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Title 7 —Agriculture

Subtitle B —Regulations of the Department of Agriculture

Chapter II —Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture

Subchapter A —Child Nutrition Programs

Part 210 National School Lunch Program

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PART 210—NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 1751-1760, 1779.

Source: 53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General

§ 210.1 General purpose and scope.

- (a) **Purpose of the program.** Section 2 of the National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751), states: “It is declared to be the policy of Congress, as a measure of national security, to safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's children and to encourage the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities and other food, by assisting the States, through grants-in-aid and other means, in providing an adequate supply of food and other facilities for the establishment, maintenance, operation, and expansion of nonprofit school lunch programs.” Pursuant to this act, the Department provides States with general and special cash assistance and donations of foods acquired by the Department to be used to assist schools in serving nutritious lunches to children each school day. In furtherance of Program objectives, participating schools shall serve lunches that are nutritionally adequate, as set forth in these regulations, and shall to the extent practicable, ensure that participating children gain a full understanding of the relationship between proper eating and good health.
- (b) **Scope of the regulations.** This part sets forth the requirements for participation in the National School Lunch and Commodity School Programs. It specifies Program responsibilities of State and local officials in the areas of program administration, preparation and service of nutritious lunches, the sale of competitive foods, payment of funds, use of program funds, program monitoring, and reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 78 FR 39090, June 28, 2013]

§ 210.2 Definitions.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32061, Apr. 25, 2024.

For the purpose of this part:

2 CFR part 200, means the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards published by OMB. The part reference covers applicable: Acronyms and Definitions (subpart A), General Provisions (subpart B), Post Federal Award Requirements (subpart D), Cost Principles (subpart E), and Audit Requirements (subpart F). (NOTE: Pre-Federal Award Requirements and Contents of Federal Awards (subpart C) does not apply to the National School Lunch Program).

Act means the National School Lunch Act, as amended.

Afterschool care program means a program providing organized child care services to enrolled school-age children afterschool hours for the purpose of care and supervision of children. Those programs shall be distinct from any extracurricular programs organized primarily for scholastic, cultural or athletic purposes.

Applicable credits shall have the meaning established in 2 CFR part 200 and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415.

Attendance factor means a percentage developed no less than once each school year which accounts for the difference between enrollment and attendance. The attendance factor may be developed by the school food authority, subject to State agency approval, or may be developed by the State agency. In the absence of a local or State attendance factor, the school food authority shall use an attendance factor developed by FNS. When taking the attendance factor into consideration, school food authorities shall assume that all children eligible for free and reduced price lunches attend school at the same rate as the general school population.

Average Daily Participation means the average number of children, by eligibility category, participating in the Program each operating day. These numbers are obtained by dividing

- (a) the total number of free lunches claimed during a reporting period by the number of operating days in the same period;
- (b) the total number of reduced price lunches claimed during a reporting period by the number of operating days in the same period; and
- (c) the total number of paid lunches claimed during a reporting period by the number of operating days in the same period.

Child means—(a) a student of high school grade or under as determined by the State educational agency, who is enrolled in an educational unit of high school grade or under as described in paragraphs (a) and (b) of the definition of “School,” including students who are mentally or physically disabled as defined by the State and who are participating in a school program established for the mentally or physically disabled; or (b) a person under 21 chronological years of age who is enrolled in an institution or center as described in paragraph (c) of the definition of “School;” or (c) For purposes of reimbursement for meal supplements served in afterschool care programs, an individual enrolled in an afterschool care program operated by an eligible school who is 12 years of age or under, or in the case of children of migrant workers and children with disabilities, not more than 15 years of age.

CND means the Child Nutrition Division of the Food and Nutrition Service of the Department.

Commodity School Program means the Program under which participating schools operate a nonprofit lunch program in accordance with this part and receive donated food assistance in lieu of general cash assistance. Schools participating in the Commodity School Program shall also receive special cash and donated food assistance in accordance with § 210.4(c).

Contractor means a commercial enterprise, public or nonprofit private organization or individual that enters into a contract with a school food authority.

Cost reimbursable contract means a contract that provides for payment of incurred costs to the extent prescribed in the contract, with or without a fixed fee.

Days means calendar days unless otherwise specified.

Department means the United States Department of Agriculture.

Distributing agency means a State agency which enters into an agreement with the Department for the distribution to schools of donated foods pursuant to part 250 of this chapter.

Donated foods means food commodities donated by the Department for use in nonprofit lunch programs.

Fiscal year means a period of 12 calendar months beginning October 1 of any year and ending with September 30 of the following year.

Fixed fee means an agreed upon amount that is fixed at the inception of the contract. In a cost reimbursable contract, the fixed fee includes the contractor's direct and indirect administrative costs and profit allocable to the contract.

Fixed-price contract means a contract that charges a fixed cost per meal, or a fixed cost for a certain time period. Fixed-price contracts may include an economic price adjustment tied to a standard index.

FNS means the Food and Nutrition Service, United States Department of Agriculture.

FNSRO means the appropriate Regional Office of the Food and Nutrition Service of the Department.

Food component means one of the food groups which comprise reimbursable meals. The food components are: Meats/meat alternates, grains, vegetables, fruits, and fluid milk. Meals offered to preschoolers must consist of: Meats/meat alternates, grains, vegetables/fruits, and fluid milk.

Food item means a specific food offered within a food component.

Food service management company means a commercial enterprise or a nonprofit organization which is or may be contracted with by the school food authority to manage any aspect of the school food service.

Free lunch means a lunch served under the Program to a child from a household eligible for such benefits under 7 CFR part 245 and for which neither the child nor any member of the household pays or is required to work.

Local educational agency means a public board of education or other public or private nonprofit authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public or private nonprofit elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public or private nonprofit elementary schools or secondary schools. The term also includes any other public or private nonprofit institution or agency having administrative control and direction of a public or private nonprofit elementary school or secondary school, including residential child care institutions, Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, and

educational service agencies and consortia of those agencies, as well as the State educational agency in a State or territory in which the State educational agency is the sole educational agency for all public or private nonprofit schools.

Lunch means a meal service that meets the meal requirements in § 210.10 for lunches.

National School Lunch Program means the Program under which participating schools operate a nonprofit lunch program in accordance with this part. General and special cash assistance and donated food assistance are made available to schools in accordance with this part.

Net cash resources means all monies, as determined in accordance with the State agency's established accounting system, that are available to or have accrued to a school food authority's nonprofit school food service at any given time, less cash payable. Such monies may include, but are not limited to, cash on hand, cash receivable, earnings on investments, cash on deposit and the value of stocks, bonds or other negotiable securities.

Nonprofit means, when applied to schools or institutions eligible for the Program, exempt from income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Nonprofit school food service means all food service operations conducted by the school food authority principally for the benefit of schoolchildren, all of the revenue from which is used solely for the operation or improvement of such food services.

Nonprofit school food service account means the restricted account in which all of the revenue from all food service operations conducted by the school food authority principally for the benefit of school children is retained and used only for the operation or improvement of the nonprofit school food service. This account shall include, as appropriate, non-Federal funds used to support paid lunches as provided in § 210.14(e), and proceeds from nonprogram foods as provided in § 210.14(f).

OIG means the Office of the Inspector General of the Department.

Paid lunch means a lunch served to children who are either not certified for or elect not to receive the free or reduced price benefits offered under part 245 of this chapter. The Department subsidizes each paid lunch with both general cash assistance and donated foods. The prices for paid lunches in a school food authority shall be determined in accordance with § 210.14(e).

Point of Service means that point in the food service operation where a determination can accurately be made that a reimbursable free, reduced price or paid lunch has been served to an eligible child.

Program means the National School Lunch Program and the Commodity School Program.

Reduced price lunch means a lunch served under the Program:

- (a) to a child from a household eligible for such benefits under 7 CFR part 245;
- (b) for which the price is less than the school food authority designated full price of the lunch and which does not exceed the maximum allowable reduced price specified under 7 CFR part 245; and
- (c) for which neither the child nor any member of the household is required to work.

Reimbursement means Federal cash assistance including advances paid or payable to participating schools for lunches meeting the requirements of § 210.10 and served to eligible children.

Revenue, when applied to nonprofit school food service, means all monies received by or accruing to the nonprofit school food service in accordance with the State agency's established accounting system including, but not limited to, children's payments, earnings on investments, other local revenues, State revenues, and Federal cash reimbursements.

School means:

- (a) An educational unit of high school grade or under, recognized as part of the educational system in the State and operating under public or nonprofit private ownership in a single building or complex of buildings;
- (b) any public or nonprofit private classes of preprimary grade when they are conducted in the aforementioned schools; or
- (c) any public or nonprofit private residential child care institution, or distinct part of such institution, which operates principally for the care of children, and, if private, is licensed to provide residential child care services under the appropriate licensing code by the State or a subordinate level of government, *except for* residential summer camps which participate in the Summer Food Service Program for Children, Job Corps centers funded by the Department of Labor, and private foster homes. The term “residential child care institutions” includes, but is not limited to: homes for the mentally, emotionally or physically impaired, and unmarried mothers and their infants; group homes; halfway houses; orphanages; temporary shelters for abused children and for runaway children; long-term care facilities for chronically ill children; and juvenile detention centers. A long-term care facility is a hospital, skilled nursing facility, intermediate care facility, or distinct part thereof, which is intended for the care of children confined for 30 days or more.

School food authority means the governing body which is responsible for the administration of one or more schools; and has the legal authority to operate the Program therein or be otherwise approved by FNS to operate the Program.

School nutrition program directors are those individuals directly responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations of school food service for all participating schools under the jurisdiction of the school food authority.

School nutrition program managers are those individuals directly responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations of school food service for a participating school(s).

School nutrition program staff are those individuals, without managerial responsibilities, involved in day-to-day operations of school food service for a participating school(s).

School week means the period of time used to determine compliance with the meal requirements in § 210.10. The period shall be a normal school week of five consecutive days; however, to accommodate shortened weeks resulting from holidays and other scheduling needs, the period shall be a minimum of three consecutive days and a maximum of seven consecutive days. Weeks in which school lunches are offered less than three times shall be combined with either the previous or the coming week.

School year means a period of 12 calendar months beginning July 1 of any year and ending June 30 of the following year.

Seamless Summer Option means the meal service alternative authorized by section 13(a)(8) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. 1761(a)(8), under which public or nonprofit school food authorities participating in the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program offer meals at no cost to children during the traditional summer vacation periods and, for year-round schools, vacation periods longer than 10 school days.

Secretary means the Secretary of Agriculture.

State means any of the 50 States, District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, and, as applicable, American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas.

State agency means

- (a) the State educational agency;
- (b) any other agency of the State which has been designated by the Governor or other appropriate executive or legislative authority of the State and approved by the Department to administer the Program in schools, as specified in § 210.3(b); or
- (c) the FNSRO, where the FNSRO administers the Program as specified in § 210.3(c).

State educational agency means, as the State legislature may determine,

- (a) the chief State school officer (such as the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Commissioner of Education, or similar officer), or
- (b) a board of education controlling the State department of education.

Student with disabilities means any child who has a physical or mental impairment as defined in § 15b.3 of the Department's nondiscrimination regulations (7 CFR part 15b).

Tofu means a soybean-derived food, made by a process in which soybeans are soaked, ground, mixed with water, heated, filtered, coagulated, and formed into cakes. Basic ingredients are whole soybeans, one or more food-grade coagulants (typically a salt or an acid), and water. Tofu products must conform to FNS guidance to count toward the meats/meat alternates component.

USDA implementing regulations include the following: 2 CFR part 400, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards; 2 CFR part 415, General Program Administrative Regulations; 2 CFR part 416, General Program Administrative Regulations for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments; and 2 CFR part 418, New Restrictions on Lobbying.

Whole grains means grains that consist of the intact, ground, cracked, or flaked grain seed whose principal anatomical components—the starchy endosperm, germ and bran—are present in the same relative proportions as they exist in the intact grain seed. Whole grain-rich products must conform to FNS guidance to count toward the grains component.

Yogurt means commercially prepared coagulated milk products obtained by the fermentation of specific bacteria, that meet milk fat or milk solid requirements and to which flavoring foods or ingredients may be added. These products are covered by the Food and Drug Administration's Definition and Standard of Identity for yogurt, lowfat yogurt, and nonfat yogurt, 21 CFR 131.200, 21 CFR 131.203, and 21 CFR 131.206, respectively.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988]

Editorial Note: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 210.2, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and at www.govinfo.gov.

§ 210.3 Administration.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32063, Apr. 25, 2024.

- (a) **FNS.** FNS will act on behalf of the Department in the administration of the Program. Within FNS, the CND will be responsible for Program administration.
- (b) **States.** Within the States, the responsibility for the administration of the Program in schools, as defined in § 210.2, shall be in the State educational agency. If the State educational agency is unable to administer the Program in public or private nonprofit residential child care institutions or nonprofit private schools, then Program administration for such schools may be assumed by FNSRO as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, or such other agency of the State as has been designated by the Governor or other appropriate executive or legislative authority of the State and approved by the Department to administer such schools. Each State agency desiring to administer the Program shall enter into a written agreement with the Department for the administration of the Program in accordance with the applicable requirements of this part; parts 235 and 245 of this chapter; parts 15, 15a, and 15b of this title, and 2 CFR part 200; USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415; and FNS instructions.
- (c) **FNSRO.** The FNSRO will administer the Program in nonprofit private schools or public or nonprofit private residential child care institutions if the State agency is prohibited by law from disbursing Federal funds paid to such schools. In addition, the FNSRO will continue to administer the Program in those States in which nonprofit private schools or public or nonprofit private residential child care institutions have been under continuous FNS administration since October 1, 1980, unless the administration of the Program in such schools is assumed by the State. The FNSRO will, in each State in which it administers the Program, assume all responsibilities of a State agency as set forth in this part and part 245 of this chapter as appropriate. References in this part to “State agency” include FNSRO, as applicable, when it is the agency administering the Program.
- (d) **School food authorities.** The school food authority shall be responsible for the administration of the Program in schools. State agencies shall ensure that school food authorities administer the Program in accordance with the applicable requirements of this part; part 245 of this chapter; parts 15, 15a, and 15b, and 3016 or 3019, as applicable, of this title and 2 CFR part 200; USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415 and FNS instructions.
- (e) **Authority to waive statute and regulations.**
 - (1) As authorized under section 12(l) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, FNS may waive provisions of such Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, as amended, and the provisions of this part with respect to a State agency or eligible service provider. The provisions of this part required by other statutes may not be waived under this authority. FNS may only approve requests for a waiver that are submitted by a State agency and comply with the requirements at section 12(l)(1) and the limitations at section 12(l)(4), including that FNS may not grant a waiver that increases Federal costs.

(2)

- (i) A State agency may submit a request for a waiver under paragraph (e)(1) of this section in accordance with section 12(l)(2) and the provisions of this part.
- (ii) A State agency may submit a request to waive specific statutory or regulatory requirements on behalf of eligible service providers that operate in the State. Any waiver where the State concurs must be submitted to the appropriate FNSRO.

(3)

- (i) An eligible service provider may submit a request for a waiver under paragraph (e)(1) of this section in accordance with section 12(l) and the provisions of this part. Any waiver request submitted by an eligible service provider must be submitted to the State agency for review. A State agency must act promptly on such a waiver request and must deny or concur with a request submitted by an eligible service provider.
- (ii) If a State agency concurs with a request from an eligible service provider, the State agency must promptly forward to the appropriate FNSRO the request and a rationale, consistent with section 12(l)(2), supporting the request. By forwarding the request to the FNSRO, the State agency affirms:
 - (A) The request meets all requirements for waiver submissions; and,
 - (B) The State agency will conduct all monitoring requirements related to regular Program operations and the implementation of the waiver.
- (iii) If the State agency denies the request, the State agency must notify the requesting eligible service provider and state the reason for denying the request in writing within 30 calendar days of the State agency's receipt of the request. The State agency response is final and may not be appealed to FNS.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 71 FR 39515, July 13, 2006; 81 FR 66489, Sept. 28, 2016; 87 FR 57354, Sept. 19, 2022]

Subpart B—Reimbursement Process for States and School Food Authorities

§ 210.4 Cash and donated food assistance to States.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32063, Apr. 25, 2024.

- (a) **General.** To the extent funds are available, FNS will make cash assistance available in accordance with the provisions of this section to each State agency for lunches and meal supplements served to children under the National School Lunch and Commodity School Programs. To the extent donated foods are available, FNS will provide donated food assistance to distributing agencies for each lunch served in accordance with the provisions of this part and part 250 of this chapter.
- (b) **Assistance for the National School Lunch Program.** The Secretary will make cash and/or donated food assistance available to each State agency and distributing agency, as appropriate, administering the National School Lunch Program, as follows:
 - (1) Cash assistance will be made available to each State agency administering the National School Lunch Program as follows:

- (i) **General:** Cash assistance payments are composed of a general cash assistance payment and a performance-based cash assistance payment, authorized under section 4 of the Act, and a special cash assistance payment, authorized under section 11 of the Act. General cash assistance is provided to each State agency for all lunches served to children in accordance with the provisions of the National School Lunch Program. Performance-based cash assistance is provided to each State agency for lunches served in accordance with § 210.7(d). Special cash assistance is provided to each State agency for lunches served under the National School Lunch Program to children determined eligible for free or reduced price lunches in accordance with part 245 of this chapter.
 - (ii) **Cash assistance for lunches.** The total general cash assistance paid to each State for any fiscal year shall not exceed the lesser of amounts reported to FNS as reimbursed to school food authorities in accordance with § 210.5(d)(3) or the total calculated by multiplying the number of lunches reported in accordance with § 210.5(d)(1) for each month of service during the fiscal year, by the applicable national average payment rate prescribed by FNS. The total performance-based cash assistance paid to each State for any fiscal year shall not exceed the lesser of amounts reported to FNS as reimbursed to school food authorities in accordance with § 210.5(d)(3) or the total calculated by multiplying the number of lunches reported in accordance with § 210.5(d)(1) for each month of service during the fiscal year, by 6 cents for school year 2012-2013, adjusted annually thereafter as specified in paragraph (b)(1)(iii) of this section. The total special assistance paid to each State for any fiscal year shall not exceed the lesser of amounts reported to FNS as reimbursed to school food authorities in accordance with § 210.5(d)(3) or the total calculated by multiplying the number of free and reduced price lunches reported in accordance with § 210.5(d)(1) for each month of service during the fiscal year by the applicable national average payment rate prescribed by FNS.
 - (iii) **Annual adjustments.** In accordance with section 11 of the Act, FNS will prescribe annual adjustments to the per meal national average payment rate (general cash assistance), the performance-based cash assistance rate (performance-based cash assistance), and the special assistance national average payment rates (special cash assistance) which are effective on July 1 of each year. These adjustments, which reflect changes in the food away from home series of the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers, are annually announced by Notice in July of each year in the FEDERAL REGISTER.
 - (iv) **Maximum per meal rates.** FNS will also establish maximum per meal rates of reimbursement within which a State may vary reimbursement rates to school food authorities. These maximum rates of reimbursement are established at the same time and announced in the same Notice as the national average payment rates.
- (2) **Donated food assistance.** For each school year, FNS will provide distributing agencies with donated foods for lunches served under the National School Lunch Program as provided under part 250 of this chapter. The per lunch value of donated food assistance is adjusted by the Secretary annually to reflect changes as required under section 6 of the Act. These adjustments, which reflect changes in the Price Index for Foods Used in Schools and Institutions, are effective on July 1 of each year and are announced by Notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER in July of each year.
 - (3) **Cash assistance for meal supplements.** For those eligible schools (as defined in § 210.10(n)(1)) operating afterschool care programs and electing to serve meal supplements to enrolled children, funds shall be made available to each State agency, each school year in an amount no less than the sum of the products obtained by multiplying:

- (i) The number of meal supplements served in the afterschool care program within the State to children from families that do not satisfy the income standards for free and reduced price school meals by 2.75 cents;
 - (ii) The number of meal supplements served in the afterschool care program within the State to children from families that satisfy the income standard for free school meals by 30 cents;
 - (iii) The number of meal supplements served in the afterschool care program within the State to children from families that satisfy the income standard for reduced price school meals by 15 cents.
- (4) The rates in paragraph (b)(3) are the base rates established in August 1981 for the CACFP. FNS shall prescribe annual adjustments to these rates in the same Notice as the National Average Payment Rates for lunches. These adjustments shall ensure that the reimbursement rates for meal supplements served under this part are the same as those implemented for meal supplements in the CACFP.
- (c) **Assistance for the Commodity School Program.** FNS will make special cash assistance available to each State agency for lunches served in commodity schools in the same manner as special cash assistance is provided in the National School Lunch Program. Payment of such amounts to State agencies is subject to the reporting requirements contained in § 210.5(d). FNS will provide donated food assistance in accordance with part 250 of this chapter. Of the total value of donated food assistance to which it is entitled, the school food authority may elect to receive cash payments of up to 5 cents per lunch served in its commodity school(s) for donated foods processing and handling expenses. Such expenses include any expenses incurred by or on behalf of a commodity school for processing or other aspects of the preparation, delivery, and storage of donated foods. The school food authority may have all or part of these cash payments retained by the State agency for use on its behalf for processing and handling expenses by the State agency or it may authorize the State agency to transfer to the distributing agency all or any part of these payments for use on its behalf for these expenses. Payment of such amounts to State agencies is subject to the reporting requirements contained in § 210.5(d). The total value of donated food assistance is calculated on a school year basis by adding:
- (1) The applicable national average payment rate (general cash assistance) prescribed by the Secretary for the period of July 1 through June 30 multiplied by the total number of lunches served during the school year under the Commodity School Program; and
 - (2) The national per lunch average value of donated foods prescribed by the Secretary for the period of July 1 through June 30 multiplied by the total number of lunches served during the school year under the Commodity School Program.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 58 FR 42487, Aug. 10, 1993; 60 FR 31207, June 13, 1995; 65 FR 26912, May 9, 2000; 77 FR 25034, Apr. 27, 2012]

§ 210.5 Payment process to States.

- (a) **Grant award.** FNS will specify the terms and conditions of the State agency's grant in a grant award document and will generally make payments available by means of a Letter of Credit issued in favor of the State agency. The State agency shall obtain funds for reimbursement to participating school food authorities through procedures established by FNS in accordance with 2 CFR part 200, subpart D and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415. State agencies shall limit requests for funds to such times and amounts as will permit prompt payment of claims or authorized advances. The State

agency shall disburse funds received from such requests without delay for the purpose for which drawn. FNS may, at its option, reimburse a State agency by Treasury Check. FNS will pay by Treasury Check with funds available in settlement of a valid claim if payment for that claim cannot be made within the grant closeout period specified in paragraph (d) of this section.

- (b) **Cash-in-lieu of donated foods.** All Federal funds to be paid to any State in place of donated foods will be made available as provided in part 240 of this chapter.
- (c) **Recovery of funds.** FNS will recover any Federal funds made available to the State agency under this part which are in excess of obligations reported at the end of each fiscal year in accordance with the reconciliation procedures specified in paragraph (d) of this section. Such recoveries shall be reflected by a related adjustment in the State agency's Letter of Credit.
- (d) **Substantiation and reconciliation process.** Each State agency shall maintain Program records as necessary to support the reimbursement payments made to school food authorities under §§ 210.7 and 210.8 and the reports submitted to FNS under this paragraph. The State agency shall ensure such records are retained for a period of 3 years or as otherwise specified in § 210.23(c).
 - (1) **Monthly report.** Each State agency shall submit a final Report of School Program Operations (FNS-10) to FNS for each month. The final reports shall be limited to claims submitted in accordance with § 210.8 of this part. For the month of October, the final report shall include the total number of children approved for free lunches, the total number of children approved for reduced price lunches, and the total number of children enrolled in participating public schools, private schools, and residential child care institutions, respectively, as of the last day of operation in October. The final reports shall be postmarked and/or submitted no later than 90 days following the last day of the month covered by the report. States shall not receive Program funds for any month for which the final report is not submitted within this time limit unless FNS grants an exception. Upward adjustments to a State's report shall not be made after 90 days from the month covered by the report unless authorized by FNS. Downward adjustments to a State's report shall always be made regardless of when it is determined that such adjustments are necessary. FNS authorization is not required for downward adjustments. Any adjustments to a State's report shall be reported to FNS in accordance with procedures established by FNS.
 - (2) **Quarterly report.** Each State agency administering the National School Lunch Program must submit to FNS a quarterly Financial Status Report (FNS-777) on the use of Program funds. Such reports must be postmarked and/or submitted no later than 30 days after the end of each fiscal year quarter.
 - (3) **End of year reports.**
 - (i) Each State agency must submit an annual report detailing the disbursement of performance-based cash assistance described in § 210.4(b)(1). The report must be submitted no later than 30 days after the end of each fiscal year. The report must include the total number of school food authorities in the State and the names of certified school food authorities. If all school food authorities in the State have been certified, the State agency is no longer required to submit the report.
 - (ii) Each State agency must submit a final Financial Status Report (FNS-777) for each fiscal year. This final fiscal year grant closeout report must be postmarked or submitted to FNS within 120 days after the end of each fiscal year or part thereof that the State agency administered the Program. Obligations must be reported only for the fiscal year in which they occur. FNS will not be responsible for reimbursing Program obligations reported later than 120 days after the close

of the fiscal year in which they were incurred. Grant closeout procedures are to be carried out in accordance with 2 CFR part 200, subpart D and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 54 FR 12580, Mar. 28, 1989; 56 FR 32939, July 17, 1991; 71 FR 39516, July 13, 2006; 77 FR 25034, Apr. 27, 2012; 79 FR 330, Jan. 3, 2014; 81 FR 50185, July 29, 2016; 81 FR 66488, Sept. 28, 2016; 88 FR 57844, Aug. 23, 2023]

§ 210.6 Use of Federal funds.

General. State agencies shall use Federal funds made available under the Program to reimburse or make advance payments to school food authorities in connection with lunches and meal supplements served in accordance with the provisions of this part; *except that*, with the approval of FNS, any State agency may reserve an amount up to one percent of the funds earned in any fiscal year under this part for use in carrying out special developmental projects. Advance payments to school food authorities may be made at such times and in such amounts as are necessary to meet the current fiscal obligations. All Federal funds paid to any State in place of donated foods shall be used as provided in part 240 of this chapter.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 58 FR 42487, Aug. 10, 1993]

§ 210.7 Reimbursement for school food authorities.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32063, Apr. 25, 2024.

- (a) **General.** Reimbursement payments to finance nonprofit school food service operations shall be made only to school food authorities operating under a written agreement with the State agency. Subject to the provisions of § 210.8(c), such payments may be made for lunches and meal supplements served in accordance with provisions of this part and part 245 in the calendar month preceding the calendar month in which the agreement is executed. These reimbursement payments include general cash assistance for all lunches served to children under the National School Lunch Program and special cash assistance payments for free or reduced price lunches served to children determined eligible for such benefits under the National School Lunch and Commodity School Programs. Reimbursement payments shall also be made for meal supplements served to eligible children in afterschool care programs in accordance with the rates established in § 210.4(b)(3). Approval shall be in accordance with part 245 of this chapter.
- (b) **Assignment of rates.** At the beginning of each school year, State agencies shall establish the per meal rates of reimbursement for school food authorities participating in the Program. These rates of reimbursement may be assigned at levels based on financial need; *except that*, the rates are not to exceed the maximum rates of reimbursement established by the Secretary under § 210.4(b) and are to permit reimbursement for the total number of lunches in the State from funds available under § 210.4. Within each school food authority, the State agency shall assign the same rate of reimbursement from general cash assistance funds for all lunches served to children under the Program. Assigned rates of reimbursement may be changed at any time by the State agency, *provided that* notice of any change is given to the school food authority. The total general and special cash assistance reimbursement paid to any school food authority for lunches served to children during the school year are not to exceed the sum of the products obtained by multiplying the total reported number of lunches, by type, served to eligible children during the school year by the applicable maximum per lunch reimbursements prescribed for the school year for each type of lunch.

(c) **Reimbursement limitations.** To be entitled to reimbursement under this part, each school food authority shall ensure that Claims for Reimbursement are limited to the number of free, reduced price and paid lunches and meal supplements that are served to children eligible for free, reduced price and paid lunches and meal supplements, respectively, for each day of operation.

(1) **Lunch count system.** To ensure that the Claim for Reimbursement accurately reflects the number of lunches and meal supplements served to eligible children, the school food authority shall, at a minimum:

- (i) Correctly approve each child's eligibility for free and reduced price lunches and meal supplements based on the requirements prescribed under 7 CFR part 245;
- (ii) Maintain a system to issue benefits and to update the eligibility of children approved for free or reduced price lunches and meal supplements. The system shall:
 - (A) Accurately reflect eligibility status as well as changes in eligibility made after the initial approval process due to verification findings, transfers, reported changes in income or household size, etc.; and
 - (B) Make the appropriate changes in eligibility after the initial approval process on a timely basis so that the mechanism the school food authority uses to identify currently eligible children provides a current and accurate representation of eligible children. Changes in eligibility which result in increased benefit levels shall be made as soon as possible but no later than 3 operating days of the date the school food authority makes the final decision on a child's eligibility status. Changes in eligibility which result in decreased benefit levels shall be made as soon as possible but no later than 10 operating days of the date the school food authority makes the final decision on the child's eligibility status.
- (iii) Base Claims for Reimbursement on lunch counts, taken daily at the point of service, which correctly identify the number of free, reduced price and paid lunches served to eligible children;
- (iv) Correctly record, consolidate and report those lunch and supplement counts on the Claim for Reimbursement; and
- (v) Ensure that Claims for Reimbursement do not request payment for any excess lunches produced, as prohibited in § 210.10(a)(2), or non-Program lunches (i.e., a la carte or adult lunches) or for more than one meal supplement per child per day.

(2) **Point of service alternatives.**

- (i) State agencies may authorize alternatives to the point of service lunch counts provided that such alternatives result in accurate, reliable counts of the number of free, reduced price and paid lunches served, respectively, for each serving day. State agencies are encouraged to issue guidance which clearly identifies acceptable point of service alternatives and instructions for proper implementation. School food authorities may select one of the State agency approved alternatives without prior approval.
- (ii) In addition, on a case-by-case basis, State agencies may authorize school food authorities to use other alternatives to the point of service lunch count; provided that such alternatives result in an accurate and reliable lunch count system. Any request to use an alternative lunch counting method which has not been previously authorized under paragraph (2)(i) is to be submitted in writing to the State agency for approval. Such request shall provide detail sufficient for the State agency to assess whether the proposed alternative would provide an

accurate and reliable count of the number of lunches, by type, served each day to eligible children. The details of each approved alternative shall be maintained on file at the State agency for review by FNS.

- (d) **Performance-based cash assistance.** The State agency must provide performance-based cash assistance as authorized under § 210.4(b)(1) for lunches served in school food authorities certified by the State agency to be in compliance with meal pattern and nutrition requirements set forth in § 210.10 and, if the school food authority participates in the School Breakfast Program (7 CFR part 220), § 220.8 or § 220.23 of this chapter, as applicable. State agencies must establish procedures to certify school food authorities for performance-based cash assistance in accordance with guidance established by FNS. Such procedures must ensure State agencies:
- (1) Make certification procedures readily available to school food authorities and provide guidance necessary to facilitate the certification process.
 - (2) Require school food authorities to submit documentation to demonstrate compliance with meal pattern requirements set forth in § 210.10 and § 220.8 of this chapter, as applicable. Such documentation must reflect meal service at or about the time of certification.
 - (3) State agencies must review certification documentation submitted by the school food authority to ensure compliance with meal pattern requirements set forth in § 210.10, or § 220.8 of this chapter, as applicable. For certification purposes, State agencies should consider any school food authority compliant:
 - (i) If when evaluating daily and weekly range requirements for grains and meat/meat alternates, the certification documentation shows compliance with the daily and weekly minimums for these two components, regardless of whether the school food authority has exceeded the maximums for the same components.
 - (ii) If when evaluating the service of frozen fruit, the school food authority serves products that contain added sugar.
 - (4) Certification procedures must ensure that no performance-based cash assistance is provided to school food authorities for meals served prior to October 1, 2012.
 - (5) Within 60 calendar days of a certification submission or as otherwise authorized by FNS, review submitted materials and notify school food authorities of the certification determination, the date that performance-based cash assistance is effective, and consequences for non-compliance,
 - (6) Disburse performance-based cash assistance for all lunches served beginning with the start of certification provided that documentation reflects meal service in the calendar month the certification materials are submitted or, in the month preceding the calendar month of submission.
- (e) The State agency shall reimburse the school food authority for meal supplements served in eligible schools (as defined in § 210.10(n)(1)) operating afterschool care programs under the NSLP in accordance with the rates established in § 210.4(b).

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 54 FR 12581, Mar. 28, 1989; 56 FR 32939, July 17, 1991; 58 FR 42487, Aug. 10, 1993; 60 FR 31207, June 13, 1995; 65 FR 26912, May 9, 2000; 77 FR 25034, Apr. 27, 2012; 79 FR 330, Jan. 3, 2014; 81 FR 50185, July 29, 2016; 88 FR 57844, Aug. 23, 2023]

§ 210.8 Claims for reimbursement.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32064, Apr. 25, 2024.

- (a) **Internal controls.** The school food authority shall establish internal controls which ensure the accuracy of meal counts prior to the submission of the monthly Claim for Reimbursement. At a minimum, these internal controls shall include: an on-site review of the meal counting and claiming system employed by each school within the jurisdiction of the school food authority; comparisons of daily free, reduced price and paid meal counts against data which will assist in the identification of meal counts in excess of the number of free, reduced price and paid meals served each day to children eligible for such meals; and a system for following up on those meal counts which suggest the likelihood of meal counting problems.
 - (1) **On-site reviews.** Every school year, each school food authority with more than one school shall perform no less than one on-site review of the counting and claiming system and the readily observable general areas of review cited under § 210.18(h), as prescribed by FNS for each school under its jurisdiction. The on-site review shall take place prior to February 1 of each school year. Further, if the review discloses problems with a school's meal counting or claiming procedures or general review areas, the school food authority shall: ensure that the school implements corrective action; and, within 45 days of the review, conducts a follow-up on-site review to determine that the corrective action resolved the problems. Each on-site review shall ensure that the school's claim is based on the counting system authorized by the State agency under § 210.7(c) of this part and that the counting system, as implemented, yields the actual number of reimbursable free, reduced price and paid meals, respectively, served for each day of operation.
 - (2) **School food authority claims review process.** Prior to the submission of a monthly Claim for Reimbursement, each school food authority shall review the lunch count data for each school under its jurisdiction to ensure the accuracy of the monthly Claim for Reimbursement. The objective of this review is to ensure that monthly claims include only the number of free, reduced price and paid lunches served on any day of operation to children currently eligible for such lunches.
 - (i) Any school food authority that was found by its most recent administrative review conducted in accordance with § 210.18, to have no meal counting and claiming violations may:
 - (A) Develop internal control procedures that ensure accurate meal counts. The school food authority shall submit any internal controls developed in accordance with this paragraph to the State agency for approval and, in the absence of specific disapproval from the State agency, shall implement such internal controls. The State agency shall establish procedures to promptly notify school food authorities of any modifications needed to their proposed internal controls or of denial of unacceptable submissions. If the State agency disapproves the proposed internal controls of any school food authority, it reserves the right to require the school food authority to comply with the provisions of paragraph (a)(3) of this section; or
 - (B) Comply with the requirements of paragraph (a)(3) of this section.
 - (ii) Any school food authority that was identified in the most recent administrative review conducted in accordance with § 210.18, or in any other oversight activity, as having meal counting and claiming violations shall comply with the requirements in paragraph (a)(3) of this section.
 - (3) **Edit checks.**

- (i) The following procedure shall be followed for school food authorities identified in paragraph (a)(2)(ii) of this section, by other school food authorities at State agency option, or, at their own option, by school food authorities identified in paragraph (a)(2)(i) of this section: the school food authority shall compare each school's daily counts of free, reduced price and paid lunches against the product of the number of children in that school currently eligible for free, reduced price and paid lunches, respectively, times an attendance factor.
 - (ii) School food authorities that are identified in administrative reviews conducted in accordance with § 210.18 as not having meal counting and claiming violations and that are correctly complying with the procedures in paragraph (a)(3)(i) of this section have the option of developing internal controls in accordance with paragraph (a)(2)(i) of this section.
- (4) **Follow-up activity.** The school food authority shall promptly follow-up through phone contact, on-site visits or other means when the internal controls used by schools in accordance with paragraph (a)(2)(i) of this section or the claims review process used by schools in accordance with paragraphs (a)(2)(ii) and (a)(3) of this section suggest the likelihood of lunch count problems. When problems or errors are identified, the lunch counts shall be corrected prior to submission of the monthly Claim for Reimbursement. Improvements to the lunch count system shall also be made to ensure that the lunch counting system consistently results in lunch counts of the actual number of reimbursable free, reduced price and paid lunches served for each day of operation.
- (5) **Recordkeeping.** School food authorities shall maintain on file, each month's Claim for Reimbursement and all data used in the claims review process, by school. Records shall be retained as specified in § 210.23(c) of this part. School food authorities shall make this information available to the Department and the State agency upon request.
- (b) **Monthly claims.** To be entitled to reimbursement under this part, each school food authority shall submit to the State agency, a monthly Claim for Reimbursement, as described in paragraph (c) of this section.
 - (1) **Submission timeframes.** A final Claim for Reimbursement shall be postmarked or submitted to the State agency not later than 60 days following the last day of the full month covered by the claim. State agencies may establish shorter deadlines at their discretion. Claims not postmarked and/or submitted within 60 days shall not be paid with Program funds unless otherwise authorized by FNS.
 - (2) **State agency claims review process.** The State agency shall review each school food authority's Claim for Reimbursement, on a monthly basis, in an effort to ensure that monthly claims are limited to the number of free and reduced price lunches served, by type, to eligible children.
 - (i) The State agency shall, at a minimum, compare the number of free and reduced price lunches claimed to the number of children approved for free and reduced price lunches enrolled in the school food authority for the month of October times the days of operation times the attendance factor employed by the school food authority in accordance with paragraph (a)(3) of this section or the internal controls used by schools in accordance with paragraph (a)(2)(i) of this section. At its discretion, the State agency may conduct this comparison against data which reflects the number of children approved for free and reduced price lunches for a more current month(s) as collected pursuant to paragraph (c)(2) of this section.
 - (ii) In lieu of conducting the claims review specified in paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section, the State agency may conduct alternative analyses for those Claims for Reimbursement submitted by residential child care institutions. Such alternatives analyses shall meet the objective of ensuring that the monthly Claims for Reimbursement are limited to the numbers of free and reduced price lunches served, by type, to eligible children.

- (3) **Follow-up activity.** The State agency shall promptly follow-up through phone contact, on-site visits, or other means when the claims review process suggests the likelihood of lunch count problems.
- (4) **Corrective action.** The State agency shall promptly take corrective action with respect to any Claim for Reimbursement which includes more than the number of lunches served, by type, to eligible children. In taking corrective action, State agencies may make adjustments on claims filed within the 60-day deadline if such adjustments are completed within 90 days of the last day of the claim month and are reflected in the final Report of School Program Operations (FNS-10) for the claim month required under § 210.5(d) of this part. Upward adjustments in Program funds claimed which are not reflected in the final FNS-10 for the claim month shall not be made unless authorized by FNS. Except that, upward adjustments for the current and prior fiscal years resulting from any review or audit may be made, at the discretion of the State agency. Downward adjustments in amounts claimed shall always be made, without FNS authorization, regardless of when it is determined that such adjustments are necessary.
- (c) **Content of claim.** The Claim for Reimbursement shall include data in sufficient detail to justify the reimbursement claimed and to enable the State agency to provide the Report of School Program Operations required under § 210.5(d) of this part. Such data shall include, at a minimum, the number of free, reduced price and paid lunches and meal supplements served to eligible children. The claim shall be signed by a school food authority official.
 - (1) **Consolidated claim.** The State agency may authorize a school food authority to submit a consolidated Claim for Reimbursement for all schools under its jurisdiction, *provided that*, the data on each school's operations required in this section are maintained on file at the local office of the school food authority and the claim separates consolidated data for commodity schools from data for other schools. Unless otherwise approved by FNS, the Claim for Reimbursement for any month shall include only lunches and meal supplements served in that month except if the first or last month of Program operations for any school year contains 10 operating days or less, such month may be combined with the Claim for Reimbursement for the appropriate adjacent month. However, Claims for Reimbursement may not combine operations occurring in two fiscal years. If a single State agency administers any combination of the Child Nutrition Programs, a school food authority shall be able to use a common claim form with respect to claims for reimbursement for meals served under those programs.
 - (2) **October data.** For the month of October, the State agency shall also obtain, either through the Claim for Reimbursement or other means, the total number of children approved for free lunches and meal supplements, the total number of children approved for reduced price lunches and meal supplements, and the total number of children enrolled in the school food authority as of the last day of operation in October. The school food authority shall submit this data to the State agency no later than December 31 of each year. State agencies may establish shorter deadlines at their discretion. In addition, the State agency may require school food authorities to provide this data for a more current month if for use in the State agency claims review process under paragraph (c)(2) of this section.
- (d) **Advance funds.** The State agency may advance funds available for the Program to a school food authority in an amount equal to the amount of reimbursement estimated to be needed for one month's operation. Following the receipt of claims, the State agency shall make adjustments, as necessary, to ensure that the total amount of payments received by the school food authority for the fiscal year does not exceed an amount equal to the number of lunches and meal supplements by reimbursement type served to children

times the respective payment rates assigned by the State in accordance with § 210.7(b). The State agency shall recover advances of funds to any school food authority failing to comply with the 60-day claim submission requirements in paragraph (b) of this section.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 54 FR 12581, Mar. 28, 1989; 56 FR 32940, July 17, 1991; 58 FR 42487, Aug. 10, 1993; 60 FR 31207, June 13, 1995; 64 FR 50740, Sept. 20, 1999; 81 FR 50185, July 29, 2016]

Subpart C—Requirements for School Food Authority Participation

§ 210.9 Agreement with State agency.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32065, Apr. 25, 2024.

- (a) **Application.** An official of a school food authority shall make written application to the State agency for any school in which it desires to operate the Program. Applications shall provide the State agency with sufficient information to determine eligibility. The school food authority shall also submit for approval a Free and Reduced Price Policy Statement in accordance with part 245 of this chapter.
- (b) **Agreement.** Each school food authority approved to participate in the program shall enter into a written agreement with the State agency that may be amended as necessary. Nothing in the preceding sentence shall be construed to limit the ability of the State agency to suspend or terminate the agreement in accordance with § 210.25. If a single State agency administers any combination of the Child Nutrition Programs, that State agency shall provide each school food authority with a single agreement with respect to the operation of those programs. The agreement shall contain a statement to the effect that the “School Food Authority and participating schools under its jurisdiction, shall comply with all provisions of 7 CFR parts 210 and 245.” This agreement shall provide that each school food authority shall, with respect to participating schools under its jurisdiction:
 - (1) Maintain a nonprofit school food service and observe the requirements for and limitations on the use of nonprofit school food service revenues set forth in § 210.14 and the limitations on any competitive school food service as set forth in § 210.11;
 - (2) Limit its net cash resources to an amount that does not exceed 3 months average expenditures for its nonprofit school food service or such other amount as may be approved in accordance with § 210.19(a);
 - (3) Maintain a financial management system as prescribed under § 210.14(c);
 - (4) Comply with the requirements of the Department's regulations regarding financial management (2 CFR part 200, subpart D and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415);
 - (5) Serve lunches, during the lunch period, which meet the minimum requirements prescribed in § 210.10;
 - (6) Price the lunch as a unit;
 - (7) Serve lunches free or at a reduced price to all children who are determined by the local educational agency to be eligible for such meals under 7 CFR part 245;
 - (8) Claim reimbursement at the assigned rates only for reimbursable free, reduced price and paid lunches served to eligible children in accordance with 7 CFR part 210. Agree that the school food authority official signing the claim shall be responsible for reviewing and analyzing meal counts to

ensure accuracy as specified in § 210.8 governing claims for reimbursement. Acknowledge that failure to submit accurate claims will result in the recovery of an overclaim and may result in the withholding of payments, suspension or termination of the program as specified in § 210.25. Acknowledge that if failure to submit accurate claims reflects embezzlement, willful misapplication of funds, theft, or fraudulent activity, the penalties specified in § 210.26 shall apply;

- (9) Count the number of free, reduced price and paid reimbursable meals served to eligible children at the point of service, or through another counting system if approved by the State agency;
- (10) Submit Claims for Reimbursement in accordance with § 210.8;
- (11) Comply with the requirements of the Department's regulations regarding nondiscrimination (7 CFR parts 15, 15a, 15b);
- (12) Make no discrimination against any child because of his or her eligibility for free or reduced price meals in accordance with the approved Free and Reduced Price Policy Statement;
- (13) Enter into an agreement to receive donated foods as required by 7 CFR part 250;
- (14) Maintain, in the storage, preparation and service of food, proper sanitation and health standards in conformance with all applicable State and local laws and regulations, and comply with the food safety requirements of § 210.13;
- (15) Accept and use, in as large quantities as may be efficiently utilized in its nonprofit school food service, such foods as may be offered as a donation by the Department;
- (16) Maintain necessary facilities for storing, preparing and serving food;
- (17) Upon request, make all accounts and records pertaining to its school food service available to the State agency and to FNS, for audit or review, at a reasonable time and place. Such records shall be retained for a period of 3 years after the date of the final Claim for Reimbursement for the fiscal year to which they pertain, except that if audit findings have not been resolved, the records shall be retained beyond the 3 year period as long as required for resolution of the issues raised by the audit;
- (18) Maintain files of currently approved and denied free and reduced price certification documentation.
- (19) Maintain direct certification documentation obtained directly from the appropriate State or local agency, or other appropriate individual, as specified by FNS, indicating that:
 - (i) A child in the *Family*, as defined in § 245.2 of this chapter, is receiving benefits from *SNAP*, *FDPIR* or *TANF*, as defined in § 245.2 of this chapter; if one child is receiving such benefits, all children in that family are considered to be directly certified;
 - (ii) The child is a homeless child as defined in § 245.2 of this chapter;
 - (iii) The child is a runaway child as defined in § 245.2 of this chapter;
 - (iv) The child is a migrant child as defined in § 245.2 of this chapter;
 - (v) The child is a Head Start child as defined in § 245.2 of this chapter; or
 - (vi) The child is a foster child as defined in § 245.2 of this chapter.
- (20) Retain eligibility documentation submitted by families for a period of 3 years after the end of the fiscal year to which they pertain or as otherwise specified under paragraph (b)(17) of this section.

(21) No later than March 1, 1997, and no later than December 31 of each year thereafter, provide the State agency with a list of all schools under its jurisdiction in which 50 percent or more of enrolled children have been determined eligible for free or reduced price meals as of the last operating day the preceding October. The State agency may designate a month other than October for the collection of this information, in which case the list must be provided to the State agency within 60 calendar days following the end of the month designated by the State agency. In addition, each school food authority shall provide, when available for the schools under its jurisdiction, and upon the request of a sponsoring organization of day care homes of the Child and Adult Care Food Program, information on the boundaries of the attendance areas for the schools identified as having 50 percent or more of enrolled children certified eligible for free or reduced price meals.

(c) **Afterschool care requirements.** Those school food authorities with eligible schools (as defined in § 210.10(n)(1)) that elect to serve meal supplements during afterschool care programs, shall agree to:

- (1) Serve meal supplements which meet the minimum requirements prescribed in § 210.10;
- (2) Price the meal supplement as a unit;
- (3) Serve meal supplements free or at a reduced price to all children who are determined by the school food authority to be eligible for free or reduced price school meals under 7 CFR part 245;
- (4) If charging for meals, the charge for a reduced price meal supplement shall not exceed 15 cents;
- (5) Claim reimbursement at the assigned rates only for meal supplements served in accordance with the agreement;
- (6) Claim reimbursement for no more than one meal supplement per child per day;
- (7) Review each afterschool care program two times a year; the first review shall be made during the first four weeks that the school is in operation each school year, except that an afterschool care program operating year round shall be reviewed during the first four weeks of its initial year of operation, once more during its first year of operation, and twice each school year thereafter; and
- (8) Comply with all requirements of this part, except that, claims for reimbursement need not be based on “point of service” meal supplement counts (as required by § 210.9(b)(9)).

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988]

Editorial Note: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 210.9, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and at www.govinfo.gov.

§ 210.10 Meal requirements for lunches and requirements for afterschool snacks.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32065, Apr. 25, 2024.

(a) **General requirements —**

- (1) **General nutrition requirements.** Schools must offer nutritious, well-balanced, and age-appropriate meals to all the children they serve to improve their diets and safeguard their health.

- (i) **Requirements for lunch.** School lunches offered to children age 5 or older must meet, at a minimum, the meal requirements in paragraph (b) of this section. Schools must follow a food-based menu planning approach and produce enough food to offer each child the quantities specified in the meal pattern established in paragraph (c) of this section for each age/grade group served in the school. In addition, school lunches must meet the dietary specifications in paragraph (f) of this section. Schools offering lunches to children ages 1 through 4 and infants must meet the meal pattern requirements in paragraphs (p) and (q), as applicable, of this section. Schools must make potable water available and accessible without restriction to children at no charge in the place(s) where lunches are served during the meal service.
- (ii) **Requirements for afterschool snacks.** Schools offering afterschool snacks in afterschool care programs must meet the meal pattern requirements in paragraph (o) of this section. Schools must plan and produce enough food to offer each child the minimum quantities under the meal pattern in paragraph (o) of this section.

(2) **Unit pricing.** Schools must price each meal as a unit. Schools need to consider participation trends in an effort to provide one reimbursable lunch and, if applicable, one reimbursable afterschool snack for each child every school day. If there are leftover meals, schools may offer them to the students but cannot get Federal reimbursement for them. Schools must identify, near or at the beginning of the serving line(s), the food items that constitute the unit-priced reimbursable school meal(s). The price of a reimbursable lunch does not change if the student does not take a food item or requests smaller portions.

(3) **Production and menu records.** Schools or school food authorities, as applicable, must keep production and menu records for the meals they produce. These records must show how the meals offered contribute to the required food components and food quantities for each age/grade group every day. Labels or manufacturer specifications for food products and ingredients used to prepare school meals must indicate zero grams of *trans* fat per serving (less than 0.5 grams). Schools or school food authorities must maintain records of the latest nutritional analysis of the school menus conducted by the State agency. Production and menu records must be maintained in accordance with FNS guidance.

(b) **Meal requirements for school lunches.** School lunches for children ages 5 and older must reflect food and nutrition requirements specified by the Secretary. Compliance with these requirements is measured as follows:

(1) On a daily basis:

- (i) Meals offered to each age/grade group must include the food components and food quantities specified in the meal pattern in paragraph (c) of this section;
- (ii) Food products or ingredients used to prepare meals must contain zero grams of *trans* fat per serving or a minimal amount of naturally occurring *trans* fat; and
- (iii) The meal selected by each student must have the number of food components required for a reimbursable meal and include at least one fruit or vegetable.

(2) Over a 5-day school week:

- (i) Average calorie content of meals offered to each age/grade group must be within the minimum and maximum calorie levels specified in paragraph (f) of this section;

- (ii) Average saturated fat content of the meals offered to each age/grade group must be less than 10 percent of total calories; and
- (iii) Average sodium content of the meals offered to each age/grade group must not exceed the maximum level specified in paragraph (f) of this section.

- (c) **Meal pattern for school lunches.** Schools must offer the food components and quantities required in the lunch meal pattern established in the following table:

Table 1 to Paragraph (c) Introductory Text—Lunch Meal Pattern

	Lunch meal pattern		
	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Food components	Amount of Food ^a per Week		
	(minimum per day)		
Fruits (cups) ^b	2 ¹ / ₂ (1 ¹ / ₂)	2 ¹ / ₂ (1 ¹ / ₂)	5 (1)
Vegetables (cups) ^b	3 ³ / ₄ (3 ³ / ₄)	3 ³ / ₄ (3 ³ / ₄)	5 (1)
Dark green ^c	1 ¹ / ₂	1 ¹ / ₂	1 ¹ / ₂
Red/Orange ^c	3 ³ / ₄	3 ³ / ₄	1 ¹ / ₄
Beans and peas (legumes) ^c	1 ¹ / ₂	1 ¹ / ₂	1 ¹ / ₂
Starchy ^c	1 ¹ / ₂	1 ¹ / ₂	1 ¹ / ₂
Other ^{c d}	1 ¹ / ₂	1 ¹ / ₂	3 ³ / ₄
Additional Vegetables to Reach Total ^e	1	1	1 ¹ / ₂
Grains (oz eq) ^f	8-9 (1)	8-10 (1)	10-12 (2)
Meats/Meat Alternates (oz eq)	8-10 (1)	9-10 (1)	10-12 (2)
Fluid milk (cups) ^g	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)
Other Specifications: Daily Amount Based on the Average for a 5-Day Week			
Min-max calories (kcal) ^h	550-650	600-700	750-850
Saturated fat (% of total calories) ^h	<10	<10	<10
Sodium Interim Target 1 (mg) ^h	≤1,230	≤1,360	≤1,420
Sodium Interim Target 1A (mg) ^{h i}	≤1,110	≤1,225	≤1,280
Trans fat ^h	Nutrition label or manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of trans fat per serving.		

^a Food items included in each group and subgroup and amount equivalents. Minimum creditable serving is 1/8 cup.

^b One quarter-cup of dried fruit counts as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit; 1 cup of leafy greens counts as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables. No more than half of the fruit or vegetable offerings may be in the form of juice. All juice must be 100% full-strength.

^c Larger amounts of these vegetables may be served.

^d This category consists of “Other vegetables” as defined in paragraph (c)(2)(iii)(E) of this section. For the purposes of the NSLP, the “Other vegetables” requirement may be met with any additional amounts from the dark green, red/orange, and beans/peas (legumes) vegetable subgroups as defined in paragraph (c)(2)(iii) of this section.

^e Any vegetable subgroup may be offered to meet the total weekly vegetable requirement.

^f At least 80 percent of grains offered weekly (by ounce equivalents) must meet the whole grain-rich criteria specified in FNS guidance, and the remaining grain items offered must be enriched.

^g All fluid milk must be fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1 percent fat or less). Milk may be unflavored or flavored, provided that unflavored milk is offered at each meal service.

^h Discretionary sources of calories (solid fats and added sugars) may be added to the meal pattern if within the specifications for calories, saturated fat, *trans* fat, and sodium. Foods of minimal nutritional value and fluid milk with fat content greater than 1 percent are not allowed.

ⁱ Sodium Interim Target 1A must be met no later than July 1, 2023 (SY 2023-2024).

(1) **Age/grade groups.** Schools must plan menus for students using the following age/grade groups: Grades K-5 (ages 5-10), grades 6-8 (ages 11-13), and grades 9-12 (ages 14-18). If an unusual grade configuration in a school prevents the use of these established age/grade groups, students in grades K-5 and grades 6-8 may be offered the same food quantities at lunch provided that the calorie and sodium standards for each age/grade group are met. No customization of the established age/grade groups is allowed.

(2) **Food components.** Schools must offer students in each age/grade group the food components specified in paragraph (c) of this section.

(i) **Meats/meat alternates component.** Schools must offer meats/meat alternates daily as part of the lunch meal pattern. The quantity of meats/meat alternates must be the edible portion as served. This component must be served in a main dish or in a main dish and only one other food item. Schools without daily choices in this component should not serve any one meat alternate or form of meat (for example, ground, diced, pieces) more than three times in the same week. If a portion size of this component does not meet the daily requirement for a particular age/grade group, schools may supplement it with another meats/meat alternates to meet the full requirement. Schools may adjust the daily quantities of this component provided that a minimum of one ounce is offered daily to students in grades K-8 and a minimum of two ounces is offered daily to students in grades 9-12, and the total weekly requirement is met over a five-day period.

- (A) **Enriched macaroni.** Enriched macaroni with fortified protein as defined in appendix A to this part may be used to meet part of the meats/meat alternates requirement when used as specified in appendix A to this part. An enriched macaroni product with fortified protein as defined in appendix A to this part may be used to meet part of the meats/meat alternates component or the grains component but may not meet both food components in the same lunch.
- (B) **Nuts and seeds.** Nuts and seeds and their butters are allowed as meat alternates in accordance with FNS guidance. Acorns, chestnuts, and coconuts may not be used because of their low protein and iron content. Nut and seed meals or flours may be used only if they meet the requirements for Alternate Protein Products established in appendix A to this part. Nuts or seeds may be used to meet no more than one-half (50 percent) of the meats/meat alternates component with another meats/meat alternates to meet the full requirement.
- (C) **Yogurt.** Yogurt may be used to meet all or part of the meats/meat alternates component. Yogurt may be plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened. Noncommercial and/or non-standardized yogurt products, such as frozen yogurt, drinkable yogurt products, homemade yogurt, yogurt flavored products, yogurt bars, yogurt covered fruits and/or nuts or similar products are not creditable. Four ounces (weight) or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (volume) of yogurt equals one ounce of the meats/meat alternates requirement.
- (D) **Tofu and soy products.** Commercial tofu and soy products may be used to meet all or part of the meats/meat alternates component in accordance with FNS guidance. Noncommercial and/or non-standardized tofu and soy products are not creditable.
- (E) **Beans and Peas (legumes).** Cooked dry beans and peas (legumes) may be used to meet all or part of the meats/meat alternates component. Beans and peas (legumes) are identified in this section and include foods such as black beans, garbanzo beans, lentils, kidney beans, mature lima beans, navy beans, pinto beans, and split peas.
- (F) **Other Meat Alternates.** Other meat alternates, such as cheese and eggs, may be used to meet all or part of the meats/meat alternates component in accordance with FNS guidance.
- (ii) **Fruits component.** Schools must offer fruits daily as part of the lunch menu. Fruits that are fresh; frozen without added sugar; canned in light syrup, water or fruit juice; or dried may be offered to meet the requirements of this paragraph. All fruits are credited based on their volume as served, except that $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of dried fruit counts as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit. Only pasteurized, full-strength fruit juice may be used, and may be credited to meet no more than one-half of the fruits component.
- (iii) **Vegetables component.** Schools must offer vegetables daily as part of the lunch menu. Fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables and dry beans and peas (legumes) may be offered to meet this requirement. All vegetables are credited based on their volume as served, except that 1 cup of leafy greens counts as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables and tomato paste and puree are credited based on calculated volume of the whole food equivalency. Pasteurized, full-strength vegetable juice may be used to meet no more than one-half of the vegetables component. Cooked dry beans or peas (legumes) may be counted as either a vegetable or as a meat alternate but not as both in

the same meal. Vegetable offerings at lunch over the course of the week must include the following vegetable subgroups, as defined in this section in the quantities specified in the meal pattern in paragraph (c) of this section:

- (A) **Dark green vegetables.** This subgroup includes vegetables such as bok choy, broccoli, collard greens, dark green leafy lettuce, kale, mesclun, mustard greens, romaine lettuce, spinach, turnip greens, and watercress;
- (B) **Red-orange vegetables.** This subgroup includes vegetables such as acorn squash, butternut squash, carrots, pumpkin, tomatoes, tomato juice, and sweet potatoes;
- (C) **Beans and peas (legumes).** This subgroup includes vegetables such as black beans, black-eyed peas (mature, dry), garbanzo beans (chickpeas), kidney beans, lentils, navy beans pinto beans, soy beans, split peas, and white beans;
- (D) **Starchy vegetables.** This subgroup includes vegetables such as black-eyed peas (not dry), corn, cassava, green bananas, green peas, green lima beans, plantains, taro, water chestnuts, and white potatoes; and
- (E) **Other vegetables.** This subgroup includes all other fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables, cooked or raw, such as artichokes, asparagus, avocado, bean sprouts, beets, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, eggplant, green beans, green peppers, iceberg lettuce, mushrooms, okra, onions, parsnips, turnips, wax beans, and zucchini.

(iv) **Grains component—**

- (A) **Enriched and whole grains.** All grains must be made with enriched and whole grain meal or flour, in accordance with the most recent grains FNS guidance. Whole grain-rich products must contain at least 50 percent whole grains and the remaining grains in the product must be enriched. The whole grain-rich criteria included in FNS guidance may be updated to reflect additional information provided by industry on the food label or a whole grains definition by the Food and Drug Administration.
- (B) **Daily and weekly servings.** The grains component is based on minimum daily servings plus total servings over a 5-day school week. Schools serving lunch 6 or 7 days per week must increase the weekly grains quantity by approximately 20 percent ($\frac{1}{5}$) for each additional day. When schools operate less than 5 days per week, they may decrease the weekly quantity by approximately 20 percent ($\frac{1}{5}$) for each day less than 5. The servings for biscuits, rolls, muffins, and other grain/bread varieties are specified in FNS guidance. Eighty (80) percent of grains offered weekly must meet the whole grain-rich criteria specified in FNS guidance, and the remaining grain items offered must be enriched.
- (C) **Desserts.** Schools may count up to two grain-based desserts per week towards meeting the grains requirement as specified in FNS guidance.

(v) **Fluid milk component.** Fluid milk must be offered daily in accordance with paragraph (d) of this section.

- (3) **Food components in outlying areas.** Schools in American Samoa, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands may serve vegetables such as yams, plantains, or sweet potatoes to meet the grains component.

- (4) **Adjustments to the school menus.** Schools must adjust future menu cycles to reflect production and how often the food items are offered. Schools may need to change the foods offerings given students' selections and may need to modify recipes and other specifications to make sure that meal requirements are met.
 - (5) **Standardized recipes.** All schools must develop and follow standardized recipes. A standardized recipe is a recipe that was tested to provide an established yield and quantity using the same ingredients for both measurement and preparation methods. Standardized recipes developed by USDA/FNS are in the Child Nutrition Database. If a school has its own recipes, they may seek assistance from the State agency or school food authority to standardize the recipes. Schools must add any local recipes to their local database as outlined in FNS guidance.
 - (6) **Processed foods.** The Child Nutrition Database includes a number of processed foods. Schools may use purchased processed foods that are not in the Child Nutrition Database. Schools or the State agency must add any locally purchased processed foods to their local database as outlined in FNS guidance. The State agencies must obtain the levels of calories, saturated fat, and sodium in the processed foods.
 - (7) **Menu substitutions.** Schools should always try to substitute nutritionally similar foods.
- (d) **Fluid milk requirement –**
- (1) **Types of fluid milk.**
 - (i) Schools must offer students a variety (at least two different options) of fluid milk. All milk must be fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1 percent fat or less). Milk with higher fat content is not allowed. Low-fat or fat-free lactose-free and reduced-lactose fluid milk may also be offered. Milk may be unflavored or flavored, provided that unflavored milk is offered at each meal service.
 - (ii) All fluid milk served in the Program must be pasteurized fluid milk which meets State and local standards for such milk. All fluid milk must have vitamins A and D at levels specified by the Food and Drug Administration and must be consistent with State and local standards for such milk.
 - (2) **Inadequate fluid milk supply.** If a school cannot get a supply of fluid milk, it can still participate in the Program under the following conditions:
 - (i) If emergency conditions temporarily prevent a school that normally has a supply of fluid milk from obtaining delivery of such milk, the State agency may allow the school to serve meals during the emergency period with an alternate form of fluid milk or without fluid milk.
 - (ii) If a school is unable to obtain a supply of any type of fluid milk on a continuing basis, the State agency may approve the service of meals without fluid milk if the school uses an equivalent amount of canned milk or dry milk in the preparation of the meals. In Alaska, Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, if a sufficient supply of fluid milk cannot be obtained, "fluid milk" includes reconstituted or recombined fluid milk, or as otherwise allowed by FNS through a written exception.

- (3) **Fluid milk substitutes.** If a school chooses to offer one or more substitutes for fluid milk for non-disabled students with medical or special dietary needs, the nondairy beverage(s) must provide the nutrients listed in the following table. Fluid milk substitutes must be fortified in accordance with fortification guidelines issued by the Food and Drug Administration. A school need only offer the nondairy beverage(s) that it has identified as allowable fluid milk substitutes according to the following chart.

Nutrient	Per cup (8 fl oz)
Calcium	276 mg.
Protein	8 g.
Vitamin A	500 IU.
Vitamin D	100 IU.
Magnesium	24 mg.
Phosphorus	222 mg.
Potassium	349 mg.
Riboflavin	0.44 mg.
Vitamin B-12	1.1 mcg.

- (4) **Restrictions on the sale of fluid milk.** A school participating in the Program, or a person approved by a school participating in the Program, must not directly or indirectly restrict the sale or marketing of fluid milk (as identified in paragraph (d)(1) of this section) at any time or in any place on school premises or at any school-sponsored event.
- (e) **Offer versus serve for grades K through 12.** School lunches must offer daily the five food components specified in the meal pattern in paragraph (c) of this section. Under offer versus serve, students must be allowed to decline two components at lunch, *except that* the students must select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of either the fruit or vegetable component. Senior high schools (as defined by the State educational agency) must participate in offer versus serve. Schools below the senior high level may participate in offer versus serve at the discretion of the school food authority.
- (f) **Dietary specifications –**

- (1) **Calories.** School lunches offered to each age/grade group must meet, on average over the school week, the minimum and maximum calorie levels specified in the following table:

	Calorie ranges for lunch		
	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Min-max calories (kcal) ^{ab}	550-650	600-700	750-850

^a The average daily amount for a 5-day school week must fall within the minimum and maximum levels.

^b Discretionary sources of calories (solid fats and added sugars) may be added to the meal pattern if within the specifications for calories, saturated fat, *trans* fat, and sodium.

- (2) **Saturated fat.** School lunches offered to all age/grade groups must, on average over the school week, provide less than 10 percent of total calories from saturated fat.
- (3) **Sodium.** School lunches offered to each age/grade group must meet, on average over the school week, the levels of sodium specified in the following table within the established deadlines:

Table 4 to Paragraph (f)(3)—National School Lunch Program Sodium
Timeline & Limits

Age/grade group	Target 1: effective July 1, 2022 (mg)	Interim target 1A: effective July 1, 2023 (mg)
K-5	≤1,230	≤1,110
6-8	≤1,360	≤1,225
9-12	≤1,420	≤1,280

- (4) **Trans fat.** Food products and ingredients used to prepare school meals must contain zero grams of *trans* fat (less than 0.5 grams) per serving. Schools must add the *trans* fat specification and request the required documentation (nutrition label or manufacturer specifications) in their procurement contracts. Documentation for food products and food ingredients must indicate zero grams of *trans* fat per serving. Meats that contain a minimal amount of naturally-occurring *trans* fats are allowed in the school meal programs.
- (g) **Compliance assistance.** The State agency and school food authority must provide technical assistance and training to assist schools in planning lunches that meet the meal pattern in paragraph (c) of this section; the calorie, saturated fat, sodium, and *trans* fat specifications established in paragraph (f) of this section; and the meal pattern requirements in paragraphs (o), (p), and (q) of this section as applicable. Compliance assistance may be offered during trainings, onsite visits, and/or administrative reviews.
- (h) **Monitoring dietary specifications.** —
 - (1) **Calories, saturated fat and sodium.** When required by the administrative review process set forth in § 210.18, the State agency must conduct a weighted nutrient analysis to evaluate the average levels of calories, saturated fat, and sodium of the lunches offered to students in grades K and above during one week of the review period. The nutrient analysis must be conducted in accordance with the procedures established in paragraph (i)(3) of this section. If the results of the nutrient analysis indicate that the school lunches are not meeting the specifications for calories, saturated fat, and sodium specified in paragraph (f) of this section, the State agency or school food authority must provide technical assistance and require the reviewed school to take corrective action to meet the requirements.
 - (2) **Trans fat.** State agencies must review product labels or manufacturer specifications to verify that the food products or ingredients used by the reviewed school(s) contain zero grams of *trans* fat (less than 0.5 grams) per serving.
- (i) **Nutrient analyses of school meals** —

(1) **Conducting the nutrient analysis.** Any nutrient analysis, whether conducted by the State agency under § 210.18 or by the school food authority, must be performed in accordance with the procedures established in paragraph (i)(3) of this section. The purpose of the nutrient analysis is to determine the average levels of calories, saturated fat, and sodium in the meals offered to each age grade group over a school week. The weighted nutrient analysis must be performed as required by FNS guidance.

(2) **Software elements —**

(i) **The Child Nutrition Database.** The nutrient analysis is based on the USDA Child Nutrition Database. This database is part of the software used to do a nutrient analysis. Software companies or others developing systems for schools may contact FNS for more information about the database.

(ii) **Software evaluation.** FNS or an FNS designee evaluates any nutrient analysis software before it may be used in schools. FNS or its designee determines if the software, as submitted, meets the minimum requirements. The approval of software does not mean that FNS or USDA endorses it. The software must be able to perform a weighted average analysis after the basic data is entered. The combined analysis of the lunch and breakfast programs is not allowed.

(3) **Nutrient analysis procedures —**

(i) **Weighted averages.** The nutrient analysis must include all foods offered as part of the reimbursable meals during one week within the review period. Foods items are included based on the portion sizes and serving amounts. They are also weighted based on their proportionate contribution to the meals offered. This means that food items offered more frequently are weighted more heavily than those not offered as frequently. The weighted nutrient analysis must be performed as required by FNS guidance.

(ii) **Analyzed nutrients.** The analysis determines the average levels of calories, saturated fat, and sodium in the meals offered over a school week. It includes all food items offered by the reviewed school over a one-week period.

(4) **Comparing the results of the nutrient analysis.** Once the procedures in paragraph (i)(3) of this section are completed, State agencies must compare the results of the analysis to the calorie, saturated fat, and sodium levels established in § 210.10 or § 220.8, as appropriate, for each age/grade group to evaluate the school's compliance with the dietary specifications.

(j) **Responsibility for monitoring meal requirements.** Compliance with the meal requirements in paragraph (b) of this section, including dietary specifications for calories, saturated fat, sodium and *trans* fat, and paragraphs (o), (p), and (q) of this section, as applicable, will be monitored by the State agency through administrative reviews authorized in § 210.18.

(k) **Menu choices at lunch —**

(1) **Availability of choices.** Schools may offer children a selection of nutritious foods within a reimbursable lunch to encourage the consumption of a variety of foods. Children who are eligible for free or reduced price lunches must be allowed to take any reimbursable lunch or any choices offered as part of a reimbursable lunch. Schools may establish different unit prices for each reimbursable lunch offered provided that the benefits made available to children eligible for free or reduced price lunches are not affected.

- (2) **Opportunity to select.** Schools that choose to offer a variety of reimbursable lunches, or provide multiple serving lines, must make all required food components available to all students, on every lunch line, in at least the minimum required amounts.

(l) **Requirements for lunch periods –**

- (1) **Timing.** Schools must offer lunches meeting the requirements of this section during the period the school has designated as the lunch period. Schools must offer lunches between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Schools may request an exemption from these times from the State agency. With State agency approval, schools may serve lunches to children under age 5 over two service periods. Schools may divide quantities and food items offered each time any way they wish.
- (2) **Adequate lunch periods.** FNS encourages schools to provide sufficient lunch periods that are long enough to give all students adequate time to be served and to eat their lunches.

(m) **Exceptions and variations allowed in reimbursable meals –**

- (1) **Exceptions for disability reasons.** Schools must make substitutions in lunches and afterschool snacks for students who are considered to have a disability under 7 CFR 15b.3 and whose disability restricts their diet. Substitutions must be made on a case by case basis only when supported by a written statement of the need for substitution(s) that includes recommended alternate foods, unless otherwise exempted by FNS. Such statement must be signed by a licensed physician.
- (2) **Exceptions for non-disability reasons.** Schools may make substitutions for students without disabilities who cannot consume the regular lunch or afterschool snack because of medical or other special dietary needs. Substitutions must be made on a case by case basis only when supported by a written statement of the need for substitutions that includes recommended alternate foods, unless otherwise exempted by FNS. Except with respect to substitutions for fluid milk, such a statement must be signed by a recognized medical authority.
 - (i) **Fluid milk substitutions for non-disability reasons.** Schools may make substitutions for fluid milk for non-disabled students who cannot consume fluid milk due to medical or special dietary needs. A school that selects this option may offer the nondairy beverage(s) of its choice, provided the beverage(s) meets the nutritional standards established under paragraph (d) of this section. Expenses incurred when providing substitutions for fluid milk that exceed program reimbursements must be paid by the school food authority.
 - (ii) **Requisites for fluid milk substitutions.**
 - (A) A school food authority must inform the State agency if any of its schools choose to offer fluid milk substitutes other than for students with disabilities; and
 - (B) A medical authority or the student's parent or legal guardian must submit a written request for a fluid milk substitute identifying the medical or other special dietary need that restricts the student's diet.
 - (iii) **Substitution approval.** The approval for fluid milk substitution must remain in effect until the medical authority or the student's parent or legal guardian revokes such request in writing, or until such time as the school changes its substitution policy for non-disabled students.

- (3) **Variations for ethnic, religious, or economic reasons.** Schools should consider ethnic and religious preferences when planning and preparing meals. Variations on an experimental or continuing basis in the food components for the meal pattern in paragraph (c) of this section may be allowed by FNS. Any variations must be consistent with the food and nutrition requirements specified under this section and needed to meet ethnic, religious, or economic needs.
- (4) **Exceptions for natural disasters.** If there is a natural disaster or other catastrophe, FNS may temporarily allow schools to serve meals for reimbursement that do not meet the requirements in this section.
- (n) **Nutrition disclosure.** To the extent that school food authorities identify foods in a menu, or on the serving line or through other communications with program participants, school food authorities must identify products or dishes containing more than 30 parts fully hydrated alternate protein products (as specified in appendix A of this part) to less than 70 parts beef, pork, poultry or seafood on an uncooked basis, in a manner which does not characterize the product or dish solely as beef, pork, poultry or seafood. Additionally, FNS encourages schools to inform the students, parents, and the public about efforts they are making to meet the meal requirements for school lunches.
- (o) **Afterschool snacks.** Eligible schools operating afterschool care programs may be reimbursed for one afterschool snack served to a child (as defined in § 210.2) per day.
 - (1) “Eligible schools” means schools that:
 - (i) Operate school lunch programs under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act; and
 - (ii) Sponsor afterschool care programs as defined in § 210.2.
 - (2) **Afterschool snack requirements for grades K through 12.** Afterschool snacks must contain two different components from the following four:
 - (i) A serving of fluid milk as a beverage, or on cereal, or used in part for each purpose.
 - (ii) A serving of meat or meat alternate, including nuts and seeds and their butters listed in FNS guidance that are nutritionally comparable to meat or other meat alternates based on available nutritional data.
 - (A) Nut and seed meals or flours may be used only if they meet the requirements for alternate protein products established in appendix A of this part.
 - (B) Acorns, chestnuts, and coconuts cannot be used as meat alternates due to their low protein and iron content.
 - (iii) A serving of vegetable or fruit, or full-strength vegetable or fruit juice, or an equivalent quantity of any combination of these foods. Juice must not be served when fluid milk is served as the only other component.
 - (iv) A serving of whole-grain or enriched bread; or an equivalent serving of a bread product, such as cornbread, biscuits, rolls, or muffins made with whole-grain or enriched meal or flour; or a serving of cooked whole-grain or enriched pasta or noodle products such as macaroni, or cereal grains such as enriched rice, bulgur, or enriched corn grits; or an equivalent quantity of any combination of these foods.
 - (3) **Afterschool snack requirements for preschoolers —**

- (i) **Snacks served to preschoolers.** Schools serving afterschool snack to children ages 1 through 4 must serve the food components and quantities required in the snack meal pattern established for the Child and Adult Care Food Program, under § 226.20(a), (c)(3), and (d) of this chapter. In addition, schools serving afterschool snacks to this age group must comply with the requirements set forth in paragraphs (a), (c)(3), (4), and (7), (d)(2) through (4), (g), and (m) of this section.
- (ii) **Preschooler snack meal pattern table.** The minimum amounts of food components to be served at snack are as follows:

Table 5 to Paragraph (o)(3)(ii)—Preschool Snack Meal Pattern

Food components and food items ¹	Minimum quantities	
	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5
Fluid Milk ²	4 fluid ounces	4 fluid ounces.
Meat/meat alternates (edible portion as served):		
Lean meat, poultry, or fish	1/2 ounce	1/2 ounce.
Tofu, soy products, or alternate protein products ³	1/2 ounce	1/2 ounce.
Cheese	1/2 ounce	1/2 ounce.
Large egg	1/2	1/2.
Cooked dry beans or peas	1/8 cup	1/8 cup.
Peanut butter or soy nut butter or other nut or seed butters	1 Tbsp	1 Tbsp.
Yogurt, plain or flavored unsweetened or sweetened ⁴	2 ounces or 1/4 cup	2 ounces or 1/4 cup.
Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds	1/2 ounce	1/2 ounce.
Vegetables ⁵	1/2 cup	1/2 cup.
Fruits ⁵	1/2 cup	1/2 cup.
Grains (oz eq) ^{6 7 8}	1/2 ounce equivalent	1/2 ounce equivalent.

Endnotes:

¹ Select two of the five components for a reimbursable snack. Only one of the two components may be a beverage.

² Must be unflavored whole milk for children age one. Must be unflavored low-fat (1 percent) or unflavored fat-free (skim) milk for children two through five years old.

³ Alternate protein products must meet the requirements in Appendix A to Part 226 of this chapter.

⁴ Yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces.

⁵ Pasteurized full-strength juice may only be used to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal, including snack, per day.

⁶ At least one serving per day, across all eating occasions, must be whole grain-rich. Grain-based desserts do not count towards meeting the grains requirement.

⁷ Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal).

⁸ Refer to FNS guidance for additional information on crediting different types of grains.

(4) **Afterschool snack requirements for infants –**

- (i) **Snacks served to infants.** Schools serving afterschool snacks to infants ages birth through 11 months must serve the food components and quantities required in the snack meal pattern established for the Child and Adult Care Food Program, under § 226.20(a), (b), and (d) of this chapter. In addition, schools serving afterschool snacks to infants must comply with the requirements set forth in paragraphs (a), (c)(3), (4), and (7), (g), and (m) of this section.
- (ii) **Infant snack meal pattern table.** The minimum amounts of food components to be served at snack are as follows:

Table 6 to Paragraph (o)(4)(ii)—Infant Snack Meal Pattern

Birth through 5 months	6 through 11 months
4-6 fluid ounces breastmilk ¹ or formula ²	2-4 fluid ounces breastmilk ¹ or formula; ² and
	0- 1/2 ounce equivalent bread; ³⁴ or
	0- 1/4 ounce equivalent crackers; ³⁴ or
	0- 1/2 ounce equivalent infant cereal; ²⁴ or
	0- 1/4 ounce equivalent ready-to-eat breakfast cereal; ³⁴⁵⁶ and
	0-2 tablespoons vegetable or fruit, or a combination of both. ⁶⁷

¹ Breastmilk or formula, or portions of both, must be served; however, it is recommended that breastmilk be served in place of formula from birth through 11 months. For some breastfed infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breastmilk per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount of breastmilk may be offered, with additional breastmilk offered at a later time if the infant will consume more.

² Infant formula and dry infant cereal must be iron-fortified.

³ A serving of grains must be whole grain-rich, enriched meal, or enriched flour.

⁴ Refer to FNS guidance for additional information on crediting different types of grains.

⁵ Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal).

⁶ A serving of this component is required when the infant is developmentally ready to accept it.

⁷ Fruit and vegetable juices must not be served.

(5) **Monitoring afterschool snacks.** Compliance with the requirements of this paragraph is monitored by the State agency as part of the administrative review conducted under § 210.18. If the snacks offered do not meet the requirements of this paragraph, the State agency or school food authority must provide technical assistance and require corrective action. In addition, the State agency must take fiscal action, as authorized in §§ 210.18(l) and 210.19(c).

(p) **Lunch requirements for preschoolers –**

(1) **Lunches served to preschoolers.** Schools serving lunches to children ages 1 through 4 under the National School Lunch Program must serve the food components and quantities required in the lunch meal pattern established for the Child and Adult Care Food Program, under § 226.20(a), (c)(2), and (d) of this chapter. In addition, schools serving lunches to this age group must comply with the requirements set forth in paragraphs (a), (c)(3), (4), and (7), (d)(2) through (4), (g), (k), (l), and (m) of this section.

(2) **Preschooler lunch meal pattern table.** The minimum amounts of food components to be served at lunch are as follows:

Table 7 to Paragraph (p)(2)—Preschool Lunch Meal Pattern

Food components and food items ¹	Minimum quantities	
	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5
Fluid Milk ²	4 fluid ounces	6 fluid ounces.
Meat/meat alternates (edible portion as served):		
Lean meat, poultry, or fish	1 ounce	1½ ounces.
Tofu, soy products, or alternate protein products ³	1 ounce	1½ ounces.
Cheese	1 ounce	1½ ounces.
Large egg	½	¾.
Cooked dry beans or peas	¼ cup	¾ cup.
Peanut butter or soy nut butter or other nut or seed butters	2 Tbsp	3 Tbsp.
Yogurt, plain or flavored unsweetened or sweetened ⁴	4 ounces or ½ cup	6 ounces or ¾ cup.
The following may be used to meet no more than 50% of the requirement: Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds, as listed in program guidance, or an equivalent quantity of any combination of the above meat/meat alternates (1 ounce of nuts/seeds = 1 ounce of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish)	½ ounce = 50%	¾ ounce = 50%.
Vegetables ^{5 6}	⅛ cup	¼ cup.
Fruits ^{5 6}	⅛ cup	¼ cup.
Grains (oz eq) ^{7 8 9}	½ ounce equivalent	½ ounce equivalent.

Endnotes:

¹ Must serve all five components for a reimbursable meal.

² Must be unflavored whole milk for children age one. Must be unflavored low-fat (1 percent) or unflavored fat-free (skim) milk for children two through five years old.

³ Alternate protein products must meet the requirements in Appendix A to Part 226 of this chapter.

⁴ Yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces.

⁵ Pasteurized full-strength juice may only be used to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal, including snack, per day.

⁶ A vegetable may be used to meet the entire fruit requirement. When two vegetables are served at lunch or supper, two different kinds of vegetables must be served.

⁷ At least one serving per day, across all eating occasions, must be whole grain-rich. Grain-based desserts do not count towards the grains requirement.

⁸ Refer to FNS guidance for additional information on crediting different types of grains.

⁹ Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal).

(q) **Lunch requirements for infants –**

- (1) **Lunches served to infants.** Schools serving lunches to infants ages birth through 11 months under the National School Lunch Program must serve the food components and quantities required in the lunch meal pattern established for the Child and Adult Care Food Program, under § 226.20(a), (b), and (d) of this chapter. In addition, schools serving lunches to infants must comply with the requirements set forth in paragraphs (a), (c)(3), (4), and (7), (g), (l), and (m) of this section.
- (2) **Infant lunch meal pattern table.** The minimum amounts of food components to be served at lunch are as follows:

Table 8 to Paragraph (q)(2)—Infant Lunch Meal Pattern

Birth through 5 months	6 through 11 months
4-6 fluid ounces breastmilk ¹ or formula ²	6-8 fluid ounces breastmilk ¹ or formula; ² and
	0- 1½ ounce equivalent infant cereal; ^{2 3} or
	0-4 tablespoons meat, fish, poultry, whole egg, cooked dry beans, or cooked dry peas; or
	0-2 ounces of cheese; or
	0-4 ounces (volume) of cottage cheese; or
	0-4 ounces or ½ cup of yogurt; ⁴ or a combination of the above; ⁵ and
	0-2 tablespoons vegetable or fruit, or a combination of both. ^{5 6}

¹ Breastmilk or formula, or portions of both, must be served; however, it is recommended that breastmilk be served in place of formula from birth through 11 months. For some breastfed infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breastmilk per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount of breastmilk may be offered, with additional breastmilk offered at a later time if the infant will consume more.

² Infant formula and dry infant cereal must be iron-fortified.

³ Refer to FNS guidance for additional information on crediting different types of grains.

⁴ Yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces.

⁵ A serving of this component is required when the infant is developmentally ready to accept it.

⁶ Fruit and vegetable juices must not be served.

[77 FR 4143, Jan. 26, 2012, as amended at 78 FR 13448, Feb. 28, 2013; 78 FR 39090, June 28, 2013; 81 FR 24372, Apr. 25, 2016; 81 FR 50185, July 29, 2016; 81 FR 75671, Nov. 1, 2016; 82 FR 56713, Nov. 30, 2017; 83 FR 63789, Dec. 12, 2018; 84 FR 50289, Sept. 25, 2019; 85 FR 7853, Feb. 12, 2020; 85 FR 74847, Nov. 24, 2020; 86 FR 57544, Oct. 18, 2021; 87 FR 4126, Jan. 27, 2022; 87 FR 7005, Feb. 7, 2022; 87 FR 47331, Aug. 3, 2022; 87 FR 52329, Aug. 25, 2022]

§ 210.11 Competitive food service and standards.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32072, Apr. 25, 2024.

(a) **Definitions.** For the purpose of this section:

- (1) **Combination foods** means products that contain two or more components representing two or more of the recommended food groups: fruit, vegetable, dairy, protein or grains.
- (2) **Competitive food** means all food and beverages other than meals reimbursed under programs authorized by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 available for sale to students on the *School campus* during the *School day*.
- (3) **Entrée item** means an item that is intended as the main dish and is either:
 - (i) A combination food of meat or meat alternate and whole grain rich food; or
 - (ii) A combination food of vegetable or fruit and meat or meat alternate; or
 - (iii) A meat or meat alternate alone with the exception of yogurt, low-fat or reduced fat cheese, nuts, seeds and nut or seed butters, and meat snacks (such as dried beef jerky); or
 - (iv) A grain only, whole-grain rich entrée that is served as the main dish of the School Breakfast Program reimbursable meal.
- (4) **School campus** means, for the purpose of competitive food standards implementation, all areas of the property under the jurisdiction of the school that are accessible to students during the school day.
- (5) **School day** means, for the purpose of competitive food standards implementation, the period from the midnight before, to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.
- (6) **Paired exempt foods** mean food items that have been designated as exempt from one or more of the nutrient requirements individually which are packaged together without any additional ingredients. Such "paired exempt foods" retain their individually designated exemption for total fat, saturated fat, and/or sugar when packaged together and sold but are required to meet the designated calorie and sodium standards specified in §§ 210.11(i) and (j) at all times.

