



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



**TO:** Sponsors of the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs

**FROM:** Cheryl Resha, Education Manager  
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education

**DATE:** August 10, 2009

**SUBJECT: Operational Memorandum #16-09**  
Responding to School Closing for H1N1 Outbreaks

This memorandum informs school sponsors about the opportunity to provide reimbursable meals to low-income children during school closures related to the H1N1 influenza virus. Such closures would follow a *declaration of a public health emergency* under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act and would prevent the service of congregate meals through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Meals served during these school closures may be claimed either through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) or the National School Lunch Program's Seamless Summer Food Program (SSFP).

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act authorizes the provision of meal service to children who are not in school during non-summer months due to an unanticipated school closure. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is providing added flexibility using program waiver authority in an effort to address concerns regarding the loss of school meals for low-income children, many of whom may not have access to other sources of food when schools are closed. Thus, the requirement for serving meals in a congregate setting will be waived for these H1N1 related school closures in order to provide meals to low-income children. Otherwise, the SFSP or SSFP will generally operate as it does during the summer months, and all meals provided to children 18 and under will be reimbursed at the SFSP rates for rural/self-prep or urban/vended meals, or the free School Meal Program rates for the SSFP.

Any school food authority (SFA) or eligible community organization that wants to continue to provide reimbursable meals for children in schools closed due to the H1N1 virus will be expected to have an agreement with the Connecticut State Department of Education which covers operation of the SFSP or the SSFP. Interested SFAs and organizations with existing agreements in place will be asked to modify their SFSP or SSFP agreements to include waiver requests for operation during H1N1 school closures. Currently, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is waiting for further guidance from USDA and prototype agreement language addressing meals service practices during H1N1 closures. ***More information will be forthcoming about submitting these agreements and waivers.*** Preliminary information may be obtained by going to the USDA's Web sites <http://www.fns.usda.gov/disasters/pandemic/default.htm> and [http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/?navid=USDA\\_H1N1](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/?navid=USDA_H1N1).

The CSDE encourages interested SFAs in having preliminary discussions with appropriate school administrators and community members to determine whether the district or institution should consider providing meals to children if a public health emergency is declared due to H1N1.

Questions pertaining to this memorandum may be directed to:

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