



FY 2027 CACFP STATE WAIVER REQUEST FOR SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS TO CONDUCT OFFSITE MONITORING OF DAY CARE HOMES

Background

Child Nutrition Programs are expected to be administered in accordance with all statutory and regulatory requirements; waivers to the requirements are exceptions. However, Section 12(l) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA), 42 U.S.C. 1760(l), provides USDA authority to waive requirements for State agencies or eligible service providers under certain circumstances.

The longstanding interpretation of the authorizing statutory provisions and regulations in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) require sponsoring organizations to conduct monitoring reviews onsite. Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) understands that the use of offsite monitoring in prior years was effective for many sponsoring organizations of day care homes (DCH). This optional waiver request form was designed to streamline the process for State agencies requesting a waiver for sponsoring organizations to conduct **one** offsite monitoring review of DCHs participating in the CACFP.

State agencies and eligible service providers are encouraged to submit complete waiver requests as soon as possible. Implementation of this waiver will begin on the date of approval through September 30, 2027.

FY 27 CACFP OFFSITE MONITORING OF DCHs WAIVER REQUEST

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

State agency:

Alaska

Date (Click on box to select date):

8/31/26

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 110500, Juneau, AK 99811-0500

Name and Title of person completing this form:

Adrianne Schwartz, Nutrition Programs Manager

Name and Title of person to whom the response should be addressed:

Adrianne Schwartz, Nutrition Programs Manager

2. Region (Click on box to select region):

Western Regional Office (WRO)

3. Affirmation that eligible service providers participating in the waiver are in good standing:

Please check one: Yes ☐ No ☐

If No, please explain:

N/A

- i. How many sponsoring organizations, in good standing, are eligible to apply for this waiver?

1

- ii. How many DCH providers, in good standing, are eligible to receive one offsite monitoring visit?

50

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

☒ Allow sponsoring organizations to conduct one offsite monitoring visit of DCHs participating in the CACFP to reduce administrative burden while ensuring all review elements are met within the timeframes set forth in regulation.

- i. Please select the current challenges and burdens that impact the sponsoring organization's ability to monitor their DCHs onsite.

All of the above

- ii. If citing distance criteria, provide a description of the travel burden such as mile radius, travel time, or multiple modes of transportation required to review the DCH onsite.

Alaska currently has only one at-large sponsor of day care homes that is based in Anchorage. Approximately 50 homes that currently participate in CACFP are either two or more hours from the sponsors' location by road or require travel by a combination of air or sea. About a dozen of the sites are in a location where weather-outs or delays are common.

- iii. Please describe how this waiver will address the challenges and burdens selected above.

This waiver will permit the eligible sponsoring organization to more flexibly schedule travel for reviews when travel conditions are more predictable to prevent inefficient use of administrative time and other cost inefficiencies such as cancellation fees while still ensuring sufficient program integrity through a combination of in-person and virtual monitoring efforts.

- iv. Please describe how the implementation of this waiver will sustain participation in the Program for sponsoring organizations and DCHs.

Reduced administrative costs ensure the sponsoring organization can effectively manage its resources and support more day care homes.

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

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP):

☒ [7 CFR 226.16(d)(4)(iii)]. Frequency and type of required facility reviews.

- Specifically, that all three monitoring reviews must be conducted on-site.

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

DEED will accept electronic waiver requests from sponsoring organizations (SO). The SO's waiver request will include:

- Location(s) where waiver will be implemented
- Identify the specific technology platform(s) to be used for monitoring and how the(se) platforms will:
 - Provide real-time video
 - Capture documentation such as menus, enrollment forms, attendance logs, and meal counts
- Monitoring procedures including:
 - How an unannounced virtual monitoring will be initiated
 - Method for observing meal service
 - Method for reviewing documentation
 - What backup procedures are in place if the monitor cannot reach the provider
 - What procedures are in place if the provider does not respond to monitor's primary or backup communication methods
- Procedures for unexpected loss of internet connection Reporting requirements sufficient for the State Agency to meet its requirements in question #12

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

☒ No regulatory barriers are expected at the State level.

If regulatory barriers are expected at the State level, please list steps taken to address them in the box below:

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

☒ No challenges to the State or eligible providers are anticipated with this waiver implementation.

If the State or eligible service providers anticipate challenges implementing this waiver, please explain in the box below:

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 by non-Federal funds. [Section 12(l)(1)(A)(iii) of the NSLA]:

☒ No anticipated increase in Federal Government costs.

☐ Other, please specify:

10. Anticipated waiver implementation date and time period:

This waiver will be in effect from **Date of Approval** through **September 30, 2027**.

11. Proposed monitoring and review procedures:

State agencies should provide, in detail, a plan for offsite monitoring visits by sponsoring organizations. Please note that in all cases, sponsoring organizations of DCHs must conduct at least one unannounced review on-site annually which includes the observation of meal service.

- i. What oversight measures will the State agency implement to ensure Program integrity?

Alaska DEED met with the sponsoring organization to discuss the monitoring and review procedures of day care homes under the sponsorship for a similar waiver requested in FY2025 and again in FY2026. Alaska DEED will inquire of any updates to these procedures and will provide updated technical assistance as needed by email or meeting, whichever is appropriate. The content of the technical assistance will cover conducting virtual reviews via video conferencing and photographs, and use of electronic monitoring such as use of software with built-in integrity features or other means of providing timestamped documentation. If the sponsor is found to have compliance issues as related to this waiver will work with the Alaska DEED to develop and implement corrective action plan. Documentation of waiver activities will be maintained in the state system.

- ii. Please describe the alternative monitoring plan the sponsoring organization plans to implement.

- A. Please select which technology platform(s) will be used to conduct the offsite monitoring visit.

Other

- If 'Other', please specify:

Sponsor's discretion, approved by DEED

- B. Please describe how sponsoring organizations will address findings during their offsite monitoring visit.

Depending on the nature of the finding, the sponsor may require written, photographic, or videographic evidence of corrective action or initiate serious deficiency procedures.

- C. How will sponsoring organizations address providers that miss their virtual visit?

Depending upon the nature of the issue, the sponsor may reschedule the visit or initiate serious deficiency procedures.

- D. Additional information:

Since there is only one eligible sponsoring organization at the time of this waiver submission, DEED will work closely with the sponsoring organization to ensure that the monitoring plan is sufficient and can work with its partners at the Western Regional Office as needed to ensure the sponsor's plan meets program integrity and accountability expectations while maintaining flexibilities to maximize the availability of CACFP in Alaska

12. Affirmation that the State agency will require eligible sponsoring organizations to submit a monitoring plan prior to the approval of utilizing offsite strategies for one monitoring review.

Please check one: Yes ☒ No ☐

If No, please explain:

13. Proposed reporting requirements (include type of data and due date(s) to FNA):

Upon approval, the State agency must report the following on their annual waiver report:

- 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.

Public Notice

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

<https://education.alaska.gov/cnp>

State agency Signature

Signature and title of requesting official:

 9/2/2026

Title: Alaska Child Nutrition Programs Manager

Requesting officials email address for transmission of response:

TO BE COMPLETED BY FNA REGIONAL OFFICE:

FNA 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(I)(1)(A)(ii) of the NSLA.

Regional Office Analysis and Recommendations: