

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM STATE MEAL PATTERN FLEXIBILITY WAIVER REQUEST

1. State agency submitting waiver request and responsible State agency staff contact information:

Alaska Department of Education and Early Development
Child Nutrition Programs
Jo Dawson, Program Manager
PO Box 110500
Juneau, AK 99811-0500
907-465-8708

2. Region: Western Region

3. Eligible service providers participating in waiver and affirmation that they are in good standing:

This waiver is limited to National School Lunch Program/School Breakfast Program sponsors in good standing.

4. Description of the challenge the State agency is seeking to solve, the goal of the waiver to improve services under the Program, and the expected outcomes if the waiver is granted. [Section 12(l)(2)(A)(iii) and 12(l)(2)(A)(iv) of the NSLA]:

Due to nationwide supply chain issues that are expected to continue well into program year 2022-2023, and continued closures due to COVID-19, the state agency would like to seek a Meal Pattern Flexibility waiver for our School Food Authority's (SFAs) to support our SFAs and allow them the flexibility to receive reimbursement for compliant meals that meet the daily meal pattern requirements but might not be able to meet the weekly requirements due to the challenges they face with vendors shortages or canceling food orders, or site closures due to Covid-19 outbreaks. This waiver will allow our SFAs the flexibility to continue feeding the children of Alaska when Covid-19 and supply chain issues make it more challenging.

5. Specific Program requirements to be waived (include statutory and regulatory citations). [Section 12(l)(2)(A)(i) of the NSLA]:

- That menus meet the dietary specification for sodium, at 7 CFR 210.10(b), (c), and (f); and 220.8(b), (c), and (f);
- That 80 percent of all grains offered be whole grain-rich, at 7 CFR 210.10(c); and 220.8(c);
- To offer a variety of vegetables from the vegetable subgroups, at 7 CFR 210.10(c) and 220.8(c);
- To offer a variety (at least two different options) of fluid milk, at 7 CFR 210.10(d)(l)(i) and 220.8(d);
- That low-fat milk must be unflavored, at 7 CFR 210.10(c) and (d)(l)(i), and 220.8(c) and (d); and
- Plan menus and offer food components for specified age/grade groups in the stated combinations, at 7 CFR 210.10(c) and 220.8(c).

6. Detailed description of alternative procedures and anticipated impact on Program operations, including technology, State systems, and monitoring:

Alaska DEED/CNP will provide detailed information and instructions to the NSLP/SBP sponsors on the meal pattern requirements and meal service expectations to ensure students are getting a nutritious meal. The state agency will monitor the SFAs during the Administrative Review to ensure compliance is being met to the best of the SFAs abilities when Covid-19 closures or supply chain issues have impacted the meal service program; including procurement records to reflect efforts to meet meal pattern requirements.

7. Description of any steps the State has taken to address regulatory barriers at the State level.
[Section 12(I)(2)(A)(ii) of the NSLA]:

DEED has provided training and technical assistance to sponsors when supply chain issues and Covid-19 closures have occurred.

8. Anticipated challenges State or eligible service providers may face with the waiver implementation:

None at this time.

9. Description of how the waiver will not increase the overall cost of the Program to the Federal Government. If there are anticipated increases, confirm that the costs will be paid from non-Federal funds. [Section 12(I)(1)(A)(iii) of the NSLA]:

There is no anticipated increase in costs to the federal government.

10. Anticipated waiver implementation date and time period: For the program year of July 1, 2022-May 30, 2023.

11. Proposed monitoring and review procedures: DEED does not plan on conducting any additional monitoring as a result of the waiver, but will require reporting on sites and meals. We may also review documentation from these meal services at a regularly scheduled NSLP Admin. review, such as menus, production records, invoices, vendor orders and email communications.

12. Proposed reporting requirements:

- A summary of the use of the meal pattern flexibilities by the State agency and local program operators, and
- A description of whether and how the meal pattern flexibilities resulted in improved services to program participants.

13. Link to or a copy of the public notice informing the public about the proposed waiver [Section 12(I)(1)(A)(ii) of the NSLA]:

[Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, Child Nutrition Programs \(https://education.alaska.gov/cnp/\)](https://education.alaska.gov/cnp/)

14. Signature and title of requesting official:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JL' followed by a stylized flourish.

Name: [Jo Dawson](#)

Title: Child Nutrition Programs Manager

Alaska Department of Education and Early Development

TO BE COMPLETED BY FNS REGIONAL OFFICE:

FNS Regional Offices are requested to ensure the questions have been adequately addressed by the State agency and formulate an opinion and justification for a response to the waiver request based on their knowledge, experience and work with the State.

Date request was received at Regional Office:

- ☐ **Check this box to confirm that the State agency has provided public notice in accordance with Section 12(l)(1)(A)(ii) of the NSLA**

Regional Office Analysis and Recommendations: