

To: All Child Nutrition Sponsors Serving Meals During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Ordered School-Building Closure

From: Brigette Hires, Child Nutrition Program Manager
Office of Integrated Student Supports

Date: March 30, 2020 , Revised September 18, 2020

Re: Parent, Guardian or Agency Meal Pickup without Children Present

Purpose

This policy provides guidance to child nutrition sponsors to allow parent or guardian meal pick up during the coronavirus (COVID-19) meal distribution process.

Overview

Under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act at 42 U.S.C. 1761(f)(3) and Program regulations at 7 CFR 210.10(a), 220.2 (Breakfast) and 220.8(a), 225.2 (Meals), 225.9(d)(7), and 226.2 (Meals), meals must be served to eligible children. The Act and cited regulations envision program operators providing meals directly to children, not to parents and guardians picking up meals at non-congregate meal sites on behalf of their children. However, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service recognizes that in during the time of this public health emergency, continuing to require children to come to the meal site to pick up meals may not be practical or in the best interest of community health. In keeping with the goal of providing meals while also taking appropriate safety measures, on Mar. 25, 2020, the USDA issued a nationwide waiver permitting parent or guardian pick up of meals for children.^{1,2} USDA issued extensions to the nationwide waiver on June 25, Aug. 20 and Aug. 31.

Policy

While distributing meals for children to parents or guardians, child nutrition sponsors must maintain program integrity. To maintain program integrity, sponsors must implement the following activities specified by the USDA, including:

- Ensure marketing materials and communications for feeding sites clearly indicate meals are for children only.
- Ensure marketing materials and communications for feeding sites do not openly indicate parents or guardians can pick up meals without children.
- Limit the number of meals per site that a parent or guardian can pick up without the child present. Site personnel should be aware of the household composition when possible.
- Collaborate with community organizations to ensure that a parent or guardian is not picking up duplicate meals through different programs.

If a community organization, such as a homeless shelter, wishes to pick up meals for children, the organization must provide an official documented request, such as a letter on letterhead. The request must include the number of children and number of meals. The sponsor must keep this documentation in accordance with their records retention policy.

Duration

This policy is effective immediately and remains in effect until June 30, 2021, or until expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier.

Contact the Office of Integrated Student Supports with questions at 614-466-2945 or child.nutrition@education.ohio.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. [Non-Discrimination Statement](#)

¹ "Parent" means: (a) A biological or adoptive parent. "Guardian" means: (a) Generally authorized to act as the child's parent, or authorized to make decisions for the child (but not the state if the child is a ward of the state); (b) An individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent or other relative) with whom the child lives, or an individual who is legally responsible for the child's welfare; (c) A surrogate parent; or (d) Any person identified in a judicial decree or order as the parent of a child or the person with authority to make educational decisions on behalf of a child.

² [Nationwide Waiver to Allow Parents and Guardians to Pick Up Meals for Children](#)

³ Nationwide Waiver to Allow Parents and Guardians to Pick Up Meals for Children, [Extension 2](#), [3](#) and [4](#)