(b) **General requirements for competitive food.**

- (1) **State and local educational agency policies.** State agencies and/or local educational agencies must establish such policies and procedures as are necessary to ensure compliance with this section. State agencies and/or local educational agencies may impose additional restrictions on competitive foods, provided that they are not inconsistent with the requirements of this part.
- (2) **Recordkeeping.** The local educational agency is responsible for the maintenance of records that document compliance with the nutrition standards for all competitive food available for sale to students in areas under its jurisdiction that are outside of the control of the school food authority responsible for the service of reimbursable school meals. In addition, the local educational agency is

responsible for ensuring that organizations designated as responsible for food service at the various venues in the schools maintain records in order to ensure and document compliance with the nutrition requirements for the foods and beverages sold to students at these venues during the school day as required by this section. The school food authority is responsible for maintaining records documenting compliance with these for foods sold under the auspices of the nonprofit school food service. At a minimum, records must include receipts, nutrition labels and/or product specifications for the competitive food available for sale to students.

(3) **Applicability.** The nutrition standards for the sale of competitive food outlined in this section apply to competitive food for all programs authorized by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 operating on the school campus during the school day.

(4) **Fundraiser restrictions.** Competitive food and beverage items sold during the school day must meet the nutrition standards for competitive food as required in this section. A special exemption is allowed for the sale of food and/or beverages that do not meet the competitive food standards as required in this section for the purpose of conducting an infrequent school-sponsored fundraiser. Such specially exempted fundraisers must not take place more than the frequency specified by the State agency during such periods that schools are in session. No specially exempted fundraiser foods or beverages may be sold in competition with school meals in the food service area during the meal service.

(c) **General nutrition standards for competitive food.**

(1) **General requirement.** At a minimum, all competitive food sold to students on the school campus during the school day must meet the nutrition standards specified in this section. These standards apply to items as packaged and served to students.

(2) **General nutrition standards.** To be allowable, a competitive food item must:

- (i) Meet all of the competitive food nutrient standards as outlined in this section; and
- (ii) Be a grain product that contains 50 percent or more whole grains by weight or have as the first ingredient a whole grain; or
- (iii) Have as the first ingredient one of the non-grain major food groups: fruits, vegetables, dairy or protein foods (meat, beans, poultry, seafood, eggs, nuts, seeds, etc.); or
- (iv) Be a combination food that contains $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of fruit and/or vegetable; or
- (v) If water is the first ingredient, the second ingredient must be one of the food items in paragraphs (c)(2)(ii), (iii) or (iv) of this section.

(3) **Exemptions.**

- (i) **Entrée items offered as part of the lunch or breakfast program.** Any entrée item offered as part of the lunch program or the breakfast program under 7 CFR Part 220 is exempt from all competitive food standards if it is offered as a competitive food on the day of, or the school day after, it is offered in the lunch or breakfast program. Exempt entrée items offered as a competitive food must be offered in the same or smaller portion sizes as in the lunch or breakfast program. Side dishes offered as part of the lunch or breakfast program and served à la carte must meet the nutrition standards in this section.

- (ii) **Sugar-free chewing gum.** Sugar-free chewing gum is exempt from all of the competitive food standards in this section and may be sold to students on the school campus during the school day, at the discretion of the local educational agency.

(d) **Fruits and vegetables.**

- (1) Fresh, frozen and canned fruits with no added ingredients except water or packed in 100 percent fruit juice or light syrup or extra light syrup are exempt from the nutrient standards included in this section.
- (2) Fresh and frozen vegetables with no added ingredients except water and canned vegetables that are low sodium or no salt added that contain no added fat are exempt from the nutrient standards included in this section.

- (e) **Grain products.** Grain products acceptable as a competitive food must include 50 percent or more whole grains by weight or have whole grain as the first ingredient. Grain products must meet all of the other nutrient standards included in this section.

(f) **Total fat and saturated fat.**

(1) **General requirements.**

- (i) The total fat content of a competitive food must be not more than 35 percent of total calories from fat per item as packaged or served, except as specified in paragraphs (f)(2) and (3) of this section.
- (ii) The saturated fat content of a competitive food must be less than 10 percent of total calories per item as packaged or served, except as specified in paragraph (f)(3) of this section.

- (2) **Exemptions to the total fat requirement.** Seafood with no added fat is exempt from the total fat requirement, but subject to the saturated fat, trans fat, sugar, calorie and sodium standards.

(3) **Exemptions to the total fat and saturated fat requirements.**

- (i) Reduced fat cheese and part skim mozzarella cheese are exempt from the total fat and saturated fat standards, but subject to the trans fat, sugar, calorie and sodium standards. This exemption does not apply to combination foods.
- (ii) Nuts and Seeds and Nut/Seed Butters are exempt from the total fat and saturated fat standards, but subject to the trans fat, sugar, calorie and sodium standards. This exemption does not apply to combination products that contain nuts, nut butters or seeds or seed butters with other ingredients such as peanut butter and crackers, trail mix, chocolate covered peanuts, etc.
- (iii) Products that consist of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fat are exempt from the total fat, saturated fat and sugar standards, but subject to the trans fat, calorie and sodium standards.
- (iv) Whole eggs with no added fat are exempt from the total fat and saturated fat standards but are subject to the trans fat, calorie and sodium standards.

- (g) **Trans fat.** The trans fat content of a competitive food must be zero grams trans fat per portion as packaged or served (not more than 0.5 grams per portion).

(h) **Total sugars.**

(1) **General requirement.** The total sugar content of a competitive food must be not more than 35 percent of *weight* per item as packaged or served, except as specified in paragraph (h)(2) of this section.

(2) **Exemptions to the total sugar requirement.**

(i) Dried whole fruits or vegetables; dried whole fruit or vegetable pieces; and dehydrated fruits or vegetables with no added nutritive sweeteners are exempt from the sugar standard, but subject to the total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, calorie and sodium standards. There is also an exemption from the sugar standard for dried fruits with nutritive sweeteners that are required for processing and/or palatability purposes;

(ii) Products that consist of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fat are exempt from the total fat, saturated fat, and sugar standards, but subject to the calorie, trans fat, and sodium standards; and

(i) **Calorie and sodium content for snack items and side dishes sold as competitive foods.** Snack items and side dishes sold as competitive foods must have not more than 200 calories and 200 mg of sodium per item as packaged or served, including the calories and sodium contained in any added accompaniments such as butter, cream cheese, salad dressing, etc., and must meet all of the other nutrient standards in this section. Effective July 1, 2016, these snack items and side dishes must have not more than 200 calories and 200 mg of sodium per item as packaged or served.

(j) **Calorie and sodium content for entrée items sold as competitive foods.** Entrée items sold as competitive foods, other than those exempt from the competitive food nutrition standards in paragraph (c)(3)(i) of this section, must have not more than 350 calories and 480 mg of sodium per item as packaged or served, including the calories and sodium contained in any added accompaniments such as butter, cream cheese, salad dressing, etc., and must meet all of the other nutrient standards in this section.

(k) **Caffeine.** Foods and beverages available to elementary and middle school-aged students must be caffeine-free, with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine substances. Foods and beverages available to high school-aged students may contain caffeine.

(l) **Accompaniments.** The use of accompaniments is limited when competitive food is sold to students in school. The accompaniments to a competitive food item must be included in the nutrient profile as a part of the food item served in determining if an item meets all of the nutrition standards for competitive food as required in this section. The contribution of the accompaniments may be based on the average amount of the accompaniment used per item at the site.

(m) **Beverages —**

(1) **Elementary schools.** Allowable beverages for elementary school-aged students are limited to:

(i) Plain water or plain carbonated water (no size limit);

(ii) Low fat milk, flavored or unflavored (no more than 8 fluid ounces);

(iii) Non fat milk, flavored or unflavored (no more than 8 fluid ounces);

(iv) Nutritionally equivalent milk alternatives as permitted in § 210.10 and § 220.8 of this chapter (no more than 8 fluid ounces); and

(v) 100 percent fruit/vegetable juice, and 100 percent fruit and/or vegetable juice diluted with water (with or without carbonation and with no added sweeteners) (no more than 8 fluid ounces).

(2) **Middle schools.** Allowable beverages for middle school-aged students are limited to:

- (i) Plain water or plain carbonated water (no size limit);
- (ii) Low fat milk, flavored or unflavored (no more than 12 fluid ounces);
- (iii) Non fat milk, flavored or unflavored (no more than 12 fluid ounces);
- (iv) Nutritionally equivalent milk alternatives as permitted in § 210.10 and § 220.8 of this chapter (no more than 12 fluid ounces); and
- (v) 100 percent fruit/vegetable juice, and 100 percent fruit and/or vegetable juice diluted with water (with or without carbonation and with no added sweeteners) (no more than 12 fluid ounces).

(3) **High schools.** Allowable beverages for high school-aged students are limited to:

- (i) Plain water or plain carbonated water (no size limit);
- (ii) Low fat milk, flavored or unflavored (no more than 12 fluid ounces);
- (iii) Non fat milk, flavored or unflavored (no more than 12 fluid ounces);
- (iv) Nutritionally equivalent milk alternatives as permitted in § 210.10 and § 220.8 of this chapter (no more than 12 fluid ounces);
- (v) 100 percent fruit/vegetable juice, and 100 percent fruit and/or vegetable juice diluted with water (with or without carbonation and with no added sweeteners) (no more than 12 fluid ounces);
- (vi) Calorie-free, flavored water, with or without carbonation (no more than 20 fluid ounces);
- (vii) Other beverages that are labeled to contain less than 5 calories per 8 fluid ounces, or less than or equal to 10 calories per 20 fluid ounces (no more than 20 fluid ounces); and
- (viii) Other beverages that are labeled to contain no more than 40 calories per 8 fluid ounces or 60 calories per 12 fluid ounces (no more than 12 fluid ounces).

(n) **Implementation date.** This section is to be implemented beginning on July 1, 2014.

[78 FR 39091, June 28, 2013, as amended at 81 FR 50151, July 29, 2016; 82 FR 56714, Nov. 30, 2017; 83 FR 63790, Dec. 12, 2018; 85 FR 74848, Nov. 24, 2020; 87 FR 7006, Feb. 7, 2022]

§ 210.12 Student, parent, and community involvement.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32073, Apr. 25, 2024.

- (a) **General.** School food authorities shall promote activities to involve students and parents in the Program. Such activities may include menu planning, enhancement of the eating environment, Program promotion, and related student-community support activities. School food authorities are encouraged to use the school food service program to teach students about good nutrition practices and to involve the school faculty and the general community in activities to enhance the Program.
- (b) **Food service management companies.** School food authorities contracting with a food service management company shall comply with the provisions of § 210.16(a) regarding the establishment of an advisory board of parents, teachers and students.

- (c) **Residential child care institutions.** Residential child care institutions shall comply with the provisions of this section, to the extent possible.
- (d) **Outreach activities.**
 - (1) To the maximum extent practicable, school food authorities must inform families about the availability breakfasts for students. Information about the School Breakfast Program must be distributed just prior to or at the beginning of the school year. In addition, schools are encouraged to send reminders regarding the availability of the School Breakfast Program multiple times throughout the school year.
 - (2) School food authorities must cooperate with Summer Food Service Program sponsors to distribute materials to inform families of the availability and location of free Summer Food Service Program meals for students when school is not in session.
- (e) **Local school wellness policies.** Local educational agencies must comply with the provisions of § 210.30(d) regarding student, parent, and community involvement in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the local school wellness policy.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 78 FR 13448, Feb. 28, 2013; 81 FR 50168, July 29, 2016]

§ 210.13 Facilities management.

- (a) **Health standards.** The school food authority shall ensure that food storage, preparation and service is in accordance with the sanitation and health standards established under State and local law and regulations.
- (b) **Food safety inspections.** Schools shall obtain a minimum of two food safety inspections during each school year conducted by a State or local governmental agency responsible for food safety inspections. They shall post in a publicly visible location a report of the most recent inspection conducted, and provide a copy of the inspection report to a member of the public upon request. Sites participating in more than one child nutrition program shall only be required to obtain two food safety inspections per school year if the nutrition programs offered use the same facilities for the production and service of meals.
- (c) **Food safety program.** The school food authority must develop a written food safety program that covers any facility or part of a facility where food is stored, prepared, or served. The food safety program must meet the requirements in paragraph (c)(1) or paragraph (c)(2) of this section, and the requirements in § 210.15(b)(5).
 - (1) A school food authority with a food safety program based on traditional hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP) principles must:
 - (i) Perform a hazard analysis;
 - (ii) Decide on critical control points;
 - (iii) Determine the critical limits;
 - (iv) Establish procedures to monitor critical control points;
 - (v) Establish corrective actions;
 - (vi) Establish verification procedures; and
 - (vii) Establish a recordkeeping system.

- (2) A school food authority with a food safety program based on the process approach to HACCP must ensure that its program includes:
 - (i) Standard operating procedures to provide a food safety foundation;
 - (ii) Menu items grouped according to process categories;
 - (iii) Critical control points and critical limits;
 - (iv) Monitoring procedures;
 - (v) Corrective action procedures;
 - (vi) Recordkeeping procedures; and
 - (vii) Periodic program review and revision.
- (d) **Storage.** The school food authority shall ensure that the necessary facilities for storage, preparation and service of food are maintained. Facilities for the handling, storage, and distribution of purchased and donated foods shall be such as to properly safeguard against theft, spoilage and other loss.

[54 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 64 FR 50740, Sept. 20, 1999; 70 FR 34630, June 15, 2005; 74 FR 66216, Dec. 15, 2009; 78 FR 13448, Feb. 28, 2013]

§ 210.14 Resource management.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32073, Apr. 25, 2024.

- (a) **Nonprofit school food service.** School food authorities shall maintain a nonprofit school food service. Revenues received by the nonprofit school food service are to be used only for the operation or improvement of such food service, *except that*, such revenues shall not be used to purchase land or buildings, unless otherwise approved by FNS, or to construct buildings. Expenditures of nonprofit school food service revenues shall be in accordance with the financial management system established by the State agency under § 210.19(a) of this part. School food authorities may use facilities, equipment, and personnel supported with nonprofit school food revenues to support a nonprofit nutrition program for the elderly, including a program funded under the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3001 *et seq.*).
- (b) **Net cash resources.** The school food authority shall limit its net cash resources to an amount that does not exceed 3 months average expenditures for its nonprofit school food service or such other amount as may be approved by the State agency in accordance with § 210.19(a).
- (c) **Financial assurances.** The school food authority shall meet the requirements of the State agency for compliance with § 210.19(a) including any separation of records of nonprofit school food service from records of any other food service which may be operated by the school food authority as provided in paragraph (a) of this section.
- (d) **Use of donated foods.** The school food authority shall enter into an agreement with the distributing agency to receive donated foods as required by part 250 of this chapter. In addition, the school food authority shall accept and use, in as large quantities as may be efficiently utilized in its nonprofit school food service, such foods as may be offered as a donation by the Department. The school food authority's policies, procedures, and records must account for the receipt, full value, proper storage and use of donated foods.

- (e) **Pricing paid lunches.** For each school year beginning July 1, 2011, school food authorities shall establish prices for paid lunches in accordance with this paragraph.
- (1) **Calculation procedures.** Each school food authority shall:
- (i) Determine the average price of paid lunches. The average shall be determined based on the total number of paid lunches claimed for the month of October in the previous school year, at each different price charged by the school food authority.
 - (ii) Calculate the difference between the per meal Federal reimbursement for paid and free lunches received by the school food authority in the previous school year (*i.e.*, the reimbursement difference);
 - (iii) Compare the average price of a paid lunch under paragraph (e)(1)(i) of this section to the difference between reimbursement rates under paragraph (e)(1)(ii) of this section.
- (2) **Average paid lunch price is equal to/greater than the reimbursement difference.** When the average paid lunch price from the prior school year is equal to or greater than the difference in reimbursement rates as determined in paragraph (e)(1)(iii) of this section, the school food authority shall establish an average paid lunch price for the current school year that is not less than the difference identified in (e)(1)(iii) of this section; except that, the school food authority may use the procedure in paragraph (e)(4)(ii) of this section when establishing prices of paid lunches.
- (3) **Average lunch price is lower than the reimbursement difference.** When the average price from the prior school year is lower than the difference in reimbursement rates as determined in paragraph (e)(1)(iii) of this section, the school food authority shall establish an average price for the current school year that is not less than the average price charged in the previous school year as adjusted by a percentage equal to the sum obtained by adding:
- (i) 2 percent; and
 - (ii) The percentage change in the Consumers Price Index for All Urban Consumers used to increase the Federal reimbursement rate under section 11 of the Act for the most recent school year for which data are available. The percentage to be used is found in the annual notice published in the FEDERAL REGISTER announcing the national average payment rates, from the prior year.
- (4) **Price Adjustments.**
- (i) **Maximum required price increase.** The maximum annual average price increase required under this paragraph shall not exceed ten cents.
 - (ii) **Rounding of paid lunch prices.** Any school food authority may round the adjusted price of the paid lunches down to the nearest five cents.
 - (iii) **Optional price increases.** A school food authority may increase the average price by more than ten cents.
- (5) **Reduction in average price for paid lunches.**
- (i) Any school food authority may reduce the average price of paid lunches as established under this paragraph if the State agency ensures that funds are added to the nonprofit school food service account in accordance with this paragraph.

The minimum that must be added is the product of:

- (A) The number of paid lunches claimed by the school food authority in the previous school year multiplied by
 - (B) The amount required under paragraph (e)(3) of this section, as adjusted under paragraph (e)(4) of this section, minus the average price charged.
 - (ii) **Prohibitions.** The following shall not be used to reduce the average price charged for paid lunches:
 - (A) Federal sources of revenue;
 - (B) Revenue from foods sold in competition with lunches or with breakfasts offered under the School Breakfast Program authorized in 7 CFR part 220. Requirements concerning foods sold in competition with lunches or breakfasts are found in § 210.11 and § 220.12 of this chapter, respectively;
 - (C) In-kind contributions;
 - (D) Any in-kind contributions converted to direct cash expenditures after July 1, 2011; and
 - (E) Per-meal reimbursements (non-Federal) specifically provided for support of programs other than the school lunch program.
 - (iii) **Allowable non-Federal revenue sources.** Any contribution that is for the direct support of paid lunches that is not prohibited under paragraph (e)(5)(ii) of this section may be used as revenue for this purpose. Such contributions include, but are not limited to:
 - (A) Per-lunch reimbursements for paid lunches provided by State or local governments;
 - (B) Funds provided by organizations, such as school-related or community groups, to support paid lunches;
 - (C) Any portion of State revenue matching funds that exceeds the minimum requirement, as provided in § 210.17, and is provided for paid lunches; and
 - (D) A proportion attributable to paid lunches from direct payments made from school district funds to support the lunch service.
- (6) **Additional considerations.**
- (i) In any given year, if a school food authority with an average price lower than the reimbursement difference is not required by paragraph (e)(4)(ii) of this section to increase its average price for paid lunches, the school food authority shall use the unrounded average price as the basis for calculations to meet paragraph (e)(3) of this section for the next school year.
 - (ii) If a school food authority has an average price lower than the reimbursement difference and chooses to increase its average price for paid lunches in any school year more than is required by this section, the amount attributable to the additional voluntary increase may be carried forward to the next school year(s) to meet the requirements of this section.
 - (iii) For the school year beginning July 1, 2011 only, the limitations for non-Federal contributions in paragraph (e)(5)(iii) of this section do not apply.
- (7) **Reporting lunch prices.** In accordance with guidelines provided by FNS:
- (i) School food authorities shall report prices charged for paid lunches to the State agency; and

(ii) State agencies shall report these prices to FNS.

(f) **Revenue from nonprogram foods.** Beginning July 1, 2011, school food authorities shall ensure that the revenue generated from the sale of nonprogram foods complies with the requirements in this paragraph.

(1) **Definition of nonprogram foods.** For the purposes of this paragraph, nonprogram foods are those foods and beverages:

(i) Sold in a participating school other than reimbursable meals and meal supplements; and

(ii) Purchased using funds from the nonprofit school food service account.

(2) **Revenue from nonprogram foods.** The proportion of total revenue from the sale of nonprogram foods to total revenue of the school food service account shall be equal to or greater than:

(i) The proportion of total food costs associated with obtaining nonprogram foods to

(ii) The total costs associated with obtaining program and nonprogram foods from the account.

(3) All revenue from the sale of nonprogram foods shall accrue to the nonprofit school food service account of a participating school food authority.

(g) **Indirect costs.** School food authorities must follow fair and consistent methodologies to identify and allocate allowable indirect costs to the nonprofit school food service account, in accordance with 2 CFR part 200 as implemented by 2 CFR part 400.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 60 FR 31215, June 13, 1995; 76 FR 35316, June 17, 2011; 81 FR 50185, July 29, 2016]

§ 210.15 Reporting and recordkeeping.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32073, Apr. 25, 2024.

(a) **Reporting summary.** Participating school food authorities are required to submit forms and reports to the State agency or the distributing agency, as appropriate, to demonstrate compliance with Program requirements. These reports include, but are not limited to:

(1) A Claim for Reimbursement and, for the month of October and as otherwise specified by the State agency, supporting data as specified in accordance with § 210.8 of this part;

(2) An application and agreement for Program operations between the school food authority and the State agency, and a Free and Reduced Price Policy Statement as required under § 210.9;

(3) A written response to reviews pertaining to corrective action taken for Program deficiencies;

(4) A commodity school's preference whether to receive part of its donated food allocation in cash for processing and handling of donated foods as required under § 210.19(b);

(5) A written response to audit findings pertaining to the school food authority's operation as required under § 210.22;

(6) Information on civil rights complaints, if any, and their resolution as required under § 210.23;

(7) The number of food safety inspections obtained per school year by each school under its jurisdiction;

- (8) The prices of paid lunches charged by the school food authority; and
 - (9) For any local educational agency required to conduct a second review of free and reduced price applications as required under § 245.11 of this chapter, the number of free and reduced price applications subject to a second review, the number and percentage of reviewed applications for which the eligibility determination was changed, and a summary of the types of changes made.
- (b) **Recordkeeping summary.** In order to participate in the Program, a school food authority or a school, as applicable, must maintain records to demonstrate compliance with Program requirements. These records include but are not limited to:
- (1) Documentation of participation data by school in support of the Claim for Reimbursement and data used in the claims review process, as required under § 210.8(a), (b), and (c) of this part;
 - (2) Production and menu records as required under § 210.10 and documentation to support performance-based cash assistance, as required under § 210.7(d)(2).
 - (3) Participation records to demonstrate positive action toward providing one lunch per child per day as required under § 210.10(a)(2), whichever is applicable;
 - (4) Currently approved and denied certification documentation for free and reduced price lunches and a description of the verification activities, including verified applications, and any accompanying source documentation in accordance with 7 CFR 245.6a of this Title; and
 - (5) Records from the food safety program for a period of six months following a month's temperature records to demonstrate compliance with § 210.13(c), and records from the most recent food safety inspection to demonstrate compliance with § 210.13(b);
 - (6) Records to document compliance with the requirements in § 210.14(e);
 - (7) Records to document compliance with the requirements in § 210.14(f); and
 - (8) Records for a three year period to demonstrate the school food authority's compliance with the professional standards for school nutrition program directors, managers and personnel established in § 210.30.
 - (9) Records to document compliance with the local school wellness policy requirements as set forth in § 210.30(f).

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 54 FR 12582, Mar. 28, 1989; 56 FR 32941, July 17, 1991; 60 FR 31215, June 13, 1995; 65 FR 26912, 26922, May 9, 2000; 70 FR 34630, June 15, 2005; 74 FR 66216, Dec. 15, 2009; 76 FR 35317, June 17, 2011; 77 FR 25035, Apr. 27, 2012; 79 FR 7053, Feb. 6, 2014; 80 FR 11092, Mar. 2, 2015; 81 FR 50169, July 29, 2016; 81 FR 50185, July 29, 2016]

§ 210.16 Food service management companies.

- (a) **General.** Any school food authority (including a State agency acting in the capacity of a school food authority) may contract with a food service management company to manage its food service operation in one or more of its schools. However, no school or school food authority may contract with a food service management company to operate an a la carte food service unless the company agrees to offer free, reduced price and paid reimbursable lunches to all eligible children. Any school food authority that employs a food service management company in the operation of its nonprofit school food service shall:

- (1) Adhere to the procurement standards specified in § 210.21 when contracting with the food service management company;
- (2) Ensure that the food service operation is in conformance with the school food authority's agreement under the Program;
- (3) Monitor the food service operation through periodic on-site visits;
- (4) Retain control of the quality, extent, and general nature of its food service, and the prices to be charged the children for meals;
- (5) Retain signature authority on the State agency-school food authority agreement, free and reduced price policy statement and claims;
- (6) Ensure that all federally donated foods received by the school food authority and made available to the food service management company accrue only to the benefit of the school food authority's nonprofit school food service and are fully utilized therein;
- (7) Maintain applicable health certification and assure that all State and local regulations are being met by a food service management company preparing or serving meals at a school food authority facility;
- (8) Establish an advisory board composed of parents, teachers, and students to assist in menu planning;
- (9) Obtain written approval of invitations for bids and requests for proposals before their issuance when required by the State agency. The school food authority must incorporate all State agency required changes to its solicitation documents before issuing those documents; and
- (10) Ensure that the State agency has reviewed and approved the contract terms and that the school food authority has incorporated all State agency required changes into the contract or amendment before any contract or amendment to an existing food service management company contract is executed. Any changes made by the school food authority or a food service management company to a State agency pre-approved prototype contract or State agency approved contract term must be approved in writing by the State agency before the contract is executed. When requested, the school food authority must submit all procurement documents, including responses submitted by potential contractors, to the State agency, by the due date established by the State agency.

(b) **Invitation to bid.** In addition to adhering to the procurement standards under § 210.21, school food authorities contracting with food service management companies shall ensure that:

- (1) The invitation to bid or request for proposal contains a 21-day cycle menu developed in accordance with the provisions of § 210.10, to be used as a standard for the purpose of basing bids or estimating average cost per meal. A school food authority with no capability to prepare a cycle menu may, with State agency approval, require that each food service management company include a 21-day cycle menu, developed in accordance with the provisions of § 210.10, with its bid or proposal. The food service management company must adhere to the cycle for the first 21 days of meal service. Changes thereafter may be made with the approval of the school food authority.
- (2) Any invitation to bid or request for proposal indicate that nonperformance subjects the food service management company to specified sanctions in instances where the food service management company violates or breaches contract terms. The school food authority shall indicate these sanctions in accordance with the procurement provisions stated in § 210.21.

- (c) **Contracts.** Contracts that permit all income and expenses to accrue to the food service management company and “cost-plus-a-percentage-of-cost” and “cost-plus-a-percentage-of-income” contracts are prohibited. Contracts that provide for fixed fees such as those that provide for management fees established on a per meal basis are allowed. Contractual agreements with food service management companies shall include provisions which ensure that the requirements of this section are met. Such agreements shall also include the following:
- (1) The food service management company shall maintain such records as the school food authority will need to support its Claim for Reimbursement under this part, and shall, at a minimum, report claim information to the school food authority promptly at the end of each month. Such records shall be made available to the school food authority, upon request, and shall be retained in accordance with § 210.23(c).
 - (2) The food service management company shall have State or local health certification for any facility outside the school in which it proposes to prepare meals and the food service management company shall maintain this health certification for the duration of the contract.
 - (3) No payment is to be made for meals that are spoiled or unwholesome at time of delivery, do not meet detailed specifications as developed by the school food authority for each food component specified in § 210.10, or do not otherwise meet the requirements of the contract. Specifications shall cover items such a grade, purchase units, style, condition, weight, ingredients, formulations, and delivery time.
 - (4) Provisions in part 250, subpart D of this chapter must be included to ensure the value of donated foods, *i.e.*, USDA Foods, are fully used in the nonprofit food service and credited to the nonprofit school food service account.
- (d) **Duration of contract.** The contract between a school food authority and food service management company shall be of a duration of no longer than 1 year; and options for the yearly renewal of a contract signed after February 16, 1988, may not exceed 4 additional years. All contracts shall include a termination clause whereby either party may cancel for cause with 60-day notification.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 60 FR 31215, June 13, 1995; 65 FR 26912, May 9, 2000; 72 FR 61491, Oct. 31, 2007; 88 FR 57845, Aug. 23, 2023]

Subpart D—Requirements for State Agency Participation

§ 210.17 Matching Federal funds.

