** Staff involved in purchasing
- **Food allergy training** – for those preparing or serving meals
- Additional job-related training to meet Professional Standards hour requirements

Required Signage & Documents

All program documentation must be maintained for 3 years plus the current year.

Ensure the following are posted or readily available:

- **Most recent health inspection** posted publicly
- **“And Justice for All” Civil Rights poster** displayed in public view
- **Food Safety Plan/SOPs** available to staff
- Required **calorie information** for applicable a la carte items
- Required **OVS and “what makes a reimbursable” meal signage** at the point of service

Civil Rights / Non-Discrimination Statements

Both the USDA and State of Maine Non-Discrimination Statements must be included or posted on program materials and communications with the public.

This includes:

- Letters/notices to families about school meal benefits
- School Food Authority (SFA) webpages related to Child Nutrition Programs
- Civil Rights posters displayed where meals are served or distributed and clearly visible to the public
- Other program promotional materials and communications

Check the Direct Certification list in NEO at least 3 times (more is better!) during the program year

- Make sure it is downloaded and saved for your records and check the “reviewed” button in NEO

Food Safety Requirements

- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for all sites
- Certified Food Protection Manager (such as ServSafe) for each location
- Temperature Logs - must be maintained daily for food & equipment

Water

- **Free potable water** must be available to students during meal service.

Buy American

- Purchase domestic agricultural commodities and food products to the maximum extent practicable.
- Maintain documentation for allowable exceptions and track non-domestic purchases as required.

- Domestic Content: Over 51% of the final processed food or agricultural item must come from U.S. farms or ranches.
- Applies to all food purchases made using the nonprofit school food service account.
- Solicitation Language: Contracts and bid documents must explicitly include Buy American provisions.
- In SY26-27 non-domestic purchases cannot exceed 10%.

Press Release for NSLP, SBP and SFSP

- **Annual Requirement:** LEAs and School Food Authorities must issue a public media release each year announcing the availability of free and reduced-price meals or meals at no charge.
- Must include procedures for filing a complaint (included in the USDA Civil Rights statement)
- Timing: Send the release to local media outlets prior to or during the first week of the school year.
- SUN Meals: Summer Food Service Program information must also be publicly posted, even if the School Food Authority does not operate a summer feeding program.
 - Add a link to the USDA Summer Meals Site Finder on the district's school lunch webpage.

Purchasing Equipment

- Follow applicable **equipment purchasing and procurement requirements**.
- Obtain **State Agency approval when required** before using nonprofit school food service funds.
- Follow your local purchasing policy for thresholds to determine when quotes or bids are required

FFVP (fresh fruit and vegetable program)

- The program must be advertised throughout the school
- The program must have an educational component

Off-Site Meals

School meals may only be claimed for reimbursement when:

- The student is enrolled in the SAU.
- The meal is served at an approved Maine DOE-recognized school building within the SAU.
- It is an in-person academic school day.
- The meal is consumed in a congregate setting.
- Exceptions: Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs and approved school field trips.

Meals may not be claimed when:

An enrolled student attends school at an alternate location, such as a:

- Regional program
- Special Purpose Private School
- The exception to this rule is when a student attends a work-study program or a field trip

Options for serving meals at offsite locations:

- **Catering:** The SAU may provide meals, but the cost must be paid from another source, and the meals are not claimed for reimbursement.
- **NSLP participation:** The alternate site may become an approved NSLP sponsor.

Public Pre-K Eligibility for NSLP/SBP

Public Pre-K students may participate in NSLP/SBP when:

- The program operates in a building on school grounds under the legal authority of a Maine DOE-recognized SAU.
- Students are enrolled and regularly attend the program.
- Students meet Maine's age eligibility requirements.
- Students are at least **3 years old by October 15** of the school year.

Unanticipated School Closures with Remote Learning

When an unexpected school closure results in remote or virtual learning, schools may request a USDA waiver to:

- Provide non-congregate meal service
- Allow parent/guardian meal pick-up and off-site meal distribution

Requirements:

- Offer versus Serve (OVS) requirements still apply, when applicable.
- Schools approved for a waiver must report:
 - Number of meals served
 - Sites where meals were distributed
 - Dates the waiver was used
 - Reason for the unanticipated school closure

Alternative Serving Locations

(different than offsite meals, example breakfast in the classroom)

But ensure that meal counts are taken at the point when the student receives a reimbursable meal.

Administrative Reviews

Be prepared to provide documentation for:

- Meal pattern
- Meal counting and claiming
- Eligibility and verification, when applicable
- Professional Standards
- Civil Rights
- Food safety
- Smart Snacks
- Local Wellness Policy
- Resource management
- Procurement and other applicable program requirements

Procurement Reviews- *Separate from Administrative Reviews, however, take place the same year as your administrative review.*

Maintain documentation showing purchases comply with applicable **federal, state, and local procurement requirements**, including competition and proper procurement methods.

Procurement Policy & Code of Conduct

Review:

- Written procurement procedures
- Written code of conduct
- Procurement documentation, including bids, quotes, contracts, invoices, and supporting records as applicable

Required On-Site Monitoring

Complete required **on-site monitoring** for applicable schools and meal service locations and maintain completed monitoring documentation.

Monitoring forms can be found on the Maine DOE Child Nutrition NSLP website

- Lunch Monitoring: 100% of NSLP multi-site operations must be reviewed on-site every year before February 1st.
- Breakfast Monitoring: At least 50% of School Breakfast Program (SBP) sites must be reviewed annually, ensuring every site is visited at least every other year before February 1st.
- Afterschool Snack Program (ASP): Required twice a year (beginning and mid-year) regardless of single or multi-site status

Know Your Policies!

Schools Food Authorities should maintain and follow required local policies:

- Local Wellness Policy
- Triennial Wellness Policy Assessment
- Meal Charge Policy
- Procurement Policy and Procedures

- Procurement Code of Conduct
- Food Safety Plan/SOPs