



Food and
Nutrition
Service

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Park Office
Center

SUBJECT: Updated School Meal Guidance

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Alexandria
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TO: Regional Directors
Special Nutrition Programs
All Regions

State Directors
Child Nutrition Programs
All States

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is issuing a suite of memoranda providing updated guidance for operators in the Child Nutrition Programs (CNPs), including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Special Milk Program for Children, Child and Adult Care Food Program, and Summer Food Service Program. These new memoranda do not include additional requirements, but are intended to help Program operators implement recent regulatory changes and provide clarification to existing policies and regulations.

This guidance includes:

- **Questions and Answers on the Final Rule *Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Requirements*:** This memorandum provides Questions and Answers on the final rule *Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Requirements* (83 FR 63775, December 12, 2018), which provides menu planning flexibilities in the CNPs. These flexibilities went into effect July 1, 2019, for the 2019-202 school year.
- **Meal Requirements under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Questions and Answers for Program Operators:** This memorandum includes questions and answers updated to incorporate changes codified by two final rules: (1) *Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010* (81 CFR 24348, published April 25, 2016) and (2) *Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Requirements* (83 FR 63775, December 12, 2018). This document also includes updated crediting questions and a new Resources section. Outdated references, citations, and questions have been removed throughout the document, and minor edits were made to clarify content.
- **Clarification on the Milk and Water Requirements in the School Meal Programs:** This updated memorandum clarifies regulations that water made

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available to students in the NSLP and SBP shall not compete with the milk requirement. While water must be made available, schools must not directly or indirectly restrict the sale or marketing of fluid milk.

- **Smoothies Offered in the Child Nutrition Programs:** This updated memorandum clarifies juice and yogurt allowances based on the childcare and preschool meal pattern updates and incorporates the meal pattern flexibilities related to flavored milk. This memorandum also changes the policy for commercially prepared smoothies. Commercially prepared smoothies can now contribute to the meat/meat alternate, fruit, vegetable, and milk components of the Federal meal requirements for all CNPs.
- **Salad Bars in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program:** This memorandum includes policy changes and general updates to outdated resources/website links and updated questions and answers. This memorandum provides State agencies with information on how salad bars can effectively improve the service of reimbursable meals and includes information on portion size, location of the salad bar, production records, and food safety.

State agencies are reminded to distribute these memoranda to Program operators. Program operators should direct any questions concerning these memoranda to their State agency. State agencies with questions should contact the appropriate FNS Regional Office.

Original Signed

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