

# Back-to-School Meal Service Toolkit



## Feeding Students During the Ongoing Coronavirus

### Indiana Supplement

No Kid Hungry has released a [Back-to-School Meal Service Toolkit](#), designed to help school nutrition staff plan for meal service during the 2020-2021 school year, as we continue to navigate the coronavirus pandemic.

This comprehensive toolkit offers tips for beginning the planning process and explains the nationwide waivers available. For those districts looking for support with financial recovery, it offers information about FEMA Public Assistance Grants, CARES Act funds and other strategies for increasing revenue and avoiding further debt. Lastly, the toolkit dives into details about meal service models—both for meals consumed at school and meals taken to-go. Several other resources are embedded within the toolkit.

This supplement includes important information specific to the state of Indiana.

#### **P-EBT**

Still receiving questions from households about P-EBT? Households who believe they are entitled to a P-EBT card can send an e-mail with information about their family, and the FSSA team will research the case. Check out the [FSSA P-EBT website](#) for more details.

#### **Tools To Connect Families with Free and Reduced-Price School Meals**

As trusted messengers, schools and community organizations are an important source of information for families. This kit provides information and outreach tools to help connect students and families in your community with the nutrition they need. Please feel free to customize these assets with the local details and specifics that provide the right information to the parents and caretakers in your community.

- [Social Media Kit](#): Images and Sample Posts which can be customized with specific information about free meal sites in your area.
- [Two customizable LTE templates](#) that can be edited and submitted to local newspapers for publication by partners, parents, educators and beyond.
- [Sample radio blurb language](#) to pitch to local radio stations, advising parents and caregivers to contact their schools about how to apply for free or reduced-price meals for kids this school year.



## Applicable Waivers

Five nationwide waivers were sent out by USDA and can be utilized in Indiana. These waivers only apply to NSLP and SBP.

### **A Non-Congregate Nationwide Waiver has been approved until June 30, 2021.**

Schools are approved to serve grab and go meals for students to consume off-site and claim under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP) whether implementing eLearning or completely closing due to COVID-19.

### **A Parent Pickup Nationwide Waiver has been approved until June 20, 2021.**

Processes should be in place to ensure that meals are distributed only to parents or guardians of eligible children who are enrolled in the school and that duplicate meals are not distributed to any child. Meal counts must be made at free, reduced, and paid rates, unless the school operates the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) or another approved provision. With state agency prior approval, sponsors can provide meals to participants for multiple days, if meals are recorded on meal count sheets. If multiple meals are distributed, separate meal counts for breakfast and lunch must be maintained, dated, signed, and marked at the point of sale (POS) as free, reduced, and paid rates, unless the school operates the CEP or another approved provision. Schools need to follow all the rules for the respective programs, such as production records, menu documentation, and civil rights.

### **A Meal Pattern Nationwide Waiver has been approved until June 30, 2021.**

There are no blanket meal pattern waivers. Each meal pattern waiver request must be submitted to your field specialist and approved in advance of any meal pattern changes. Waivers will be approved on a case-by-case basis and are limited to specific nationwide food shortages. Failure to follow the meal pattern due to any other reason can lead to disallowed meals.

### **A Meal Times Nationwide Waiver has been approved until June 30, 2021.**

Schools are still responsible for indicating their specific meal service times within the CNPweb by updating the site information sheet.

### **An Offer Versus Serve Flexibility Nationwide Waiver has been approved until June 30, 2021.**

Offer versus serve is not required to be implemented for grades 9-12 for school year 2020-2021 at lunch. Menus still need to meet the meal pattern and the weekly calorie, saturated fat, and sodium guidelines for each grade group. If implementing offer versus serve, all components must be offered for lunch with the option for students to decline two components. Students must still take 1/2 cup of fruit and/or vegetables as part of the reimbursable meal.

### **A SFSP and SSO Option Waiver has been approved until June 30, 2021.**

Due to the continued need for social distancing, many states and SFAs are utilizing a virtual or hybrid education model. In addition, schools using in-person instruction have recognized the need to modify meal service models to ensure student safety. Providing meals through the SFSP/SSO will support these models and not require additional administrative contact or burden for states or operators.



## Resources

Indiana NKH has many resources for your Back to School needs. Follow this link to access resources on regulations, recipe ideas, nutrition education opportunities, food safety, and much more.

More information about compliance, application requirements and other details is available on the [IDOE website](#).

## Grants

This fall, the No Kid Hungry Indiana Campaign is offering a school nutrition grant opportunity to enable districts and schools to maximize the child nutrition programs and other emergency food programs to ensure children and families have access to healthy meals at school and at home. These flexible grants will allow school districts across the state to respond to the growing needs and emerging opportunities to provide meals and resources to kids and families.

Learn more about this funding opportunity here and apply: [CLICK HERE](#)

## Connect with No Kid Hungry Indiana

Our team is available to provide technical assistance and support by phone and email.

We can:

- Help navigate USDA waivers.
- Offer ideas around meal distribution, staffing, planning for emergencies, communication, partnerships and more.
- Troubleshoot challenges and identify solutions.
- Share best practices and lessons learned from districts across the state and country.
- Connect you with peer-to-peer support.

Want to learn more about the work happening across Indiana? Click [here](#) to learn more and get involved.

For more information, contact **Tarah Westercamp, No Kid Hungry Indiana Manager** at [twestercamp@strength.org](mailto:twestercamp@strength.org).