September 28, 2026

Brigette Hires

Administrator

Ohio Department of Education and Workforce

25 S. Front St.

Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Brigette Hires:

This letter is in response to the waiver request from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW) received on September 22, 2026, requesting to waive the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) regulation requiring sponsoring organizations to conduct onsite monitoring reviews of day care homes (DCHs). Under the waiver authority granted at section 12(l) of the National School Lunch Act (NSLA) (42 U.S.C 1760(l)), the Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) approves ODEW's request to waive the regulations at 7 CFR 226.16(d)(4)(iii), as it relates to onsite monitoring reviews of DCHs. Specifically, ODEW is permitted to allow sponsoring organizations in good standing to conduct one offsite monitoring review of DCHs within the program year.

In its request, ODEW requested that CACFP organizations in good standing be permitted to conduct one of three required monitoring reviews virtually for DCHs due to required staff travel and facility retention. ODEW stated that there are currently five sponsoring organizations of DCHs with 1,376 providers who are eligible to participate in this waiver.

ODEW would require sponsoring organizations to submit, for review and written approval, monitoring plans including how technology solutions will be utilized to perform monitoring reviews, as well as provide technical assistance, and address missed reviews and any serious deficiency determinations. Upon approval, ODEW will allow

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eligible sponsoring organizations to conduct one offsite monitoring review of DCHs to include the required review elements and documentation listed at 7 CFR 226.16(d)(4)(i) via Zoom, FaceTime, MS Teams, and Google Meet. Sponsoring organizations granted this flexibility by ODEW will be required to conduct a phone or video call to conclude their review.

FNA approves ODEW's request to allow sponsoring organizations in good standing to conduct one offsite monitoring review virtually and has determined that continuing to allow some virtual reviews will facilitate program operations and help mitigate challenges related to monitoring in remote or isolated geographic areas. Therefore, FNA's approval of this waiver will not compromise the integrity of the CACFP. Provided that the sponsoring organization in good standing submits and receives approval from the State agency for a virtual monitoring plan as described above, ODEW is approved to:

- Permit sponsoring organizations in good standing to conduct one annual monitoring review offsite;
- Require that at least one onsite monitoring review of each DCH provider be unannounced and include a meal service observation; and
- Require that the offsite review includes a phone or video call to complete the review.

This waiver is in effect from October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027.

The waiver authority at section 12(l) of the NSLA requires FNA to review the performance of any State or eligible service provider that was granted a waiver. Therefore, no later than November 1, 2027, ODEW must provide their assigned FNA Office with a written report quantifying the impact of the waiver, as described below. The report must include:

- A description of how this waiver allowed the Program(s) to provide nutritional meals and/or snacks to Program participants;

- A description of how this waiver improved services for the Program(s) participants;
- A description of how this waiver reduced the administrative burden necessary to operate the Program(s);
- A description of how this waiver has facilitated sponsoring organizations' oversight abilities and responsibilities;
- A summary of how many sponsoring organizations utilized this waiver and how many were recruited or retained as a result of the waiver approval;
- A summary of how many DCHs were monitored off-site during the waiver period;
- A summary of program integrity measures taken to identify any misuse of Federal funds and identify fraudulent activities, and, if anything was identified, any actions taken; and
- A summary of any technical assistance measures that were provided by the State agency to sponsoring organizations and to DCH providers by the sponsoring organizations.

FNA appreciates the efforts of ODEW to support institutions in conducting effective monitoring to ensure program integrity. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your FNA Office.

Sincerely,

JESSICA SARACINO Digitally signed by JESSICA SARACINO
Date: 2026.09.28 15:18:01 -04'00'

Jessica Saracino

Acting Associate Administrator

Child Nutrition Programs

Electronic Copy: Jheanell West