pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MEMO

TO: Sponsors of the Seamless Summer Option and Summer Food Service Program

FROM: Vonda Ramp, M.S., R.D.
State Director, Child Nutrition Programs

DATE: March 27, 2026

RE: Public Notice: Summer Meal Waivers

MESSAGE:

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), Bureau of Food and Nutrition (BFN), has requested waivers from the following regulations for summer 2026.

Waivers related to excessive heat:

The waivers in this section apply to Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) sponsors, in good standing, to operate approved outdoor meal sites without temperature-controlled alternative sites as non-congregate sites on days when the area is experiencing excessive heat for the period of May 1, 2026, through September 30, 2026.

- Non-Congregate Meal Service [42U.S.C. 753(b)(1)(A), 42U.S.C.1761(a)(1)(D), and 7 CFR 225.6(i)(15)]
- Parent/Guardian Meal Pickup 42 U.S.C.1761(f)(3), 7 CFR 225.2 (Meals), and 7 CFR 225.9(d)(7)]
- Meal Service Times [7 CFR 225.16(c)(1), (2), and (3)]

Waivers related to air quality advisories:

The waivers in this section apply to SFSP and SSO sponsors, in good standing, to operate approved outdoor meal sites without alternative indoor sites as non-congregate sites on days when the area is experiencing certain air quality advisories for the period of May 1, 2026, through September 30, 2026.

- Non-Congregate Meal Service [42U.S.C. 1753(b)(1)(A), 42U.S.C. 1761(a)(1)(D), and 7 CFR 225.6(i)(15)]
- Parent/Guardian Meal Pickup [42 U.S.C. 1761(f)(3), 7 CFR 225.2 (Meals), and 7 CFR 225.9(d)(7)]

- Meal Service Times [7 CFR 225.16(c)(1), (2), and (3)]

Offer Versus Serve:

The waiver in this section applies to SFSP sponsors, in good standing, to use SFSP offer versus serve meal service parameters by non-school food authority (SFA) sponsors on a case-by-case basis for the period of May 1, 2026, through September 30, 2026.

- Offer Versus Serve [42U.S.C. 1761(f)(7) and 7 CFR 225.16(f)(1)(ii)]

This is a required public notice that PDE, BFN submitted a request to USDA for a waiver to the aforementioned regulations and does not imply the waiver has been approved at this time. Detailed guidance and instructions will be provided to Program Sponsors if USDA approval is granted.

Questions may be directed to Vonda Ramp at vramp@pa.gov.