- (a) **State revenue matching.** For each school year, the amount of State revenues appropriated or used specifically by the State for program purposes shall not be less than 30 percent of the funds received by such State under section 4 of the National School Lunch Act during the school year beginning July 1, 1980; *provided that*, the State revenues derived from the operation of such programs and State revenues expended for salaries and administrative expenses of such programs at the State level are not considered in this computation. However, if the per capita income of any State is less than the per capita income of the United States, the matching requirements so computed shall be decreased by the percentage by which the State per capita income is below the per capita income of the United States.

- (b) **Private school exemption.** No State in which the State agency is prohibited by law from disbursing State appropriated funds to nonpublic schools shall be required to match general cash assistance funds expended for meals served in such schools, or to disburse to such schools any of the State revenues required to meet the requirements of paragraph (a) of this section. Furthermore, the requirements of this section do not apply to schools in which the Program is administered by a FNSRO.
- (c) **Territorial waiver.** American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands shall be exempted from the matching requirements of paragraph (a) of this section if their respective matching requirements are under \$100,000.
- (d) **Applicable revenues.** The following State revenues, appropriated or used specifically for program purposes which are expended for any school year shall be eligible for meeting the applicable percentage of the matching requirements prescribed in paragraph (a) of this section for that school year:
 - (1) State revenues disbursed by the State agency to school food authorities for program purposes, including revenue disbursed to nonprofit private schools where the State administers the program in such schools;
 - (2) State revenues made available to school food authorities and transferred by the school food authorities to the nonprofit school food service accounts or otherwise expended by the school food authorities in connection with the nonprofit school food service program; and
 - (3) State revenues used to finance the costs (other than State salaries or other State level administrative costs) of the nonprofit school food service program, i.e.:
 - (i) Local program supervision;
 - (ii) Operating the program in participating schools; and
 - (iii) The intrastate distribution of foods donated under part 250 of this chapter to schools participating in the program.
- (e) **Distribution of matching revenues.** All State revenues made available under paragraph (a) of this section are to be disbursed to school food authorities participating in the Program, *except* as provided for under paragraph (b) of this section. Distribution of matching revenues may be made with respect to a class of school food authorities as well as with respect to individual school food authorities.
- (f) **Failure to match.** If, in any school year, a State fails to meet the State revenue matching requirement, as prescribed in paragraph (a) of this section, the general cash assistance funds utilized by the State during that school year shall be subject to recall by and repayment to FNS.
- (g) **Reports.** Within 120 days after the end of each school year, each State agency shall submit an Annual Report of Revenues (FNS-13) to FNS. This report identifies the State revenues to be counted toward the State revenue matching requirements specified in paragraph (a) of this section.
- (h) **Accounting system.** The State agency shall establish or cause to be established a system whereby all expended State revenues counted in meeting the matching requirements prescribed in paragraph (a) of this section are properly documented and accounted for.

§ 210.18 Administrative reviews.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32073, Apr. 25, 2024.

- (a) **Programs covered and methodology.** Each State agency must follow the requirements of this section to conduct administrative reviews of school food authorities participating in the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program (part 220 of this chapter). These procedures must also be followed, as applicable, to conduct administrative reviews of the National School Lunch Program's Afterschool Snacks and Seamless Summer Option, the Special Milk Program (part 215 of this chapter), and the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. To conduct a program review, the State agency must gather and assess information off-site and/or on-site, observe the school food service operation, and use a risk-based approach to evaluate compliance with specific program requirements.
- (b) **Definitions.** The following definitions are provided in alphabetical order in order to clarify State agency administrative review requirements:

Administrative reviews means the comprehensive evaluation of all school food authorities participating in the programs specified in paragraph (a) of this section. It includes a review of both critical and general areas in accordance with paragraphs (g) and (h) of this section, as applicable for each reviewed program. With FNS approval, the administrative review may include other areas of program operations determined by the State agency.

Critical areas means the following two performance standards described in detail in paragraph (g) of this section:

General areas means the areas of review specified in paragraph (h) of this section. These areas include free and reduced-price process, civil rights, school food authority on-site monitoring, reporting and recordkeeping, food safety, competitive food services, water, program outreach, resource management, Buy American, and other areas identified by FNS.

- (i) **Performance Standard 1** —All free, reduced price and paid school meals claimed for reimbursement are served only to children eligible for free, reduced price and paid school meals, respectively; and are counted, recorded, consolidated and reported through a system which consistently yields correct claims.
- (ii) **Performance Standard 2** —Reimbursable lunches meet the meal requirements in § 210.10, as applicable to the age/grade group reviewed. Reimbursable breakfasts meet the meal requirements in § 220.8 of this chapter, as applicable to the age/grade group reviewed.

Day of Review means the day(s) on which the on-site review of the individual sites selected for review occurs.

Documented corrective action means written notification required of the school food authority to certify that the corrective action required for each violation has been completed and to notify the State agency of the dates of completion. Documented corrective action may be provided at the time of the review or may be submitted to the State agency within specified timeframes.

General areas means the areas of review specified in paragraph (h) of this section. These areas include free and reduced price process, civil rights, school food authority on-site monitoring, reporting and recordkeeping, food safety, competitive food services, water, program outreach, resource management, and other areas identified by FNS.

Participation factor means the percentages of children approved by the school for free meals, reduced price meals, and paid meals, respectively, who are participating in the Program. The free participation factor is derived by dividing the number of free lunches claimed for any given period by the product of the number of children approved for free lunches for the same period times the

operating days in that period. A similar computation is used to determine the reduced price and paid participation factors. The number of children approved for paid meals is derived by subtracting the number of children approved for free and reduced price meals for any given period from the total number of children enrolled in the reviewed school for the same period of time, if available. If such enrollment figures are not available, the most recent total number of children enrolled must be used. If school food authority participation factors are unavailable or unreliable, State-wide data must be employed.

Review period means the most recent month for which a Claim for Reimbursement was submitted, provided that it covers at least ten (10) operating days.

- (c) **Review cycle.** State agencies must conduct administrative reviews of all school food authorities participating in the National School Lunch Program (including Afterschool Snacks and the Seamless Summer Option) and the School Breakfast Program at least once during a 5-year review cycle, provided that each school food authority is reviewed at least once every 6 years, depending on review cycle observed. At a minimum, the on-site portion of the administrative review must be completed during the school year in which the review began.
- (1) **Targeted follow-up reviews.** A State agency that reviews school food authorities on a cycle longer than 3 years must identify school food authorities that are high-risk to receive a targeted follow-up review. A State agency must develop and receive FNS approval of a plan to identify school food authorities that meet the high-risk criteria.
- (2) **High-risk criteria for targeted follow-up reviews.** At a minimum, a State plan should identify as high-risk those school food authorities that during the most recent administrative review conducted in accordance with this § 210.18 had one or more of the following risk factors as determined by the State Agency: a 10 percent or greater certification and benefit issuance error rate; incomplete verification for the review year; or one or more significant or systemic errors in Performance Standard 1 as defined at (g)(1) of this section, Performance Standard 2 as defined at paragraph (g)(2) of this section, or allowable costs.
- (3) **Timing and scope of targeted follow-up reviews.** Within two years of the review, high-risk school food authorities must receive a targeted follow-up review. Targeted follow-up reviews must include the areas of significant or systemic error identified in the previous review, and may include other areas at the discretion of the State agency. The State agency may conduct targeted follow-up reviews in the same school year as the administrative review, and may conduct any additional reviews at its discretion.
- (d) **Scheduling school food authorities.** The State agency must use its own criteria to schedule school food authorities for administrative reviews; provided that the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section are met. State agencies may take into consideration the findings of the claims review process required under § 210.8(b)(2) in the selection of school food authorities.
- (1) **Schedule of reviews.** To ensure no unintended overlap occurs, the State agency must inform FNS of the anticipated schedule of school food authority reviews upon request.
- (2) **Exceptions.** In any school year in which FNS or the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) conducts a review or investigation of a school food authority in accordance with § 210.19(a)(4), the State agency must, unless otherwise authorized by FNS, delay conduct of a scheduled administrative review until the following school year. The State agency must document any exception authorized under this paragraph.

(e) **Number of schools to review.** At a minimum, the State agency must review the number of schools specified in paragraph (e)(1) of this section and must select the schools to be reviewed on the basis of the school selection criteria specified in paragraph (e)(2) of this section. The State agency may review all schools meeting the school selection criteria specified in paragraph (e)(2) of this section.

(1) **Minimum number of schools.** State agencies must review at least one school from each local education agency. Except for residential child care institutions, the State agency must review all schools with a free average daily participation of 100 or more and a free participation factor of 100 percent or more. In no event must the State agency review less than the minimum number of schools illustrated in Table A for the National School Lunch Program.

Table A

Number of schools in the school food authority	Minimum number of schools to review
1 to 5	1
6 to 10	2
11 to 20	3
21 to 40	4
41 to 60	6
61 to 80	8
81 to 100	10
101 or more	*12

* Twelve plus 5 percent of the number of schools over 100. Fractions must be rounded up (>0.5) or down (<0.5) to the nearest whole number.

(2) **School selection criteria.**

(i) Selection of additional schools to meet the minimum number of schools required under paragraph (e)(1) of this section, must be based on the following criteria:

- (A) Elementary schools with a free average daily participation of 100 or more and a free participation factor of 97 percent or more;
- (B) Secondary schools with a free average daily participation of 100 or more and a free participation factor of 77 percent or more; and
- (C) Combination schools with a free average daily participation of 100 or more and a free participation factor of 87 percent or more. A combination school means a school with a mixture of elementary and secondary grades.

(ii) When the number of schools selected on the basis of the criteria established in paragraph (e)(2)(i) of this section is not sufficient to meet the minimum number of schools required under paragraph (e)(1) of this section, the additional schools selected for review must be identified using State agency criteria which may include low participation schools; recommendations

from a food service director based on findings from the on-site visits or the claims review process required under § 210.8(a); or any school in which the daily meal counts appear questionable (e.g., identical or very similar claiming patterns, or large changes in free meal counts).

- (iii) In selecting schools for an administrative review of the School Breakfast Program, State agencies must follow the selection criteria set forth in this paragraph and FNS' *Administrative Review Manual*. At a minimum:
 - (A) In school food authorities operating only the breakfast program, State agencies must review the number of schools set forth in Table A in paragraph (e)(1) of this section.
 - (B) In school food authorities operating both the lunch and breakfast programs, State agencies must review the breakfast program in 50 percent of the schools selected for an administrative review under paragraph (e)(1) of this section that operate the breakfast program.
 - (C) If none of the schools selected for an administrative review under paragraph (e)(1) of this section operates the breakfast program, but the school food authority operates the program elsewhere, the State agency must follow procedures in the FNS *Administrative Review Manual* to select at least one other site for a school breakfast review.

(3) **Site selection for other federal program reviews –**

- (i) **National School Lunch Program's Afterschool Snacks.** If a school selected for an administrative review under this section operates Afterschool Snacks, the State agency must review snack documentation for compliance with program requirements, according to the FNS *Administrative Review Manual*. Otherwise, the State agency is not required to review the Afterschool Snacks.
- (ii) **National School Lunch Program's Seamless Summer Option.** The State agency must review Seamless Summer Option at a minimum of one site if the school food authority selected for review under this section operates the Seamless Summer Option and only operates congregate meal service. If the school food authority operates congregate and non-congregate meal service, a minimum of two sites must be reviewed, one congregate site and one non-congregate site. If the school food authority has one site that operates both congregate and non-congregate meal services, the State agency may review a minimum of one site and must observe both a congregate and non-congregate meal service at that one site. This review can take place at any site within the reviewed school food authority the summer before or after the school year in which the administrative review is scheduled. The State agency must review the Seamless Summer Option for compliance with program requirements, according to the FNS *Administrative Review Manual*.
- (iii) **Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.** The State agency must review the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program at one or more of the schools selected for an administrative review, as specified in Table B. If none of the schools selected for the administrative review operates the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program but the school food authority operates the Program elsewhere, the State agency must follow procedures in the FNS *Administrative Review Manual* to select one or more sites for the program review.

Table B

Number of schools selected for an NSLP administrative review that operate the FFVP	Minimum number of FFVP schools to be reviewed
0 to 5	1
6 to 10	2
11 to 20	3
21 to 40	4
41 to 60	6
61 to 80	8
81 to 100	10
101 or more	12*

* Twelve plus 5 percent of the number of schools over 100. Fractions must be rounded up (>0.5) or down (<0.5) to the nearest whole number.

(iv) **Special Milk Program.** If a school selected for review under this section operates the Special Milk Program, the State agency must review the school's program documentation off-site or on-site, as prescribed in the *FNS Administrative Review Manual*. On-site review is only required if the State agency has identified documentation problems or if the State agency has identified meal counting or claiming errors in the reviews conducted under the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program.

(4) **Pervasive problems.** If the State agency review finds pervasive problems in a school food authority, FNS may authorize the State agency to cease review activities prior to reviewing the required number of schools under paragraphs (e)(1) and (e)(3) of this section. Where FNS authorizes the State agency to cease review activity, FNS may either conduct the review activity itself or refer the school food authority to OIG.

(5) **Noncompliance with meal pattern requirements.** If the State agency determines there is significant noncompliance with the meal pattern and nutrition requirements set forth in § 210.10 and § 220.8 of this chapter, as applicable, the State agency must select the school food authority for administrative review earlier in the review cycle.

(f) **Scope of review.** During the course of an administrative review for the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program, the State agency must monitor compliance with the critical and general areas in paragraphs (g) and (h) of this section, respectively. Selected critical and general areas must be monitored when reviewing the National School Lunch Program's Afterschool Snacks and the Seamless Summer Option, the Special Milk Program, and the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, as applicable and as specified in the *FNS Administrative Review Manual*. State agencies may add additional review areas with FNS approval.

(1) **Review forms.** State agencies must use the administrative review forms, tools and workbooks prescribed by FNS.

(2) **Timeframes covered by the review.**

- (i) The timeframes covered by the administrative review include the review period and the day of review, as defined in paragraph (b) of this section.
- (ii) Subject to FNS approval, the State agency may conduct a review early in the school year, prior to the submission of a Claim for Reimbursement. In such cases, the review period must be the prior month of operation in the current school year, provided that such month includes at least 10 operating days.

(3) **Audit results.** The State agency may use any recent and currently applicable results from Federal, State, or local audit activity to meet FNS monitoring requirements. Such results may be used only when they pertain to the reviewed school(s) or the overall operation of the school food authority, when they are relevant to the review period, and when they adhere to audit standards contained in 2 CFR part 200, subpart F. The State agency must document the source and the date of the audit. The content of local level audits activity requires the approval of FNS to ensure that these audits align with Federal audit standards.

(4) **Completion of review requirements outside the administrative review.** State agencies may, with FNS approval, omit specific, redundant areas of the administrative review, when sufficient oversight is conducted outside of the administrative review.

(5) **Error reduction strategies.** State agencies may omit designated areas of review, in part or entirely, where a school food authority or State agency has implemented FNS-approved error reduction strategies or utilized FNS-approved monitoring efficiencies.

(g) **Critical areas of review.** The performance standards listed in this paragraph are directly linked to meal access and reimbursement, and to the meal pattern and nutritional quality of the reimbursable meals offered. These critical areas must be monitored by the State agency when conducting administrative reviews of the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. Selected aspects of these critical areas must also be monitored, as applicable, when conducting administrative reviews of the National School Lunch Program's Afterschool Snacks and the Seamless Summer Option, and of the Special Milk Program. State agencies may omit designated critical areas of review, in part or entirely, where school food authority or State agency has implemented FNS-specified error reduction strategies or utilized FNS-specified monitoring efficiencies.

(1) **Performance Standard 1 (All free, reduced price and paid school meals claimed for reimbursement are served only to children eligible for free, reduced price and paid school meals, respectively; and are counted, recorded, consolidated and reported through a system which consistently yields correct claims.)** The State agency must follow review procedures stated in this section and as specified in the FNS *Administrative Review Manual* to ensure that the school food authority's certification and benefit issuance processes for school meals offered under the National School Lunch Program, and School Breakfast Program are conducted as required in part 245 of this chapter, as applicable. In addition, the State agency must ensure that benefit counting, consolidation, recording and claiming are conducted as required in this part and part 220 of this chapter for the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program, respectively. The State agency must also follow procedures consistent with this section, and as specified in the FNS *Administrative Review Manual*, to review applicable areas of Performance Standard 1 in the National School Lunch Program's Afterschool Snacks and Seamless Summer Option, and in the Special Milk Program.

- (i) **Certification and benefit issuance.** The State agency must gather information and monitor the school food authority's compliance with program requirements regarding benefit application, direct certification, and categorical eligibility, as well as the transfer of benefits to the point-of-

service benefit issuance document. To review this area, the State agency must obtain the benefit issuance document for each participating school under the jurisdiction of the school food authority for the day of review or a day in the review period, review all or a statistically valid sample of student certifications, and validate that the eligibility certification for free and reduced price meals was properly transferred to the benefit issuance document and reflects changes due to verification findings, transfers, or a household's decision to decline benefits. If the State agency chooses to review a statistically valid sample of student certifications, the State agency must use a sample size with a 99 percent confidence level of accuracy. However, a sample size with a 95 percent confidence level of accuracy may be used if a school food authority uses an electronic benefit issuance and certification system with no manual data entry and the State agency has not identified any potential systemic noncompliance. Any sample size must be large enough so that there is a 99 or 95 percent, as applicable, chance that the actual accuracy rate for all certifications is not less than 2 percentage points less than the accuracy rate found in the sample (*i.e.*, the lower bound of the one-sided 99/95 percent confidence interval is no more than 2 percentage points less than the point estimate).

(ii) ***Meal counting and claiming.*** The State agency must gather information and conduct an on-site visit to ensure that the processes used by the school food authority and reviewed school(s) to count, record, consolidate, and report the number of reimbursable meals/snacks served to eligible students by category (*i.e.*, free, reduced price or paid meal) are in compliance with program requirements and yield correct claims. The State agency must determine whether:

(A) The daily meal counts, by type, for the review period are more than the product of the number of children determined by the school/school food authority to be eligible for free, reduced price, and paid meals for the review period times an attendance factor. If the meal count, for any type, appears questionable or significantly exceeds the product of the number of eligibles, for that type, times an attendance factor, documentation showing good cause must be available for review by the State agency.

(B) For each school selected for review, each type of food service line provides accurate point of service meal counts, by type, and those meal counts are correctly counted and recorded. If an alternative counting system is employed (in accordance with § 210.7(c)(2)), the State agency shall ensure that it provides accurate counts of reimbursable meals, by type, and is correctly implemented as approved by the State agency.

(C) For each school selected for review, all meals are correctly counted, recorded, consolidated and reported for the day they are served.

(2) ***Performance Standard 2 (Lunches claimed for reimbursement by the school food authority meet the meal requirements in § 210.10, as applicable to the age/grade group reviewed. Breakfasts claimed for reimbursement by the school food authority meet the meal requirements in § 220.8 of this chapter, as applicable to the age/grade group reviewed.)*** The State agency must follow review procedures, as stated in this section and detailed in the *FNS Administrative Review Manual*, to ensure that meals offered by the school food authority meet the food component and quantity requirements and the dietary specifications for each program, as applicable. Review of these critical areas may occur off-site or on-site. The State agency must also follow procedures consistent with this section, as specified in the *FNS Administrative Review Manual*, to review applicable areas of Performance Standard 2 in the National School Lunch Program's Afterschool Snacks and Seamless Summer Option, and in the Special Milk Program.

- (i) **Food components and quantities.** For each school selected for review, the State agency must complete a USDA-approved menu tool, review documentation, and observe the meal service to ensure that meals offered by the reviewed schools meet the meal patterns for each program. To review this area, the State agency must:
 - (A) Review menu and production records for the reviewed schools for a minimum of one school week (*i.e.*, a minimum number of three consecutive school days and a maximum of seven consecutive school days) from the review period. Documentation, including food crediting documentation, such as food labels, product formulation statements, CN labels and bid documentation, must be reviewed to ensure compliance with the lunch and breakfast meal patterns. If the documentation review reveals problems with food components or quantities, the State agency must expand the review to, at a minimum, the entire review period. The State agency should consider a school food authority compliant with the school meal pattern if:
 - (1) When evaluating the daily and weekly range requirements for grains and meat/meat alternates, the documentation shows compliance with the daily and weekly minimums for these components, regardless of whether the school food authority has exceeded the recommended weekly maximums for the same components.
 - (2) When evaluating the service of frozen fruit, the State agency determines that the school food authority serves frozen fruit with or without added sugar.
 - (B) On the day of review, the State agency must:
 - (1) Observe a significant number of program meals, as described in the FNS *Administrative Review Manual*, at each serving line and review the corresponding documentation to determine whether all reimbursable meal service lines *offer* all of the required food components/items and quantities for the age/grade groups being served, as required under § 210.10, as applicable, and § 220.8 of this chapter, as applicable. Observe meals at the beginning, middle and end of the meal service line, and confirm that signage or other methods are used to assist students in identifying the reimbursable meal. If the State agency identifies missing components or inadequate quantities prior to the beginning of the meal service, it must inform the school food authority and provide an opportunity to make corrections. Additionally, if visual observation suggests that quantities offered are insufficient or excessive, the State agency must require the reviewed schools to provide documentation demonstrating that the required amounts of each component were available for service for each day of the review period.
 - (2) Observe a significant number of the program meals counted at the point of service for each type of serving line to determine whether the meals *selected* by the students contain the food components and food quantities required for a reimbursable meal under § 210.10, as applicable, and § 220.8 of this chapter, as applicable.
 - (3) If Offer versus Serve is in place, observe whether students select at least three food components at lunch and at least three food items at breakfasts, and that the lunches and breakfasts include at least 1/2 cup of fruits or vegetables.
- (ii) **Dietary specifications.** The State agency must conduct a meal compliance risk assessment for each school selected for review to determine which school is at highest risk for nutrition-related violations. The State agency must conduct a targeted menu review for the school at highest

risk for noncompliance using one of the options specified in the *FNS Administrative Review Manual*. Under the targeted menu review options, the State agency may conduct or validate an SFA-conducted nutrient analysis for both lunch and breakfast, or further evaluate risk for noncompliance and, at a minimum, conduct a nutrient analysis if further examination shows the school is at high risk for noncompliance with the dietary specifications in § 210.10 and § 220.8 of this chapter. The State agency is not required to assess compliance with the dietary specifications when reviewing meals for preschoolers, and the National School Lunch Program's Afterschool Snacks and the Seamless Summer Option.

(iii) **Performance-based cash assistance.** If the school food authority is receiving performance-based cash assistance under § 210.7(d), the State agency must assess the school food authority's meal service and documentation of lunches served and determine its continued eligibility for the performance-based cash assistance.

(h) **General areas of review.** The general areas listed in this paragraph reflect requirements that must be monitored by the State agency when conducting administrative reviews of the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. Selected aspects of these general areas must also be monitored, as applicable and as specified in the *FNS Administrative Review Manual*, when conducting administrative reviews of the National School Lunch Program's Afterschool Snacks and Seamless Summer Option, the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, and the Special Milk Program. State agencies may omit designated general areas of review, in part or entirely, where the school food authority or State agency has implemented FNS-specified error reduction strategies or utilized FNS-specified monitoring efficiencies. State agencies may omit designated general areas of review, in part or entirely, where the school food authority or State agency has implemented FNS-specified error reduction strategies or utilized FNS-specified monitoring efficiencies. The general areas of review must include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) **Resource management.** The State agency must conduct an assessment of the school food authority's nonprofit school food service account to evaluate the risk of noncompliance with resource management requirements. If risk indicators show that the school food authority is at high risk for noncompliance with resource management requirements, the State agency must conduct a comprehensive review including, but not limited to, the following areas using procedures specified in the *FNS Administrative Review Manual*.

(i) **Maintenance of the nonprofit school food service account.** The State agency must confirm the school food authority's resource management is consistent with the maintenance of the nonprofit school food service account requirements in §§ 210.2, 210.14, 210.19(a), and 210.21.

(ii) **Paid lunch equity.** The State agency must review compliance with the requirements for pricing paid lunches in § 210.14(e).

(iii) **Revenue from nonprogram foods.** The State agency must ensure that all non-reimbursable foods sold by the school food service, including, but not limited to, a la carte food items, adult meals, and vended meals, generate at least the same proportion of school food authority revenues as they contribute to school food authority food costs, as required in § 210.14(f).

(iv) **Indirect costs.** The State agency must ensure that the school food authority follows fair and consistent methodologies to identify and allocate allowable indirect costs to school food service accounts, as required in 2 CFR part 200 and § 210.14(g).

(2) **General Program Compliance –**

- (i) **Free and reduced price process.** In the course of the review of each school food authority, the State agency must:
 - (A) Confirm the free and reduced price policy statement, as required in § 245.10 of this chapter, is implemented as approved.
 - (B) Ensure that the process used to verify children's eligibility for free and reduced price meals in a sample of household applications is consistent with the verification requirements, procedures, and deadlines established in § 245.6a of this chapter.
 - (C) Determine that, for each reviewed school, the meal count system does not overtly identify children eligible for free and reduced price meals, as required under § 245.8 of this chapter.
 - (D) Review at least 10 denied applications to evaluate whether the determining official correctly denied applicants for free and reduced price meals, and whether denied households were provided notification in accordance with § 245.6(c)(7) of this chapter.
 - (E) Confirm that a second review of applications has been conducted and that information has been correctly reported to the State agency as required in § 245.11, if applicable.
- (ii) **Civil rights.** The State agency must examine the school food authority's compliance with the civil rights provisions specified in § 210.23(b) to ensure that no child is denied benefits or otherwise discriminated against in any of the programs reviewed under this section because of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability.
- (iii) **School food authority on-site monitoring.** The State agency must ensure that the school food authority conducts on-site reviews of each school under its jurisdiction, as required by §§ 210.8(a)(1) and 220.11(d) of this chapter, and monitors claims and readily observable general areas of review in accordance with §§ 210.8(a)(2) and (a)(3), and 220.11(d) of this chapter.
- (iv) **Competitive food standards.** The State agency must ensure that the local educational agency and school food authority comply with the nutrition standards for competitive foods in §§ 210.11 and 220.12 of this chapter, and retain documentation demonstrating compliance with the competitive food service and standards.
- (v) **Water.** The State agency must ensure that water is available and accessible to children at no charge as specified in §§ 210.10(a)(1)(i) and 220.8(a)(1) of this chapter.
- (vi) **Food safety.** The State agency must examine records to confirm that each school food authority under its jurisdiction meets the food safety requirements of § 210.13.
- (vii) **Reporting and recordkeeping.** The State agency must determine that the school food authority submits reports and maintains records in accordance with program requirements in this part, and parts 220 and 245 of this chapter, and as specified in the *FNS Administrative Review Manual*.
- (viii) **Program outreach.** The State agency must ensure the school food authority is conducting outreach activities to increase participation in the School Breakfast Program and the Summer Food Service Program, as required in § 210.12(d). If the State agency administering the Summer Food Service Program is not the same State agency that administers the National School Lunch Program, then the two State agencies must work together to implement outreach measures.

- (ix) **Professional standards.** The State agency shall ensure the local educational agency and school food authority complies with the professional standards for school nutrition program directors, managers, and personnel established in § 210.30.
- (x) **Local school wellness.** The State agency shall ensure the local educational agency complies with the local school wellness requirements set forth in § 210.30.
- (xi) **Buy American.** The State agency must ensure that the school food authority complies with the Buy American requirements set forth in § 210.21(d) and 7 CFR 220.16(d), as specified in the FNS Administrative Review Manual.

(i) **Entrance and exit conferences and notification –**

- (1) **Entrance conference.** The State agency may hold an entrance conference with the appropriate school food authority staff at the beginning of the on-site administrative review to discuss the results of any off-site assessments, the scope of the on-site review, and the number of schools to be reviewed.
- (2) **Exit conference.** The State agency must hold an exit conference at the close of the administrative review and of any subsequent follow-up review to discuss the violations observed, the extent of the violations and a preliminary assessment of the actions needed to correct the violations. The State agency must discuss an appropriate deadline(s) for completion of corrective action, provided that the deadline(s) results in the completion of corrective action on a timely basis.
- (3) **Notification.** The State agency must provide written notification of the review findings to the school food authority's Superintendent (or equivalent in a non-public school food authority) or authorized representative, preferably no later than 30 days after the exit conference for each review. The written notification must include the date(s) of review, date of the exit conference, review findings, the needed corrective actions, the deadlines for completion of the corrective action, and the potential fiscal action. As a part of the denial of all or a part of a Claim for Reimbursement or withholding payment in accordance with the provisions of this section, the State agency must provide the school food authority a written notice which details the grounds on which the denial of all or a part of the Claim for Reimbursement or withholding payment is based. This notice, must be provided by certified mail, or its equivalent, or sent electronically by email or facsimile. This notice shall also include a statement indicating that the school food authority may appeal the denial of all or a part of a Claim for Reimbursement or withholding payment and the entity (*i.e.*, FNS or State agency) to which the appeal should be directed. The notice is considered to be received by the school food authority when it is delivered by certified mail, return receipt (or the equivalent private delivery service), by facsimile, or by email. If the notice is undeliverable, it is considered to be received by the school food authority five days after being sent to the addressee's last known mailing address, facsimile number, or email address. The State agency shall notify the school food authority, in writing, of the appeal procedures as specified in paragraph (p) of this section for appeals of State agency findings, and for appeals of FNS findings, provide a copy of § 210.29(d)(3).

- (j) **Corrective action.** Corrective action is required for any violation under either the critical or general areas of the review. Corrective action must be applied to all schools in the school food authority, as appropriate, to ensure that deficient practices and procedures are revised system-wide. Corrective actions may include training, technical assistance, recalculation of data to ensure the accuracy of any claim that the school food authority is preparing at the time of the review, or other actions. Fiscal action must be taken in accordance with paragraph (l) of this section.

(1) **Extensions of the timeframes.** If the State agency determines that extraordinary circumstances make a school food authority unable to complete the required corrective action within the timeframes specified by the State agency, the State agency may extend the timeframes upon written request of the school food authority.

(2) **Documented corrective action.** Documented corrective action is required for any degree of violation of general or critical areas identified in an administrative review. Documented corrective action may be provided at the time of the review; however, it must be postmarked or submitted to the State agency electronically by email or facsimile, no later than 30 days from the deadline for completion of each required corrective action, as specified under paragraph (i)(2) of this section or as otherwise extended by the State agency under paragraph (j)(1) of this section. The State agency must maintain any documented corrective action on file for review by FNS.

(k) **Withholding payment.** At a minimum, the State agency must withhold all program payments to a school food authority as follows:

(1) **Cause for withholding.**

- (i) The State agency must withhold all Program payments to a school food authority if documented corrective action for critical area violations is not provided with the deadlines specified in paragraph (j)(2) of this section;
- (ii) The State agency must withhold all Program payments to a school food authority if the State agency finds that corrective action for critical area violation was not completed;
- (iii) The State agency may withhold Program payments to a school food authority at its discretion, if the State agency found a critical area violation on a previous review and the school food authority continues to have the same error for the same cause; and
- (iv) For general area violations, the State agency may withhold Program payments to a school food authority at its discretion, if the State agency finds that documented corrective action is not provided within the deadlines specified in paragraph (j)(2) of this section, corrective action is not complete, or corrective action was not taken as specified in the documented corrective action.

(2) **Duration of withholding.** In all cases, Program payments must be withheld until such time as corrective action is completed, documented corrective action is received and deemed acceptable by the State agency, or the State agency completes a follow-up review and confirms that the problem has been corrected. Subsequent to the State agency's acceptance of the corrective actions, payments will be released for all meals served in accordance with the provisions of this part during the period the payments were withheld. In very serious cases, the State agency will evaluate whether the degree of non-compliance warrants termination in accordance with § 210.25.

(3) **Exceptions.** The State agency may, at its discretion, reduce the amount required to be withheld from a school food authority pursuant to paragraph (k)(1)(i) through (iii) of this section by as much as 60 percent of the total Program payments when it is determined to be in the best interest of the Program. FNS may authorize a State agency to limit withholding of funds to an amount less than 40 percent of the total Program payments, if FNS determines such action to be in the best interest of the Program.

(4) **Failure to withhold payments.** FNS may suspend or withhold Program payments, in whole or in part, to those State agencies failing to withhold Program payments in accordance with paragraph (k)(1) of this section and may withhold administrative funds in accordance with § 235.11(b) of this chapter. The withholding of Program payments will remain in effect until such time as the State agency documents compliance with paragraph (k)(1) of this section to FNS. Subsequent to the documentation of compliance, any withheld administrative funds will be released and payment will be released for any meals served in accordance with the provisions of this part during the period the payments were withheld.

(l) **Fiscal action.** The State agency must take fiscal action for all Performance Standard 1 violations and specific Performance Standard 2 violations identified during an administrative review, including targeted follow-up review or other reviews, as specified in this section. Fiscal action must be taken in accordance with the principles in § 210.19(c) and the procedures established in the FNS Administrative Review Manual. The State agency must follow the fiscal action formula prescribed by FNS to calculate the correct entitlement for a school food authority or a school. While there is no fiscal action required for general area violations, the State agency has the ability to withhold funds for repeat or egregious violations occurring in the majority of the general areas as described in paragraph (k)(1)(iv) of this section.

(1) **Performance Standard 1 violations.** A State agency is required to take fiscal action for Performance Standard 1 violations, in accordance with this paragraph and paragraph (l)(3).

- (i) For certification and benefit issuance errors cited under paragraph (g)(1)(i) of this section, the total number of free and reduced price meals claimed must be adjusted to according to procedures established by FNS.
- (ii) For meal counting and claiming errors cited under paragraph (g)(1)(ii) of this section, the State agency must apply fiscal action to the incorrect meal counts at the school food authority level, or only to the reviewed schools where violations were identified, as applicable.

(2) **Performance Standard 2 violations.** Fiscal action for Performance Standard 2 violations applies as follows:

- (i) For missing food components or missing production records cited under paragraph (g)(2) of this section, the State agency must apply fiscal action.
- (ii) For repeated violations involving food quantities, whole grain-rich foods, milk type, and vegetable subgroups cited under paragraph (g)(2) of this section, the State agency has discretion to apply fiscal action as follows:
 - (A) If the meals contain insufficient quantities of the required food components, the deficient meals may be disallowed and reclaimed.
 - (B) If no whole grain-rich foods are offered during the week of review, meals for up to the entire week of review may be disallowed and reclaimed.
 - (C) If insufficient whole grain-rich foods are offered during the week of review, meals for up to the entire week of review may be disallowed and/or reclaimed.
 - (D) If an unallowable milk type is offered, or no milk variety is offered, the deficient meals may be disallowed and reclaimed.
 - (E) If one vegetable subgroup is not offered over the course of the week of review, meals for up to the entire week of review may be disallowed and reclaimed.

- (F) If a weekly vegetable subgroup is offered in insufficient quantity to meet the weekly vegetable subgroup requirement, meals for one day of the week of review may be disallowed and reclaimed.
- (G) If the amount of juice offered exceeds the weekly limitation, meals for up to the entire week of review may be disallowed and/or reclaimed.
- (iii) For repeated violations of calorie, saturated fat, sodium, and trans fat dietary specifications cited under paragraph (g)(2)(ii) of this section, the State agency has discretion to apply fiscal action to the reviewed school as follows:
 - (A) If the average meal offered over the course of the week of review does not meet one of the dietary specifications, meals for the entire week of review may be disallowed and reclaimed; and
 - (B) Fiscal action is limited to the school selected for the targeted menu review and must be supported by a nutrient analysis of the meals at issue using USDA-approved software.
- (iv) The following conditions must be met prior to applying fiscal action as described in paragraphs (l)(2)(ii) and (iii) of this section:
 - (A) Technical assistance has been given by the State agency;
 - (B) Corrective action has been previously required and monitored by the State agency; and
 - (C) The school food authority remains noncompliant with the meal requirements established in part 210 and part 220 of this chapter.
- (3) **Duration of fiscal action.** Fiscal action must be extended back to the beginning of the school year or that point in time during the current school year when the infraction first occurred for all violations of Performance Standard 1 and specific violations of Performance Standard 2. Based on the severity and longevity of the problem, the State agency may extend fiscal action back to previous school years. If corrective action occurs, the State agency may limit the duration of fiscal action for Performance Standard 1 and Performance Standard 2 violations as follows:
 - (i) **Performance Standard 1 certification and benefit issuance violations.** The total number of free and reduced price meals claimed for the review period and the month of the on-site review must be adjusted to reflect the State calculated certification and benefit issuance adjustment factors.
 - (ii) **Other Performance Standard 1 and Performance Standard 2 violations.** With the exception of violations described in paragraph (l)(3)(i) of this section, a State agency may limit fiscal action from the point corrective action occurs back through the beginning of the review period for errors.
 - (A) If corrective action occurs during the on-site review month or after, the State agency would be required to apply fiscal action from the point corrective action occurs back through the beginning of the on-site review month, *and* for the review period;
 - (B) If corrective action occurs during the review period, the State agency would be required to apply fiscal action from the point corrective action occurs back through the beginning of the review period;

(C) If corrective action occurs prior to the review period, no fiscal action would be required; and

(D) If corrective action occurs in a claim month between the review period and the on-site review month, the State agency would apply fiscal action only to the review period.

(4) **Performance-based cash assistance.** In addition to fiscal action described in paragraphs (l)(2)(i) through (v) of this section, school food authorities found to be out of compliance with the meal patterns or nutrition standards set forth in § 210.10 may not earn performance-based cash assistance authorized under § 210.4(b)(1) unless immediate corrective action occurs. School food authorities will not be eligible for the performance-based reimbursement beginning the month immediately following the administrative review and, at State discretion, for the month of review. Performance-based cash assistance may resume beginning in the first full month the school food authority demonstrates to the satisfaction of the State agency that corrective action has taken place.

(m) **Transparency requirement.** The most recent administrative review final results must be easily available to the public.

(1) The State agency must post a summary of the most recent results for each school food authority on the State agency's public Web site, and make a copy of the final administrative review report available to the public upon request. A State agency may also strongly encourage each school food authority to post a summary of the most recent results on its public Web site, and make a copy of the final administrative review report available to the public upon request.

(2) The summary must cover meal access and reimbursement, meal patterns and nutritional quality of school meals, school nutrition environment (including food safety, local school wellness policy, and competitive foods), civil rights, and program participation.

(3) The summary must be posted no later than 30 days after the State agency provides the results of administrative review to the school food authority.

(n) **Reporting requirement.** Each State agency must report to FNS the results of the administrative reviews by March 1 of each school year on a form designated by FNS. In such annual reports, the State agency must include the results of all administrative reviews conducted in the preceding school year.

(o) **Recordkeeping.** Each State agency must keep records which document the details of all reviews and demonstrate the degree of compliance with the critical and general areas of review. Records must be retained as specified in § 210.23(c) and include documented corrective action, and documentation of withholding of payments and fiscal action, including recoveries made. Additionally, the State agency must have on file:

(1) Criteria for selecting schools for administrative reviews in accordance with paragraphs (e)(2)(ii) and (i)(2)(ii) of this section.

(2) Documentation demonstrating compliance with the statistical sampling requirements in accordance with paragraph (g)(1)(i) of this section, if applicable.

(p) **School food authority appeal of State agency findings.** Except for FNS-conducted reviews authorized under § 210.29(d)(2), each State agency must establish an appeal procedure to be followed by a school food authority requesting a review of a denial of all or a part of the Claim for Reimbursement, withholding payment arising from administrative or follow-up review activity conducted by the State agency under this § 210.18, or fines established under § 210.26, or § 215.15 or § 220.18 of this chapter. State agencies may use their own appeal procedures provided the same procedures are applied to all appellants in the State

and the procedures meet the following requirements: Appellants are assured of a fair and impartial hearing before an independent official at which they may be represented by legal counsel; decisions are rendered in a timely manner not to exceed 120 days from the date of the receipt of the request for review; appellants are afforded the right to either a review of the record with the right to file written information, or a hearing which they may attend in person; and adequate notice is given of the time, date, place and procedures of the hearing. If the State agency has not established its own appeal procedures or the procedures do not meet the above listed criteria, the State agency shall observe the following procedures at a minimum:

- (1) The written request for a review must be postmarked within 15 calendar days of the date the appellant received the notice of the denial of all or a part of the Claim for Reimbursement, withholding of payment, or fines established under § 210.26, or § 215.15 or § 220.18 of this chapter, and the State agency must acknowledge the receipt of the request for appeal within 10 calendar days;
- (2) The appellant may refute the action specified in the notice in person and by written documentation to the review official. In order to be considered, written documentation must be filed with the review official not later than 30 calendar days after the appellant received the notice. The appellant may retain legal counsel, or may be represented by another person. A hearing shall be held by the review official in addition to, or in lieu of, a review of written information submitted by the appellant only if the appellant so specifies in the letter of request for review. Failure of the appellant school food authority's representative to appear at a scheduled hearing shall constitute the appellant school food authority's waiver of the right to a personal appearance before the review official, unless the review official agrees to reschedule the hearing. A representative of the State agency shall be allowed to attend the hearing to respond to the appellant's testimony and to answer questions posed by the review official;
- (3) If the appellant has requested a hearing, the appellant and the State agency shall be provided with at least 10 calendar days advance written notice, sent by certified mail, or its equivalent, or sent electronically by email or facsimile, of the time, date and place of the hearing;
- (4) Any information on which the State agency's action was based shall be available to the appellant for inspection from the date of receipt of the request for review;
- (5) The review official shall be an independent and impartial official other than, and not accountable to, any person authorized to make decisions that are subject to appeal under the provisions of this section;
- (6) The review official shall make a determination based on information provided by the State agency and the appellant, and on program regulations;
- (7) Within 60 calendar days of the State agency's receipt of the request for review, by written notice, sent by certified mail, or its equivalent, or electronically by email or facsimile, the review official shall inform the State agency and the appellant of the determination of the review official. The final determination shall take effect upon receipt of the written notice of the final decision by the school food authority;
- (8) The State agency's action shall remain in effect during the appeal process; and
- (9) The determination by the State review official is the final administrative determination to be afforded to the appellant.

- (q) **FNS review activity.** The term “State agency” and all the provisions specified in paragraphs (a) through (h) of this section refer to FNS when FNS conducts administrative reviews in accordance with § 210.29(d)(2). FNS will notify the State agency of the review findings and the need for corrective action and fiscal action. The State agency shall pursue any needed follow-up activity.

[81 FR 50185, July 29, 2016, as amended at 83 FR 25357, June 1, 2018; 88 FR 57845, Aug. 23, 2023; 88 FR 90347, Dec. 29, 2023]

§ 210.19 Additional responsibilities.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32074, Apr. 25, 2024.

- (a) **General Program management.** Each State agency shall provide an adequate number of consultative, technical and managerial personnel to administer programs and monitor performance in complying with all Program requirements.
- (1) **Assurance of compliance for finances.** Each State agency shall ensure that school food authorities comply with the requirements to account for all revenues and expenditures of their nonprofit school food service. School food authorities shall meet the requirements for the allowability of nonprofit school food service expenditures in accordance with this part and, 2 CFR part 200, subpart D and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415, as applicable. All costs resulting from contracts that do not meet the requirements of this part are unallowable nonprofit school food service account expenses. When the school food authority fails to incorporate State agency required changes to solicitation or contract documents, all costs resulting from the subsequent contract award are unallowable charges to the nonprofit school food service account. The State agency shall ensure compliance with the requirements to limit net cash resources and shall provide for approval of net cash resources in excess of three months' average expenditures. Each State agency shall monitor, through review or audit or by other means, the net cash resources of the nonprofit school food service in each school food authority participating in the Program. In the event that net cash resources exceed 3 months' average expenditures for the school food authority's nonprofit school food service or such other amount as may be approved in accordance with this paragraph, the State agency may require the school food authority to reduce the price children are charged for lunches, in a manner that is consistent with the paid lunch equity provision in § 210.14(e) and corresponding FNS guidance, improve food quality or take other action designed to improve the nonprofit school food service. In the absence of any such action, the State agency shall make adjustments in the rate of reimbursement under the Program. Each State agency shall ensure that school food authorities comply with the requirements for pricing paid lunches and nonprogram foods as required in § 210.14(e) and § 210.14(f).
- (2) **Improved management practices.** The State agency must work with the school food authority toward improving the school food authority's management practices where the State agency has found poor food service management practices leading to decreasing or low child participation, menu acceptance, or program efficiency. The State agency should provide training and technical assistance to the school food authority or direct the school food authority to places to obtain such resources, such as the Institute of Child Nutrition.
- (3) **Program compliance.** Each State agency shall require that school food authorities comply with the applicable provisions of this part. The State agency shall ensure compliance through audits, administrative reviews, technical assistance, training guidance materials or by other means.

(4) **Investigations.** Each State agency shall promptly investigate complaints received or irregularities noted in connection with the operation of the Program, and shall take appropriate action to correct any irregularities. State agencies shall maintain on file, evidence of such investigations and actions. FNS and OIG may make reviews or investigations at the request of the State agency or where FNS or OIG determines reviews or investigations are appropriate.

(5) **Food service management companies.**

(i) The State agency must annually review and approve each contract and contract amendment, including all supporting documentation, between any school food authority and food service management company before implementation of the contract by either party to ensure compliance with all the provisions and standards set forth in this part.

(A) When the State agency develops a prototype contract for use by the school food authority that meets the provisions and standards set forth in this part, this annual review may be limited to changes made to that contract.

(B) The State agency may establish due dates for submission of the contract or contract amendment documents.

(ii) The State agency must perform a review of each school food authority that contracts with a food service management company, at least once during each 5-year period. The reviews must examine the school food authority's compliance with § 210.16 of this part.

(iii) The State agency may require all food service management companies to register with the State agency prior to contracting for food service with any school food authority in the State.

(iv) State agencies must provide assistance to school food authorities upon request to assure compliance with the requirements for contracting with a food service management company.

(b) **Donated food distribution information.** Information on schools eligible to receive donated foods available under section 6 of the National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1755) shall be prepared each year by the State agency with accompanying information on the average daily number of lunches to be served in such schools. This information shall be prepared as early as practicable each school year and forwarded no later than September 1 to the Distributing agency. The State agency shall be responsible for promptly revising the information to reflect additions or deletions of eligible schools, and for providing such adjustments in participation as are determined necessary by the State agency. Schools shall be consulted by the Distributing agency with respect to the needs of such schools relating to the manner of selection and distribution of commodity assistance.

(c) **Fiscal action.** State agencies are responsible for ensuring Program integrity at the school food authority level. State agencies must take fiscal action against school food authorities for Claims for Reimbursement that are not properly payable, including, if warranted, the disallowance of funds for failure to take corrective action to comply with requirements in parts 210, 215, and 220 of this chapter. In taking fiscal action, State agencies must use their own procedures within the constraints of this part and must maintain all records pertaining to action taken under this section. The State agency may refer to FNS for assistance in making a claim determination under this part.

(1) **Definition.** Fiscal action includes, but is not limited to, the recovery of overpayment through direct assessment or offset of future claims, disallowance of overclaims as reflected in unpaid Claims for Reimbursement, submission of a revised Claim for Reimbursement, and correction of records to ensure that unfilled Claims for Reimbursement are corrected when filed. Fiscal action also includes

disallowance of funds for failure to take corrective action to meet the meal requirements in parts 210, 215, and 220 of this chapter, including the disallowance of performance-based cash assistance described in § 210.4(b)(1).

(2) **General principles.** When taking fiscal action, State agencies shall consider the following:

- (i) The State agency shall identify the school food authority's correct entitlement and take fiscal action when any school food authority claims or receives more Federal funds than earned under § 210.7 of this part. In order to take fiscal action, the State agency shall identify accurate counts of reimbursable meals through available data, if possible. In the absence of reliable data, the State agency shall reconstruct the meal accounts in accordance with procedures established by FNS.
- (ii) Unless otherwise specified under § 210.18(l) of this part, fiscal action shall be extended back to the beginning of the school year or that point in time during the current school year when the infraction first occurred, as applicable. Based on the severity and longevity of the problem, the State agency may extend fiscal action back to previous school years, as applicable. The State agency shall ensure that any Claim for Reimbursement, filed subsequent to the reviews conducted under § 210.18 and prior to the implementation of corrective action, is limited to meals eligible for reimbursement under this part.
- (iii) In taking fiscal action, State agencies shall assume that children determined by the reviewer to be incorrectly approved for free and reduced price meals participated at the same rate as correctly approved children in the corresponding meal category.

(3) **Failure to collect.** If a State agency fails to disallow a claim or recover an overpayment from a school food authority, as described in this section, FNS will notify the State agency that a claim may be assessed against the State agency. In all such cases, the State agency shall have full opportunity to submit evidence concerning overpayment. If after considering all available information, FNS determines that a claim is warranted, FNS will assess a claim in the amount of such overpayment against the State agency. If the State agency fails to pay any such demand for funds promptly, FNS will reduce the State agency's Letter of Credit by the sum due in accordance with FNS' existing offset procedures for Letter of Credit. In such event, the State agency shall provide the funds necessary to maintain Program operations at the level of earnings from a source other than the Program.

(4) **Interest charge.** If an agreement cannot be reached with the State agency for payment of its debts or for offset of debts on its current Letter of Credit, interest will be charged against the State agency from the date the demand letter was sent, at the rate established by the Secretary of Treasury.

(5) **Use of recovered payment.** The amounts recovered by the State agency from school food authorities may be utilized during the fiscal year for which the funds were initially available, first, to make payments to school food authorities for the purposes of the Program; and second, to repay any State funds expended in the reimbursement of claims under the Program and not otherwise repaid. Any amounts recovered which are not so utilized shall be returned to FNS in accordance with the requirements of this part.

(6) **Exceptions.** The State agency need not disallow payment or collect an overpayment when any review or audit reveals that a school food authority is approving applications which indicate that the households' incomes are within the Income Eligibility Guidelines issued by the Department or the applications contain Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or TANF case numbers or FDPIR case numbers or other FDPIR identifiers but the applications are missing the information specified in paragraph (1)(ii) of the definition of *Documentation* in § 245.2 of this chapter.

- (7) **Claims adjustment.** FNS will have the authority to determine the amount of, to settle, and to adjust any claim arising under the Program, and to compromise or deny such claim or any part thereof. FNS will also have the authority to waive such claims if FNS determines that to do so would serve the purposes of the Program. This provision shall not diminish the authority of the Attorney General of the United States under section 516 of title 28, U.S. Code, to conduct litigation on behalf of the United States.
- (d) **Management evaluations.** Each State agency shall provide FNS with full opportunity to conduct management evaluations of all State agency Program operations and shall provide OIG with full opportunity to conduct audits of all State agency Program operations. Each State agency shall make available its records, including records of the receipt and disbursement of funds under the Program and records of any claim compromised in accordance with this paragraph, upon a reasonable request by FNS, OIG, or the Comptroller General of the United States. FNS and OIG retain the right to visit schools and OIG also has the right to make audits of the records and operations of any school. In conducting management evaluations, reviews, or audits in a fiscal year, the State agency, FNS, or OIG may disregard an overpayment if the overpayment does not exceed \$600. A State agency may establish, through State law, regulation or procedure, an alternate disregard threshold that does not exceed \$600. This disregard may be made once per each management evaluation, review, or audit per Program within a fiscal year. However, no overpayment is to be disregarded where there is substantial evidence of violations of criminal law or civil fraud statutes.
- (e) **Additional requirements.** Nothing contained in this part shall prevent a State agency from imposing additional requirements for participation in the Program which are not inconsistent with the provisions of this part.
- (f) **Cooperation with the Child and Adult Care Food Program.** On an annual basis, the State agency shall provide the State agency which administers the Child and Adult Care Food Program with a list of all schools in the State participating in the National School Lunch Program in which 50 percent or more of enrolled children have been determined eligible for free or reduced price meals as of the last operating day of the previous October, or other month specified by the State agency. The first list shall be provided by March 15, 1997; subsequent lists shall be provided by February 1 of each year or, if data is based on a month other than October, within 90 calendar days following the end of the month designated by the State agency. The State agency may provide updated free and reduced price enrollment data on individual schools to the State agency which administers the Child and Adult Care Food Program only when unusual circumstances render the initial data obsolete. In addition, the State agency shall provide the current list, upon request, to sponsoring organizations of day care homes participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988]

Editorial Note: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 210.19, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and at www.govinfo.gov.

§ 210.20 Reporting and recordkeeping.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32074, Apr. 25, 2024.

- (a) **Reporting summary.** Participating State agencies shall submit forms and reports to FNS to demonstrate compliance with Program requirements. The reports include but are not limited to:
- (1) Requests for cash to make reimbursement payments to school food authorities as required under § 210.5(a);
 - (2) Information on the amounts of Federal Program funds expended and obligated to date (FNS-777) as required under § 210.5(d);
 - (3) Statewide totals on Program participation (FNS-10) as required under § 210.5(d);
 - (4) Information on State funds provided by the State to meet the State matching requirements (FNS-13) specified under § 210.17(g);
 - (5) Results of reviews and audits;
 - (6) Results of the commodity preference survey and recommendations for commodity purchases as required under § 250.13(k) of this chapter;
 - (7) Results of the State agency's review of schools' compliance with the food safety inspection requirement in § 210.13(b) by November 15 following each of school years 2005-2006 through 2014-2015, beginning November 15, 2006. The report will be based on data supplied by the school food authorities in accordance with § 210.15(a)(7);
 - (8) The prices of paid lunches charged by each school food authority; and
 - (9) For each local educational agency required to conduct a second review of applications under § 245.11 of this chapter, the number of free and reduced price applications subject to a second review, the results of the reviews including the number and percentage of reviewed applications for which the eligibility determination was changed, and a summary of the types of changes made.
- (b) **Recordkeeping summary.** Participating State agencies are required to maintain records to demonstrate compliance with Program requirements. The records include but are not limited to:
- (1) Accounting records and source documents to control the receipt, custody and disbursement of Federal Program funds as required under § 210.5(a);
 - (2) Documentation supporting all school food authority claims paid by the State agency as required under § 210.5(d);
 - (3) Documentation to support the amount the State agency reported having used for State revenue matching as required under § 210.17(h);
 - (4) Records supporting the State agency's review of net cash resources as required under § 210.19(a);
 - (5) Reports on the results of investigations of complaints received or irregularities noted in connection with Program operations as required under § 210.19(a);
 - (6) Records of all reviews and audits, including records of action taken to correct Program violations; and records of fiscal action taken, including documentation of recoveries made;
 - (7) Documentation of action taken to disallow improper claims submitted by school food authorities, as required by § 210.19(c) and as determined through claims processing, resulting from actions such as reviews, audits and USDA audits;

- (8) Records of USDA audit findings, State agency's and school food authorities' responses to them and of corrective action taken as required by § 210.22(a);
- (9) Records pertaining to civil rights responsibilities as defined under § 210.23(b);
- (10) Records pertaining to the annual food preference survey of school food authorities as required by § 250.13(k) of this chapter;
- (11) Records supplied by the school food authorities showing the number of food safety inspections obtained by schools for the current and three most recent school years.
- (12) Records showing compliance with the requirements in § 210.14(e)(5) and records supplied annually by school food authorities showing paid meal prices charged as required by § 210.14(e)(6);
- (13) Records to document compliance with the requirements in § 210.14(f); and
- (14) Records for a three year period to demonstrate compliance with the professional standards for State directors of school nutrition programs established in § 235.11(h) of this chapter.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 56 FR 32948, July 17, 1991; 56 FR 55527, Oct. 28, 1991; 64 FR 50741, Sept. 20, 1999; 70 FR 34630, June 15, 2005; 76 FR 35318, June 17, 2011; 78 FR 13449, Feb. 28, 2013; 79 FR 7054, Feb. 6, 2014; 80 FR 11092, Mar. 2, 2015; 81 FR 50193, July 29, 2016; 88 FR 57847, Aug. 23, 2023]

Subpart E—State Agency and School Food Authority Responsibilities

§ 210.21 Procurement.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32074, Apr. 25, 2024.

- (a) **General.** State agencies and school food authorities shall comply with the requirements of this part and 2 CFR part 200, subpart D and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415, as applicable, which implement the applicable requirements, concerning the procurement of all goods and services with nonprofit school food service account funds.
- (b) **Contractual responsibilities.** The standards contained in this part and 2 CFR part 200, subpart D and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415, as applicable, do not relieve the State agency or school food authority of any contractual responsibilities under its contracts. The State agency or school food authority is the responsible authority, without recourse to FNS, regarding the settlement and satisfaction of all contractual and administrative issues arising out of procurements entered into in connection with the Program. This includes, but is not limited to source evaluation, protests, disputes, claims, or other matters of a contractual nature. Matters concerning violation of law are to be referred to the local, State, or Federal authority that has proper jurisdiction.
- (c) **Procedures.** The State agency may elect to follow either the State laws, policies and procedures as authorized by 2 CFR 200.317, or the procurement standards for other governmental grantees and all governmental subgrantees in accordance with 2 CFR 200.318 through 2 CFR 200.326. Regardless of the option selected, States must ensure that all contracts include any clauses required by Federal statutes and executive orders and that the requirements 2 CFR 200.236 and Appendix II, Contract Provisions for Non-Federal Entity Contracts Under Federal Award are followed. A school food authority may use its own procurement procedures which reflect applicable State and local laws and regulations, provided that

procurements made with nonprofit school food service account funds adhere to the standards set forth in this part and in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D, as applicable. School food authority procedures must include a written code of standards of conduct meeting the minimum standards of 2 CFR 200.318, as applicable.

- (1) **Pre-issuance review requirement.** The State agency may impose a pre-issuance review requirement on a school food authority's proposed procurement. The school food authority must make available, upon request by the State agency, its procurement documents, including but not limited to solicitation documents, specifications, evaluation criteria, procurement procedures, proposed contracts and contract terms. School food authorities shall comply with State agency requests for changes to procurement procedures and solicitation and contract documents to ensure that, to the State agency's satisfaction, such procedures and documents reflect applicable procurement and contract requirements and the requirements of this part.
- (2) **Prototype solicitation documents and contracts.** The school food authority must obtain the State agency's prior written approval for any change made to prototype solicitation or contract documents before issuing the revised solicitation documents or execution of the revised contract.
- (3) **Prohibited expenditures.** No expenditure may be made from the nonprofit school food service account for any cost resulting from a procurement failing to meet the requirements of this part.

(d) **Buy American —**

- (1) **Definition of domestic commodity or product.** In this paragraph (d), the term 'domestic commodity or product' means—
 - (i) An agricultural commodity that is produced in the United States; and
 - (ii) A food product that is processed in the United States substantially using agricultural commodities that are produced in the United States.
- (2) **Requirement.**
 - (i) **In general.** Subject to paragraph (d)(2)(ii) of this section, the Department shall require that a school food authority purchase, to the maximum extent practicable, domestic commodities or products.
 - (ii) **Limitations.** Paragraph (d)(2)(i) of this section shall apply only to—
 - (A) A school food authority located in the contiguous United States; and
 - (B) A purchase of domestic commodity or product for the school lunch program under this part.
- (3) **Applicability to Hawaii.** Paragraph (d)(2)(i) of this section shall apply to a school food authority in Hawaii with respect to domestic commodities or products that are produced in Hawaii in sufficient quantities to meet the needs of meals provided under the school lunch program under this part.

- (e) **Restrictions on the sale of milk.** A school food authority participating in the Program, or a person approved by a school participating in the Program, must not directly or indirectly restrict the sale or marketing of fluid milk (as described in § 210.10(d)(4) of this chapter) at any time or in any place on school premises or at any school-sponsored event.

- (f) **Cost reimbursable contracts —**

- (1) **Required provisions.** The school food authority must include the following provisions in all cost reimbursable contracts, including contracts with cost reimbursable provisions, and in solicitation documents prepared to obtain offers for such contracts:
 - (i) Allowable costs will be paid from the nonprofit school food service account to the contractor net of all discounts, rebates and other applicable credits accruing to or received by the contractor or any assignee under the contract, to the extent those credits are allocable to the allowable portion of the costs billed to the school food authority;
 - (ii)
 - (A) The contractor must separately identify for each cost submitted for payment to the school food authority the amount of that cost that is allowable (can be paid from the nonprofit school food service account) and the amount that is unallowable (cannot be paid from the nonprofit school food service account); or
 - (B) The contractor must exclude all unallowable costs from its billing documents and certify that only allowable costs are submitted for payment and records have been established that maintain the visibility of unallowable costs, including directly associated costs in a manner suitable for contract cost determination and verification;
 - (iii) The contractor's determination of its allowable costs must be made in compliance with the applicable Departmental and Program regulations and Office of Management and Budget cost circulars;
 - (iv) The contractor must identify the amount of each discount, rebate and other applicable credit on bills and invoices presented to the school food authority for payment and individually identify the amount as a discount, rebate, or in the case of other applicable credits, the nature of the credit. If approved by the State agency, the school food authority may permit the contractor to report this information on a less frequent basis than monthly, but no less frequently than annually;
 - (v) The contractor must identify the method by which it will report discounts, rebates and other applicable credits allocable to the contract that are not reported prior to conclusion of the contract; and
 - (vi) The contractor must maintain documentation of costs and discounts, rebates and other applicable credits, and must furnish such documentation upon request to the school food authority, the State agency, or the Department.
 - (2) **Prohibited expenditures.** No expenditure may be made from the nonprofit school food service account for any cost resulting from a cost reimbursable contract that fails to include the requirements of this section, nor may any expenditure be made from the nonprofit school food service account that permits or results in the contractor receiving payments in excess of the contractor's actual, net allowable costs.
- (g) **Geographic preference.**
- (1) A school food authority participating in the Program, as well as State agencies making purchases on behalf of such school food authorities, may apply a geographic preference when procuring unprocessed locally grown or locally raised agricultural products. When utilizing the geographic

preference to procure such products, the school food authority making the purchase or the State agency making purchases on behalf of such school food authorities have the discretion to determine the local area to which the geographic preference option will be applied;

- (2) For the purpose of applying the optional geographic procurement preference in paragraph (g)(1) of this section, “unprocessed locally grown or locally raised agricultural products” means only those agricultural products that retain their inherent character. The effects of the following food handling and preservation techniques shall not be considered as changing an agricultural product into a product of a different kind or character: Cooling; refrigerating; freezing; size adjustment made by peeling, slicing, dicing, cutting, chopping, shucking, and grinding; forming ground products into patties without any additives or fillers; drying/dehydration; washing; packaging (such as placing eggs in cartons), vacuum packing and bagging (such as placing vegetables in bags or combining two or more types of vegetables or fruits in a single package); the addition of ascorbic acid or other preservatives to prevent oxidation of produce; butchering livestock and poultry; cleaning fish; and the pasteurization of milk.

(h) **Procurement training.**

- (1) State directors of school nutrition programs, State directors of distributing agencies, and school nutrition program directors, management, and staff tasked with National School Lunch Program procurement responsibilities must complete annual training on Federal procurement standards annually.
- (2) Procurement training may count towards the professional standards training standards at § 210.30(g) of this part and § 235.11(h) of this chapter.
- (3) State agencies and school food authorities must retain records to document compliance with the requirement in this section.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 64 FR 50741, Sept. 20, 1999; 70 FR 70033, Nov. 21, 2005; 71 FR 39516, July 13, 2006; 72 FR 61491, Oct. 31, 2007; 76 FR 22607, Apr. 22, 2011; 77 FR 4153, Jan. 26, 2012; 81 FR 66489, Sept. 28, 2016; 88 FR 57847, Aug. 23, 2023]

§ 210.22 Audits.

- (a) **General.** Unless otherwise exempt, audits at the State and school food authority levels shall be conducted in accordance with 2 CFR part 200, subpart F and Appendix XI (Compliance Supplement) and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415.
- (b) **Audit procedure.** These requirements call for organization-wide financial and compliance audits to ascertain whether financial operations are conducted properly; financial statements are presented fairly; recipients and subrecipients comply with the laws and regulations that affect the expenditures of Federal funds; recipients and subrecipients have established procedures to meet the objectives of federally assisted programs; and recipients and subrecipients are providing accurate and reliable information concerning grant funds. States and school food authorities shall use their own procedures to arrange for and prescribe the scope of independent audits, provided that such audits comply with the requirements set forth in 2 CFR part 200, subpart F and Appendix XI, and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 71 FR 39516, July 13, 2006; 81 FR 66488, Sept. 28, 2016]

§ 210.23 Other responsibilities.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32075, Apr. 25, 2024.

- (a) **Free and reduced price lunches and meal supplements.** State agencies and school food authorities shall ensure that lunches and meal supplements are made available free or at a reduced price to all children who are determined by the school food authority to be eligible for such benefits. The determination of a child's eligibility for free or reduced price lunches and meal supplements is to be made in accordance with 7 CFR part 245.
- (b) **Civil rights.** In the operation of the Program, no child shall be denied benefits or be otherwise discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability. State agencies and school food authorities shall comply with the requirements of: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Department of Agriculture regulations on nondiscrimination (7 CFR parts 15, 15a, and 15b); and FNS Instruction 113-1.
- (c) **Retention of records.** State agencies and school food authorities may retain necessary records in their original form or on microfilm. State agency records shall be retained for a period of 3 years after the date of submission of the final Financial Status Report for the fiscal year. School food authority records shall be retained for a period of 3 years after submission of the final Claim for Reimbursement for the fiscal year. In either case, if audit findings have not been resolved, the records shall be retained beyond the 3-year period as long as required for the resolution of the issues raised by the audit.
- (d) **Program evaluations.** States, State agencies, local educational agencies, school food authorities, schools and contractors must cooperate in studies and evaluations conducted by or on behalf of the Department, related to programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 58 FR 42489, Aug. 10, 1993; 64 FR 50741, Sept. 20, 1999; 72 FR 24183, May 2, 2007; 76 FR 22797, Apr. 25, 2011; 76 FR 37982, June 29, 2011; 81 FR 50193, July 29, 2016]

Subpart F—Additional Provisions

§ 210.24 Withholding payments.

In accordance with Departmental regulations at 2 CFR 200.338 through 200.342, the State agency shall withhold Program payments, in whole or in part, to any school food authority which has failed to comply with the provisions of this part. Program payments shall be withheld until the school food authority takes corrective action satisfactory to the State agency, or gives evidence that such corrective action will be taken, or until the State agency terminates the grant in accordance with § 210.25 of this part. Subsequent to the State agency's acceptance of the corrective actions, payments will be released for any lunches served in accordance with the provisions of this part during the period the payments were withheld.

[56 FR 32948, July 17, 1991, as amended at 71 FR 39516, July 13, 2006; 72 FR 61492, Oct. 31, 2007; 81 FR 66488, Sept. 28, 2016]

§ 210.25 Suspension, termination and grant closeout procedures.

Whenever it is determined that a State agency has materially failed to comply with the provisions of this part, or with FNS guidelines and instructions, FNS may suspend or terminate the Program in whole, or in part, or take any other action as may be available and appropriate. A State agency may also terminate the Program by mutual agreement with FNS. FNS and the State agency shall comply with the provisions of 2 CFR part 200, subpart D and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415 concerning grant suspension, termination and closeout procedures. Furthermore, the State agency shall apply these provisions, as applicable, to suspension or termination of the Program in school food authorities.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988. Redesignated at 56 FR 32948, July 17, 1991, and amended at 71 FR 39516, July 13, 2006; 81 FR 66488, 66490, Sept. 28, 2016]

§ 210.26 Penalties and fines.

- (a) **Penalties.** Whomever embezzles, willfully misapplies, steals, or obtains by fraud any funds, assets, or property provided under this part whether received directly or indirectly from the Department will, if such funds, assets, or property are of a value of \$100 or more, be fined no more than \$25,000 or imprisoned not more than 5 years or both; or if such funds, assets, or property are of a value of less than \$100, be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned not more than 1 year or both. Whomever receives, conceals, or retains for personal use or gain, funds, assets, or property provided under this part, whether received directly or indirectly from the Department, knowing such funds, assets, or property have been embezzled, willfully misapplied, stolen, or obtained by fraud, will be subject to the same penalties.
- (b) **Fines.**
 - (1) The State agency may establish a fine against any school food authority when it has determined that the school food authority or a school under its agreement has:
 - (i) Failed to correct severe mismanagement of this Program or a Child Nutrition Program under parts 225 or 226 of this chapter;
 - (ii) Disregarded a Program requirement of which the school food authority or school had been informed; or
 - (iii) Failed to correct repeated violations of Program requirements under this part or under parts 225 or 226 of this chapter.
 - (2) FNS may direct the State agency to establish a fine against any school food authority when it has determined that the school food authority or school meets the criteria set forth under paragraph (b)(1) of this section.
 - (3) Funds used to pay fines established under this paragraph must be derived from non-Federal sources. The State agency must calculate the fine based on the amount of Program reimbursement earned by the school food authority or school for the most recent fiscal year for which full year data is available, provided that the fine does not exceed the equivalent of:
 - (i) For the first fine, 1 percent of the amount of meal reimbursement earned for the fiscal year;
 - (ii) For the second fine, 5 percent of the amount of meal reimbursement earned for the fiscal year; and

- (iii) For the third or subsequent fine, 10 percent of the amount of meal reimbursement earned for the fiscal year.
- (4) The State agency must inform FNS at least 30 days prior to establishing the fine under this paragraph. The State agency must send the school food authority written notification of the fine established under this paragraph and provide a copy of the notification to FNS. The notification must:
 - (i) Specify the violations or actions which constitute the basis for the fine and indicate the amount of the fine;
 - (ii) Inform the school food authority that it may appeal the fine and advise the school food authority of the appeal procedures established under § 210.18(p);
 - (iii) Indicate the effective date and payment procedures should the school food authority not exercise its right to appeal within the specified timeframe.
- (5) Any school food authority subject to a fine under paragraph (b)(1) of this section may appeal the State agency's determination. In appealing a fine, the school food authority must submit to the State agency any pertinent information, explanation, or evidence addressing the Program violations identified by the State agency. Any school food authority seeking to appeal the State agency determination must follow State agency appeal procedures.
- (6) The decision of the State agency review official is final and not subject to further administrative or judicial review. Failure to pay a fine established under this paragraph may be grounds for suspension or termination.
- (7) Money received by the State agency as a result of a fine established under this paragraph against a school food authority and any interest charged in the collection of these fines must be remitted to FNS, and then remitted to the United States Treasury.

[88 FR 57847, Aug. 23, 2023]

§ 210.27 Educational prohibitions.

In carrying out the provisions of the Act, the Department shall not impose any requirements with respect to teaching personnel, curriculum, instructions, methods of instruction, or materials of instruction in any school as a condition for participation in the Program.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988. Redesignated at 56 FR 32948, July 17, 1991, as amended at 64 FR 50741, Sept. 20, 1999]

§ 210.28 Pilot project exemptions.

Those State agencies or school food authorities selected for the pilot projects mandated under section 18(d) of the Act may be exempted by the Department from some or all of the counting and free and reduced price application requirements of this part and 7 CFR part 245, as necessary, to conduct an approved pilot project. Additionally, those schools selected for pilot projects that also operate the School Breakfast Program (7 CFR part 220) and/or the Special Milk Program for Children (7 CFR part 215), may be exempted from the counting and free and reduced price application requirements mandated under these Programs. The Department shall notify the appropriate State agencies and school food authorities of its determination of which requirements are exempted after the Department's selection of pilot projects.

[55 FR 41504, Oct. 12, 1990. Redesignated at 56 FR 32948, July 17, 1991, And further redesignated at 64 FR 50741, Sept. 20, 1999]

§ 210.29 Management evaluations.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32075, Apr. 25, 2024.

- (a) **Management evaluations.** FNS will conduct a comprehensive management evaluation of each State agency's administration of the National School Lunch Program.
- (b) **Basis for evaluations.** FNS will evaluate all aspects of State agency management of the Program using tools such as State agency reviews as required under § 210.18 of this part; reviews conducted by FNS in accordance with § 210.18 of this part; FNS reviews of school food authorities and schools authorized under § 210.19(a)(4) of this part; follow-up actions taken by the State agency to correct violations found during reviews; FNS observations of State agency reviews; and audit reports.
- (c) **Scope of management evaluations.** The management evaluation will determine whether the State agency has taken steps to ensure school food authority compliance with Program regulations, and whether the State agency is administering the Program in accordance with Program requirements and good management practices.
 - (1) **Local compliance.** FNS will evaluate whether the State agency has actively taken steps to ensure that school food authorities comply with the provisions of this part.
 - (2) **State agency compliance.** FNS will evaluate whether the State agency has fulfilled its State level responsibilities, including, but not limited to the following areas: use of Federal funds; reporting and recordkeeping; agreements with school food authorities; review of food service management company contracts; review of the claims payment process; implementation of the State agency's monitoring responsibilities; initiation and completion of corrective action; recovery of overpayments; disallowance of claims that are not properly payable; withholding of Program payments; oversight of school food authority procurement activities; training and guidance activities; civil rights; and compliance with the State Administrative Expense Funds requirements as specified in 7 CFR part 235.
- (d) **School food authority reviews.** FNS will examine State agency administration of the Program by reviewing local Program operations. When conducting these reviews under paragraph (d)(2) of this section, FNS will follow all the administrative review requirements specified in § 210.18(a)-(h) of this part. When FNS conducts reviews, the findings will be sent to the State agency to ensure all the needed follow-up activity occurs. The State agency will, in all cases, be invited to accompany FNS reviewers.
 - (1) **Observation of State agency reviews.** FNS may observe the State agency conduct of any review as required under this part. At State agency request, FNS may assist in the conduct of the review.
 - (2) **Section 210.18 reviews.** FNS will conduct administrative reviews in accordance with § 210.18(a)-(h) of this part which will count toward meeting the State agency responsibilities identified under § 210.18 of this part.
 - (3) **School food authority appeal of FNS findings.** When administrative or follow-up review activity conducted by FNS in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (d)(2) of this section results in the denial of all or part of a Claim for Reimbursement or withholding of payment, a school food authority

may appeal the FNS findings by filing a written request with the Chief, Administrative Review Branch, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, Virginia, 22302, in accordance with the appeal procedures specified in this paragraph:

- (i) The written request for a review of the record shall be postmarked within 15 calendar days of the date the appellant received the notice of the denial of all or a part of the Claim for Reimbursement or withholding payment and the envelope containing the request shall be prominently marked "REQUEST FOR REVIEW". FNS will acknowledge the receipt of the request for appeal within 10 calendar days. The acknowledgement will include the name and address of the FNS Administrative Review Officer (ARO) reviewing the case. FNS will also notify the State agency of the request for appeal.
 - (ii) The appellant may refute the action specified in the notice in person and by written documentation to the ARO. In order to be considered, written documentation must be filed with the ARO not later than 30 calendar days after the appellant received the notice. The appellant may retain legal counsel, or may be represented by another person. A hearing shall be held by the ARO in addition to, or in lieu of, a review of written information submitted by the appellant only if the appellant so specifies in the letter of request for review. Failure of the appellant school food authority's representative to appear at a scheduled hearing shall constitute the appellant school food authority's waiver of the right to a personal appearance before the ARO, unless the ARO agrees to reschedule the hearing. A representative of FNS shall be allowed to attend the hearing to respond to the appellant's testimony and to answer questions posed by the ARO;
 - (iii) If the appellant has requested a hearing, the appellant shall be provided with a least 10 calendar days advance written notice, sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, of the time, date, and place of the hearing;
 - (iv) Any information on which FNS's action was based shall be available to the appellant for inspection from the date of receipt of the request for review;
 - (v) The ARO shall be an independent and impartial official other than, and not accountable to, any person authorized to make decisions that are subject to appeal under the provisions of this section;
 - (vi) The ARO shall make a determination based on information provided by FNS and the appellant, and on Program regulations;
 - (vii) Within 60 calendar days of the receipt of the request for review, by written notice, sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, the ARO shall inform FNS, the State agency and the appellant of the determination of the ARO. The final determination shall take effect upon receipt of the written notice of the final decision by the school food authority;
 - (viii) The action being appealed shall remain in effect during the appeal process;
 - (ix) The determination by the ARO is the final administrative determination to be afforded to the appellant.
- (4) **Coordination with State agency.** FNS will coordinate school food authority selection with the State agency to ensure that no unintended overlap exists and to ensure reviews are conducted in a consistent manner.

- (e) **Management evaluation findings.** FNS will consider the results of all its review activity within each State, including school food authority reviews, in performing management evaluations and issuing management evaluation reports. FNS will communicate the findings of the management evaluation to appropriate State agency personnel in an exit conference. Subsequent to the exit conference, the State agency will be notified in writing of the management evaluation findings and any needed corrective actions or fiscal sanctions in accordance with the provisions § 210.25 of this part and/or 7 CFR part 235.

[56 FR 32949, July 17, 1991, as amended at 57 FR 38586, Aug. 26, 1992. Redesignated at 64 FR 50741, Sept. 20, 1999, as amended at 81 FR 50193, July 29, 2016]

§ 210.30 School nutrition program professional standards.

Link to an amendment published at 89 FR 32075, Apr. 25, 2024.

- (a) **General.** School food authorities that operate the National School Lunch Program, or the School Breakfast Program (7 CFR part 220), must establish and implement professional standards for school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff, as defined in § 210.2.
- (b) **Minimum standards for all school nutrition program directors.** Each school food authority must ensure that all newly hired school nutrition program directors meet minimum hiring standards and ensure that all new and existing directors have completed the minimum annual training/education requirements for school nutrition program directors, as set forth below:
- (1) **Hiring standards.** All school nutrition program directors hired on or after July 1, 2015, must meet the following minimum educational requirements, as applicable:
- (i) **School nutrition program directors with local educational agency enrollment of 2,499 students or fewer.** Directors must meet the requirements in paragraph (b)(1)(i)(A), (B), (C), or (D) of this section. However, a State agency may approve a school food authority to use the nonprofit school food service account to pay the salary of a school nutrition program director who does not meet the hiring standards herein so long as the school food authority is complying with a State agency-approved plan to ensure the director will meet the requirements.
- (A) A bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with an academic major or concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field;
- (B) A bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with any academic major or area of concentration, *and* either a State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors, or at least one year of relevant food service experience. At the discretion of the State agency, and on an individual basis, documented relevant food service experience may be unpaid;
- (C) An associate's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with an academic major or area of concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field *and* at least one year of relevant food service experience. At the discretion of the State agency, and on an individual basis, documented relevant food service experience may be unpaid; or

- (D) A high school diploma or equivalency (such as the general educational development diploma), *and* at least three years of relevant food service experience. At the discretion of the State agency, and on an individual basis, documented relevant food service experience may be unpaid. Directors hired under this criterion are strongly encouraged to work toward attaining an associate's degree in an academic major in at least one of the fields listed in paragraph (b)(1)(i)(C).
 - (E) For a local educational agency with less than 500 students, the State agency may approve the hire of a director who meets one of the educational criteria in paragraphs (b)(1)(i)(B) through (D) but has less than the required years of relevant food service experience.
- (ii) ***School nutrition program directors with local educational agency enrollment of 2,500 to 9,999 students.*** Directors must meet the requirements in either paragraph (b)(1)(ii)(A), (B), (C), or (D) of this section.
- (A) A bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with an academic major or concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field;
 - (B) A bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with any academic major or area of concentration, *and* a State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors;
 - (C) A bachelor's degree in any academic major *and* at least two years of relevant experience in school nutrition programs; or
 - (D) An associate's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with an academic major or area of concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field *and* at least two years of relevant school nutrition program experience. Directors hired with an associate's degree are strongly encouraged to work toward attaining a bachelor's degree in an academic major in the fields listed in this paragraph.
- (iii) ***School nutrition program directors with local educational agency enrollment of 10,000 or more students.*** Directors must meet the requirements in either paragraph (b)(1)(iii)(A), (B), or (C) of this section.
- (A) A bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with an academic major or area of concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field;
 - (B) A bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with any academic major or area of concentration, *and* a State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors; or
 - (C) A bachelor's degree in any major *and* at least five years experience in management of school nutrition programs.
 - (D) School food authorities are strongly encouraged to seek out individuals who possess a master's degree or are willing to work toward a master's degree in the fields listed in this paragraph. At least one year of management experience, preferably in school nutrition, is strongly recommended. It is also strongly recommended that directors have at least three credit hours at the university level in food service management and at least three credit hours in nutritional sciences at the time of hire.

- (iv) At the discretion of the State agency, acting school nutrition program directors expected to serve for more than 30 business days must meet the hiring standards established in § 210.30(b)(1) of this chapter.
- (v) **School nutrition program directors for all local educational agency sizes.** All school nutrition program directors, *for all local educational agency sizes*, must have completed at least eight hours of food safety training within five years prior to their starting date or complete eight hours of food safety training within 30 calendar days of their starting date. At the discretion of the State agency, all school nutrition program directors, regardless of their starting date, may be required to complete eight hours of food safety training every five years.

- (2) **Summary of school nutrition program director hiring/standards.** The following chart summarizes the hiring standards established in this section:

Minimum requirements for directors	Student enrollment 2,499 or less	Student enrollment 2,500-9,999	Student enrollment 10,000 or more
Minimum Education Standards (required) (<i>new directors only</i>)	Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major or concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field;	Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major or concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field;	Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major or concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field;
	OR	OR	OR
	Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with any academic major or area of concentration, <i>and</i> either a State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors or at least 1 year of relevant food service experience;	Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with any academic major or area of concentration, <i>and</i> a State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors;	Bachelor's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with any academic major or area of concentration, <i>and</i> a State-recognized certificate for school nutrition directors;
	OR	OR	OR
	Associate's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major or concentration in food and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related	Bachelor's degree in any academic major <i>and</i> at least 2 years of relevant school nutrition program experience; OR Associate's degree, or equivalent educational experience, with academic major or concentration in food	Bachelor's degree in any major <i>and</i> at least 5 years of experience in management of school nutrition programs.

Minimum requirements for directors	Student enrollment 2,499 or less	Student enrollment 2,500-9,999	Student enrollment 10,000 or more
	field, <i>and</i> at least 1 year of relevant food service experience; OR High school diploma (or GED) <i>and</i> 3 years of relevant food service experience.	and nutrition, food service management, dietetics, family and consumer sciences, nutrition education, culinary arts, business, or a related field, <i>and</i> at least 2 years of relevant school nutrition program experience	
Minimum Education Standards (preferred) (<i>new directors only</i>)	Directors hired without an associate's degree are strongly encouraged to work toward attaining an associate's degree upon hiring	Directors hired without a bachelor's degree are strongly encouraged to work toward attaining a bachelor's degree upon hiring	Master's degree, or willingness to work toward a master's degree, preferred.
			At least 1 year of management experience, preferably in school nutrition, is strongly recommended. At least 3 credit hours at the university level in food service management plus at least 3 credit hours in nutritional sciences at time of hiring is strongly preferred.
Minimum Prior Training Standards (required) (<i>new directors only</i>)	At least 8 hours of food safety training is required either not more than 5 years prior to their starting date or completed within 30 calendar days of employee's starting date		

- (3) ***Continuing education/training standards for all school nutrition program directors.*** Each school year, the school food authority must ensure that all school nutrition program directors, (including acting directors, at the discretion of the State agency) complete annual continuing education/training. For the school year beginning July 1, 2015, program directors must complete eight hours of annual training. Beginning July 1, 2016, twelve hours of annual training are required. The annual training must include, but is not limited to, administrative practices (including training in application, certification, verification, meal counting, and meal claiming procedures), as applicable, and any other

specific topics identified by FNS, as needed, to address Program integrity or other critical issues. Continuing education/training required under this paragraph is in addition to the food safety training required in the first year of employment under paragraph (b)(1)(v) of this section.

- (c) **Continuing education/training standards for all school nutrition program managers.** Each school year, the school food authority must ensure that all school nutrition program managers have completed annual continuing education/training. For the school year beginning July 1, 2015, program managers must complete six hours of annual training. Beginning July 1, 2016, ten hours of annual training are required. The annual training must include, but is not limited to, the following topics, as applicable:
- (1) Administrative practices (including training in application, certification, verification, meal counting, and meal claiming procedures);
 - (2) The identification of reimbursable meals at the point of service;
 - (3) Nutrition;
 - (4) Health and safety standards; and
 - (5) Any specific topics identified by FNS, as needed, to address Program integrity or other critical issues.
- (d) **Continuing education/training standards for all staff with responsibility for school nutrition programs.** Each school year, the school food authority must ensure that all staff with responsibility for school nutrition programs that work an average of at least 20 hours per week, other than school nutrition program directors and managers, completes annual training in areas applicable to their job. For the school year beginning July 1, 2015, staff must complete four hours of annual training. Beginning July 1, 2016, six hours of annual training are required. Part-time staff working an average of less than 20 hours per week must complete four hours of annual training beginning July 1, 2015. The annual training must include, but is not limited to, the following topics, as applicable to their position and responsibilities:
- (1) Free and reduced price eligibility;
 - (2) Application, certification, and verification procedures;
 - (3) The identification of reimbursable meals at the point of service;
 - (4) Nutrition;
 - (5) Health and safety standards; and
 - (6) Any specific topics identified by FNS, as needed, to address Program integrity or other critical issues.
- (e) **Summary of required minimum continued education/training standards and flexibilities.** The annual training requirements for school nutrition program managers, directors, and staff summarized in the following chart are effective beginning July 1, 2015. Program managers, directors, and staff hired on or after January 1 of each school year must complete half of their required annual training hours before the end of the school year. At the discretion of the State agency:
- (1) Acting and temporary staff, substitutes, and volunteers must complete training in one or more of the topics listed in paragraph (d) of this section, as applicable, within 30 calendar days of their start date; and

- (2) School nutrition program personnel may carry over excess annual training hours to an immediately previous or subsequent school year and demonstrate compliance with the training requirements over a period of two school years, provided that some training hours are completed each school year.

Summary of Required Minimum Continuing Education/Training Standards, for All Local Educational Agency Sizes	
New and Current Directors	<p>Each year, at least 12 hours of annual continuing education/training.</p> <p>Includes topics such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative practices (including training in application, certification, verification, meal counting, and meal claiming procedures). • Any specific topics required by FNS, as needed, to address Program integrity or other critical issues. <p>This required continuing education/training is in addition to the food safety training required in the first year of employment, or for all school nutrition program directors if determined by the State agency.</p>
New and Current Managers	<p>Each year, at least 10 hours of annual continuing education/training.</p> <p>Includes topics such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative practices (including training in application, certification, verification, meal counting, and meal claiming procedures). • The identification of reimbursable meals at the point of service. • Nutrition, health and safety standards. • Any specific topics required by FNS, as needed, to address Program integrity or other critical issues.
New and Current Staff (other than the director and managers) that work an average of at least 20 hours per week	<p>Each year, at least 6 hours of annual continuing education/training.</p> <p>Includes topics such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free and reduced price eligibility. • Application, certification, and verification procedures. • The identification of reimbursable meals at the point of service. • Nutrition, health and safety standards. • Any specific topics required by FNS, as needed, to address Program integrity or other critical issues.

- (f) **Use of food service funds for training costs.** Costs associated with annual continuing education/training required under paragraphs (b)(3), (c) and (d) of this section are allowed provided they are reasonable, allocable, and necessary in accordance with the cost principles set forth in 2 CFR part 225, Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments (OMB Circular A-87). However, food service funds must not be used to pay for the cost of college credits incurred by an individual to meet the hiring requirements in paragraphs (b)(1)(i) through (iv) and in paragraph (b)(2) of this section.
- (g) **School food authority oversight.** Each school year, the school food authority director must document compliance with the requirements of this section for all staff with responsibility for school nutrition programs, including directors, managers, and staff. Documentation must be adequate to establish, to the State's satisfaction during administrative reviews, that employees are meeting the minimum professional standards. The school food authority must certify that:
- (1) The school nutrition programs director meets the hiring standards and training requirements set forth in paragraph (b) of this section; and
 - (2) Each employee has completed the applicable training requirements in paragraphs (c) and (d) of this section no later than the end of each school year.
 - (3) Each employee tasked with Program procurement has completed annual procurement training, as required under § 210.21(h), by the end of each school year.

[80 FR 11092, Mar. 2, 2015; 80 FR 26181, May 7, 2015. Redesignated at 81 FR 50169, July 29, 2016 and further redesignated and amended at 81 FR 93792, Dec. 22, 2016; 84 FR 6959, Mar. 1, 2019; 84 FR 8247, Mar. 7, 2019; 88 FR 57848, Aug. 23, 2023]

§ 210.31 Local school wellness policy.

- (a) **General.** Each local educational agency must establish a local school wellness policy for all schools participating in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program under the jurisdiction of the local educational agency. The local school wellness policy is a written plan that includes methods to promote student wellness, prevent and reduce childhood obesity, and provide assurance that school meals and other food and beverages sold and otherwise made available on the school campus during the school day are consistent with applicable minimum Federal standards.
- (b) **Definitions.** For the purposes of this section:
 - (1) **School campus** means the term as defined in § 210.11(a)(4).
 - (2) **School day** means the term as defined in § 210.11(a)(5).
- (c) **Content of the plan.** At a minimum, local school wellness policies must contain:
 - (1) Specific goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness. In developing these goals, local educational agencies must review and consider evidence-based strategies and techniques;
 - (2) Standards for all foods and beverages provided, but not sold, to students during the school day on each participating school campus under the jurisdiction of the local educational agency;
 - (3) Standards and nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages sold to students during the school day on each participating school campus under the jurisdiction of the local educational agency that:
 - (i) Are consistent with applicable requirements set forth under §§ 210.10 and 220.8 of this chapter;
 - (ii) Are consistent with the nutrition standards set forth under § 210.11;
 - (iii) Permit marketing on the school campus during the school day of only those foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards under § 210.11; and
 - (iv) Promote student health and reduce childhood obesity.
 - (4) Identification of the position of the LEA or school official(s) or school official(s) responsible for the implementation and oversight of the local school wellness policy to ensure each school's compliance with the policy;
 - (5) A description of the manner in which parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators, and the general public are provided an opportunity to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the local school wellness policy; and
 - (6) A description of the plan for measuring the implementation of the local school wellness policy, and for reporting local school wellness policy content and implementation issues to the public, as required in paragraphs (d) and (e) of this section.
- (d) **Public involvement and public notification.** Each local educational agency must:

- (1) Permit parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators, and the general public to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the local school wellness policy;
- (2) Inform the public about the content and implementation of the local school wellness policy, and make the policy and any updates to the policy available to the public on an annual basis;
- (3) Inform the public about progress toward meeting the goals of the local school wellness policy and compliance with the local school wellness policy by making the triennial assessment, as required in paragraph (e)(2) of this section, available to the public in an accessible and easily understood manner.

(e) **Implementation assessments and updates.** Each local educational agency must:

- (1) Designate one or more local educational agency officials or school officials to ensure that each participating school complies with the local school wellness policy;
- (2) At least once every three years, assess schools' compliance with the local school wellness policy, and make assessment results available to the public. The assessment must measure the implementation of the local school wellness policy, and include:
 - (i) The extent to which schools under the jurisdiction of the local educational agency are in compliance with the local school wellness policy;
 - (ii) The extent to which the local educational agency's local school wellness policy compares to model local school wellness policies; and
 - (iii) A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the local school wellness policy.
- (3) Make appropriate updates or modifications to the local school wellness policy, based on the triennial assessment.

(f) **Recordkeeping requirement.** Each local educational agency must retain records to document compliance with the requirements of this section. These records include but are not limited to:

- (1) The written local school wellness policy;
- (2) Documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements, including requirements to make the local school wellness policy and triennial assessments available to the public as required in paragraph (e) of this section; and
- (3) Documentation of the triennial assessment of the local school wellness policy for each school under its jurisdiction.

[81 FR 51069, July 29, 2016. Redesignated at 81 FR 93792, Dec. 22, 2016]

§ 210.32 Program information.

Persons seeking information about this Program should contact their State administering agency or the appropriate FNSRO. The FNS website has contact information for State agencies at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/contacts> and FNSROs at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-regional-offices>.

[88 FR 57848, Aug. 23, 2023]

§ 210.33 OMB control numbers.

The following control numbers have been assigned to the information collection requirements in 7 CFR part 210 by the Office of Management and Budget pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, Public Law 96-511.

7 CFR section where requirements are described	Current OMB control No.
210.3(b)	0584-0067
210.4(b)	0584-0002
210.5(d)	0584-0006; 0584-0002; 0584-0067; 0584-0567 (to be merged with 0584-0006)
210.7	0584-0567 (to be merged with 0584-0006)
210.8	0584-0284; 0584-0006
210.9	0584-0006
210.10	0584-0006; 0584-0494
210.11	0584-0576 (to be merged with 0584-0006)
210.13	0584-0006
210.14	0584-0006
210.15	0584-0006
210.17	0584-0075
210.18	0584-0006
210.19	0584-0006
210.20	0584-0006; 0584-0002; 0584-0067
210.23	0584-0006

[80 FR 11092, Mar. 2, 2015. Redesignated at 81 FR 50169, July 29, 2016]

§ 210.34 Seamless Summer Option non-congregate meal service.

A school food authority operating the Seamless Summer Option in a rural area may be approved to offer a non-congregate meal service consistent with that established in part 225 of this chapter. Such school food authorities must comply with the non-congregate meal service provisions set forth at § 225.16(b)(5)(i) and (iv) of this chapter and may use the non-congregate meal service options contained in § 225.16(i) of this chapter.

[88 FR 90347, Dec. 29, 2023]

Appendix A to Part 210—Alternate Foods for Meals

I. Enriched Macaroni Products with Fortified Protein

1. Schools may utilize the enriched macaroni products with fortified protein defined in paragraph 3 as a food item in meeting the meal requirements of this part under the following terms and conditions:

- (a) One ounce (28.35 grams) of a dry enriched macaroni product with fortified protein may be used to meet not more than one-half of the meat or meat alternate requirements specified in § 210.10, when served in combination with 1 or more ounces (28.35 grams) of cooked meat, poultry, fish, or cheese. The size of servings of the cooked combination may be adjusted for various age groups.
 - (b) Only enriched macaroni products with fortified protein that bear a label containing substantially the following legend shall be so utilized: "One ounce (28.35 grams) dry weight of this product meets one-half of the meat or meat alternate requirements of lunch or supper of the USDA child nutrition programs when served in combination with 1 or more ounces (28.35 grams) of cooked meat, poultry, fish, or cheese. In those States where State or local law prohibits the wording specified, a legend acceptable to both the State or local authorities and FNS shall be substituted."
 - (c) Enriched macaroni product may not be used for infants under 1 year of age.
2. Only enriched macaroni products with fortified protein that have been accepted by FNS for use in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs may be labeled as provided in paragraph 1(b) of this appendix. Manufacturers seeking acceptance of their product shall furnish FNS a chemical analysis, the Protein Digestibility-Corrected Amino Acid Score (PDCAAS), and such other pertinent data as may be requested by FNS, except that prior to November 7, 1994, manufacturers may submit protein efficiency ratio analysis in lieu of the PDCAAS. This information is to be forwarded to: Director, Nutrition and Technical Services Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 3101 Park Center Drive, room 607, Alexandria, VA 22302. All laboratory analyses are to be performed by independent or other laboratories acceptable to FNS. (FNS prefers an independent laboratory.) All laboratories shall retain the "raw" laboratory data for a period of 1 year. Such information shall be made available to FNS upon request. Manufacturers must notify FNS if there is a change in the protein portion of their product after the original testing. Manufacturers who report such a change in protein in a previously approved product must submit protein data in accordance with the method specified in this paragraph.
3. The product should not be designed in such a manner that would require it to be classified as a Dietary Supplement as described by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 21 CFR part 105. To be accepted by FNS, enriched macaroni products with fortified protein must conform to the following requirements:
- (a)
 - (1) Each of these foods is produced by drying formed units of dough made with one or more of the milled wheat ingredients designated in 21 CFR 139.110(a) and 139.138(a), and other ingredients to enable the finished food to meet the protein requirements set out in paragraph 3.(a)(2)(i) under Enriched Macaroni Products with Fortified Protein in this appendix. Edible protein sources, including food grade flours or meals made from nonwheat cereals or from oilseeds, may be used. Vitamin and mineral enrichment nutrients are added to bring the food into conformity with the requirements of paragraph (b) under Enriched Macaroni Products with Fortified Protein in this appendix. Safe and suitable ingredients, as provided for in paragraph (c) under Enriched Macaroni Products with Fortified Protein in this appendix, may be added. The proportion of the milled wheat ingredient is larger than the proportion of any other ingredient used.

- (2) Each such finished food, when tested by the methods described in the pertinent sections of "Official Methods of Analysis of the AOAC International," (formerly the Association of Official Analytical Chemists), 15th Ed. (1990) meets the following specifications. This publication is incorporated by reference in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from the AOAC International, 2200 Wilson Blvd., suite 400, Arlington, VA 22201-3301. This publication may be examined at the Food and Nutrition Service, Nutrition and Technical Services Division, 3101 Park Center Drive, room 607, Alexandria, Virginia 22302 or at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call 202-741-6030, or go to: http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/code_of_federal_regulations/ibr_locations.html.
- (i) The protein content ($N \times 6.25$) is not less than 20 percent by weight (on a 13 percent moisture basis) as determined by the appropriate method of analysis in the AOAC manual cited in (a)(2) under Enriched Macaroni Products with Fortified Protein in this appendix. The protein quality is not less than 95 percent that of casein as determined on a dry basis by the PDCAAS method as described below:
- (A) The PDCAAS shall be determined by the methods given in sections 5.4.1, 7.2.1. and 8.0 as described in "Protein Quality Evaluation, Report of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on Protein Quality Evaluation," Rome, 1990, as published by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations/World Health Organization (WHO). This report is incorporated by reference in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies of this report may be obtained from the Nutrition and Technical Services Division, Food and Nutrition Service, 3101 Park Center Drive, room 607, Alexandria, Virginia 22302. This report may also be inspected at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, call 202-741-6030, or go to: http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/code_of_federal_regulations/ibr_locations.html.
- (B) The standard used for assessing protein quality in the PDCAAS method is the amino acid scoring pattern established by FAO/WHO and United Nations University (UNU) in 1985 for preschool children 2 to 5 years of age which has been adopted by the National Academy of Sciences, Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA), 1989.
- (C) To calculate the PDCAAS for an individual food, the test food must be analyzed for proximate analysis and amino acid composition according to AOAC methods.
- (D) The PDCAAS may be calculated using FDA's limited data base of published true digestibility values (determined using humans and rats). The true digestibility values contained in the WHO/FAO report referenced in paragraph 3.(a)(2)(i)(A) under Enriched Macaroni Products with Fortified Protein in this appendix may also be used. If the digestibility of the protein is not available from these sources it must be determined by a laboratory according to methods in the FAO/WHO report (sections 7.2.1 and 8.0).

- (E) The most limiting essential amino acid (that is, the amino acid that is present at the lowest level in the test food compared to the standard) is identified in the test food by comparing the levels of individual amino acids in the test food with the 1985 FAO/WHO/UNU pattern of essential amino acids established as a standard for children 2 to 5 years of age.
- (F) The value of the most limiting amino acid (the ratio of the amino acid in the test food over the amino acid value from the pattern) is multiplied by the percent of digestibility of the protein. The resulting number is the PDCAAS.
- (G) The PDCAAS of food mixtures must be calculated from data for the amino acid composition and digestibility of the individual components by means of a weighted average procedure. An example for calculating a PDCAAS for a food mixture of varying protein sources is shown in section 8.0 of the FAO/WHO report cited in paragraph 3.(a)(2)(i)(A) under Enriched Macaroni Products with Fortified Protein in this appendix.
- (H) For the purpose of this regulation, each 100 grams of the product (on a 13 percent moisture basis) must contain protein in amounts which is equivalent to that provided by 20 grams of protein with a quality of not less than 95 percent casein. The equivalent grams of protein required per 100 grams of product (on a 13 percent moisture basis) would be determined by the following equation:

$$X = \frac{a \times b}{c}$$

X = grams of protein required per 100 grams of product

a = 20 grams (amount of protein if casein)

b = .95 [95% × 1 (PDCAAS of casein)]

c = PDCAAS for protein used in formulation

- (ii) The total solids content is not less than 87 percent by weight as determined by the methods described in the "Official Methods of Analysis of the AOAC International" cited in paragraph (a)(2) under Enriched Macaroni Products with Fortified Protein in this appendix.

(b)

- (1) Each pound of food covered by this section shall contain 5 milligrams of thiamine, 2.2 milligrams of riboflavin, 34 milligrams of niacin or niacinamide, and 16.5 milligrams of iron.
- (2) Each pound of such food may also contain 625 milligrams of calcium.
- (3) Only harmless and assimilable forms of iron and calcium may be added. The enrichment nutrients may be added in a harmless carrier used only in a quantity necessary to effect a uniform distribution of the nutrients in the finished food. Reasonable overages, within the limits of good manufacturing practice, may be used to assure that the prescribed levels of

the vitamins and mineral(s) in paragraphs (b)(1) and (2) under Enriched Macaroni Products with Fortified Protein in this appendix are maintained throughout the expected shelf life of the food under customary conditions of distribution.

(c) Ingredients that serve a useful purpose such as to fortify the protein or facilitate production of the food are the safe and suitable ingredients referred to in paragraph (a) under Enriched Macaroni Products with Fortified Protein in this appendix. This does not include color additives, artificial flavorings, artificial sweeteners, chemical preservatives, or starches. Ingredients deemed suitable for use by this paragraph are added in amounts that are not in excess of those reasonably required to achieve their intended purposes. Ingredients are deemed to be safe if they are not food additives within the meaning of section 201(s) of the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, or in case they are food additives if they are used in conformity with regulations established pursuant to section 409 of the act.

(d)

(1) The name of any food covered by this section is “Enriched Wheat _____ Macaroni Product with Fortified Protein”, the blank being filled in with appropriate word(s) such as “Soy” to show the source of any flours or meals used that were made from non-wheat cereals or from oilseeds. In lieu of the words “Macaroni Product” the words “Macaroni”, “Spaghetti”, or “Vermicelli” as appropriate, may be used if the units conform in shape and size to the requirements of 21 CFR 139.110 (b), (c), or (d).

(2) When any ingredient not designated in the part of the name prescribed in paragraph (d)(1) under Enriched Macaroni Products with Fortified Protein in this appendix, is added in such proportion as to contribute 10 percent or more of the quantity of protein contained in the finished food, the name shall include the statement “Made with _____”, the blank being filled in with the name of each such ingredient, e.g. “Made with nonfat milk”.

(3) When, in conformity with paragraph (d)(1) or (d)(2) under Enriched Macaroni Products with Fortified Protein in this appendix, two or more ingredients are listed in the name, their designations shall be arranged in descending order of predominance by weight.

(4) If a food is made to comply with a section of 21 CFR part 139, but also meets the compositional requirements of the Enriched Macaroni with Fortified Protein Appendix, it may alternatively bear the name set out in the other section.

(e) Each ingredient used shall declare its common name as required by the applicable section of 21 CFR part 101. In addition, the ingredients statement shall appear in letters not less than one half the size of that required by 21 CFR 101.105 for the declaration of net quantity of contents, and in no case less than one-sixteenth of an inch in height.

II. Alternate Protein Products

A. What Are the Criteria for Alternate Protein Products Used in the National School Lunch Program?

1. An alternate protein product used in meals planned under the food-based menu planning approaches in § 210.10(k), must meet all of the criteria in this section.

2. An alternate protein product whether used alone or in combination with meat or other meat alternates must meet the following criteria:
 - a. The alternate protein product must be processed so that some portion of the non-protein constituents of the food is removed. These alternate protein products must be safe and suitable edible products produced from plant or animal sources.
 - b. The biological quality of the protein in the alternate protein product must be at least 80 percent that of casein, determined by performing a Protein Digestibility Corrected Amino Acid Score (PDCAAS).
 - c. The alternate protein product must contain at least 18 percent protein by weight when fully hydrated or formulated. ("When hydrated or formulated" refers to a dry alternate protein product and the amount of water, fat, oil, colors, flavors or any other substances which have been added).
 - d. Manufacturers supplying an alternate protein product to participating schools or institutions must provide documentation that the product meets the criteria in paragraphs A2. a through c of this appendix.
 - e. Manufacturers should provide information on the percent protein contained in the dry alternate protein product and on an as prepared basis.
 - f. For an alternate protein product mix, manufacturers should provide information on:
 - (1) the amount by weight of dry alternate protein product in the package;
 - (2) hydration instructions; and
 - (3) instructions on how to combine the mix with meat or other meat alternates.

B. How Are Alternate Protein Products Used in the National School Lunch Program?

1. Schools, institutions, and service institutions may use alternate protein products to fulfill all or part of the meat/meat alternate component discussed in § 210.10.
2. The following terms and conditions apply:
 - a. The alternate protein product may be used alone or in combination with other food ingredients. Examples of combination items are beef patties, beef crumbles, pizza topping, meat loaf, meat sauce, taco filling, burritos, and tuna salad.
 - b. Alternate protein products may be used in the dry form (nonhydrated), partially hydrated or fully hydrated form. The moisture content of the fully hydrated alternate protein product (if prepared from a dry concentrated form) must be such that the mixture will have a minimum of 18 percent protein by weight or equivalent amount for the dry or partially hydrated form (based on the level that would be provided if the product were fully hydrated).

C. How Are Commercially Prepared Products Used in the National School Lunch Program?

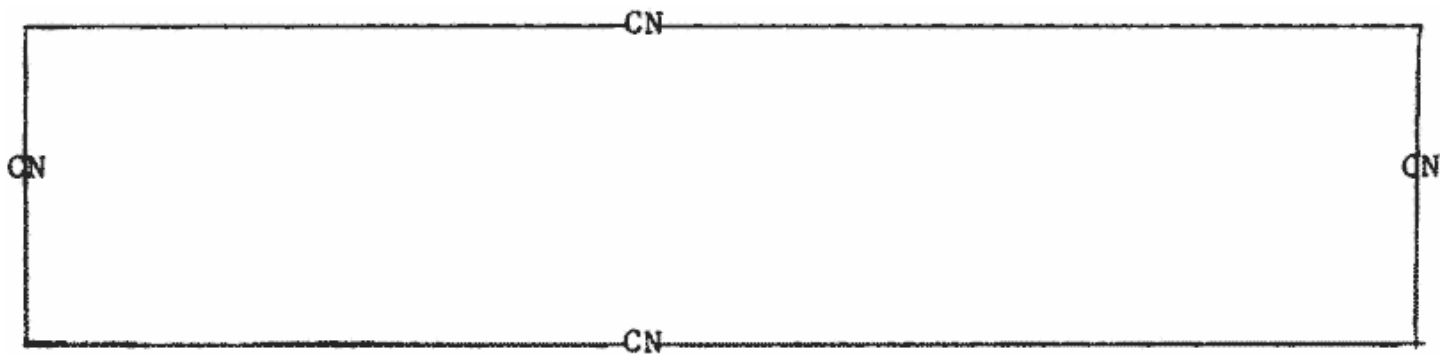
Schools, institutions, and service institutions may use a commercially prepared meat or meat alternate product combined with alternate protein products or use a commercially prepared product that contains only alternate protein products.

[51 FR 34874, Sept. 30, 1986; 51 FR 41295, Nov. 14, 1986, as amended at 53 FR 29164, Aug. 2, 1988; 59 FR 51086, Oct. 7, 1994; 60 FR 31216, June 13, 1995; 61 FR 37671, July 19, 1996; 65 FR 12434, Mar. 9, 2000; 65 FR 26912, May 9, 2000; 69 FR 18803, Apr. 9, 2004]

Appendix B to Part 210 [Reserved]

Appendix C to Part 210—Child Nutrition Labeling Program

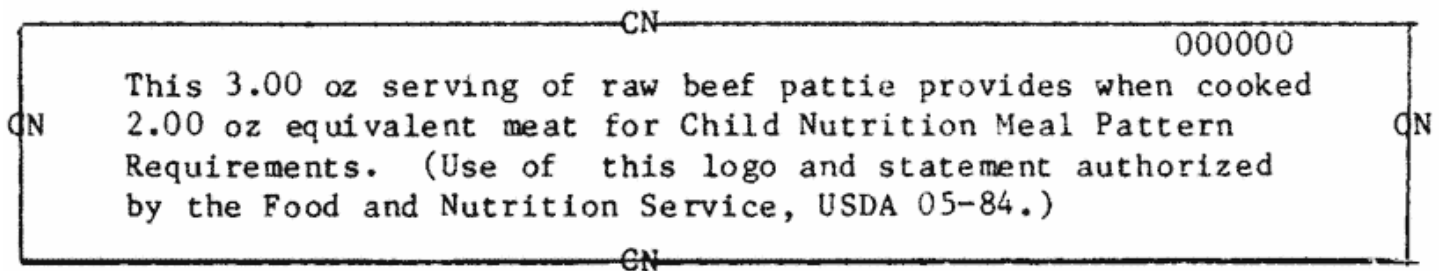
1. The Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program is a voluntary technical assistance program administered by the Food and Nutrition Service in conjunction with the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), and Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and National Marine Fisheries Service of the U.S. Department of Commerce (USDC) for the Child Nutrition Programs. This program essentially involves the review of a manufacturer's recipe or product formulation to determine the contribution a serving of a commercially prepared product makes toward meal pattern requirements and a review of the CN label statement to ensure its accuracy. CN labeled products must be produced in accordance with all requirements set forth in this rule.
2. Products eligible for CN labels are as follows:
 - (a) Commercially prepared food products that contribute significantly to the meat/meat alternate component of meal pattern requirements of 7 CFR 210.10, 225.20, and 226.20 and are served in the main dish.
 - (b) Juice drinks and juice drink products that contain a minimum of 50 percent full-strength juice by volume.
3. For the purpose of this appendix the following definitions apply:
 - (a) “**CN label**” is a food product label that contains a CN label statement and CN logo as defined in paragraph 3 (b) and (c) below.
 - (b) The “**CN logo**” (as shown below) is a distinct border which is used around the edges of a “CN label statement” as defined in paragraph 3(c).



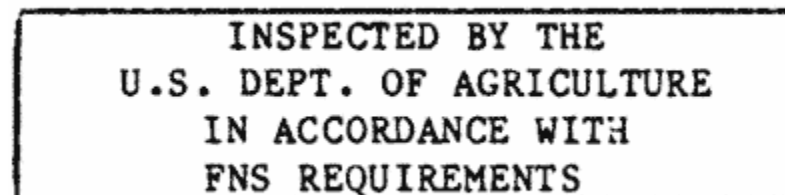
- (c) The “CN label statement” includes the following:
 - (1) The product identification number (assigned by FNS),

- (2) The statement of the product's contribution toward meal pattern requirements of 7 CFR 210.10, § 220.8 or § 220.8a, whichever is applicable, §§ 225.20, and 226.20. The statement shall identify the contribution of a specific portion of a meat/meat alternate product toward the meat/meat alternate, bread/bread alternate, and/or vegetable/fruit component of the meal pattern requirements. For juice drinks and juice drink products the statement shall identify their contribution toward the vegetable/fruit component of the meal pattern requirements,
- (3) Statement specifying that the use of the CN logo and CN statement was authorized by FNS, and
- (4) The approval date.

For example:



- (d) **Federal inspection** means inspection of food products by FSIS, AMS or USDC.
4. Food processors or manufacturers may use the CN label statement and CN logo as defined in paragraph 3 (b) and (c) under the following terms and conditions:
 - (a) The CN label must be reviewed and approved at the national level by FNS and appropriate USDA or USDC Federal agency responsible for the inspection of the product.
 - (b) The CN labeled product must be produced under Federal inspection by USDA or USDC. The Federal inspection must be performed in accordance with an approved partial or total quality control program or standards established by the appropriate Federal inspection service.
 - (c) The CN label statement must be printed as an integral part of the product label along with the product name, ingredient listing, the inspection shield or mark for the appropriate inspection program, the establishment number where appropriate, and the manufacturer's or distributor's name and address. The inspection marking for CN labeled non-meat, non-poultry, and non-seafood products with the exception of juice drinks and juice drink products is established as follows:



- (d) Yields for determining the product's contribution toward meal pattern requirements must be calculated using the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* (Program AID Number 1331).

5. In the event a company uses the CN logo and CN label statement inappropriately, the company will be directed to discontinue the use of the logo and statement and the matter will be referred to the appropriate agency for action to be taken against the company.
6. Products that bear a CN label statement as set forth in paragraph 3(c) carry a warranty. This means that if a food service authority participating in the Child Nutrition Programs purchases a CN labeled product and uses it in accordance with the manufacturer's directions, the school or institution will not have an audit claim filed against it for the CN labeled product for noncompliance with the meal pattern requirements of 7 CFR 210.10, § 220.8 or § 220.8a, whichever is applicable, §§ 225.20, and 226.20. If a State or Federal auditor finds that a product that is CN labeled does not actually meet the meal pattern requirements claimed on the label, the auditor will report this finding to FNS. FNS will prepare a report of the findings and send it to the appropriate divisions of FSIS and AMS of the USDA, National Marine Fisheries Services of the USDC, Food and Drug Administration, or the Department of Justice for action against the company. Any or all of the following courses of action may be taken:
 - (a) The company's CN label may be revoked for a specific period of time;
 - (b) The appropriate agency may pursue a misbranding or mislabeling action against the company producing the product;
 - (c) The company's name will be circulated to regional FNS offices;
 - (d) FNS will require the food service program involved to notify the State agency of the labeling violation.
7. FNS is authorized to issue operational policies, procedures, and instructions for the CN Labeling Program. To apply for a CN label and to obtain additional information on CN label application procedures write to: CN Labels, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Nutrition and Technical Services Division, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, Virginia 22302.

[51 FR 34874, Sept. 30, 1986, as amended at 53 FR 29164, Aug. 2, 1988; 60 FR 31216, June 13, 1995; 65 FR 26912, May 9, 2000]