

## Administrative Memo

**Date:** March 16, 2020  
**To:** School Administrators and Finance Administrators  
**From:** Roger Dorson, deputy commissioner, Financial and Administrative Services  
**Subject:** FAS-20-001 – COVID-19 School Closure USDA Waivers

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) office recently applied for two waivers from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) FNS. The waivers aim to support schools and communities in providing meals to children in areas experiencing school closures in response to COVID-19. Those waivers were approved Sunday, March 15.

Unanticipated school closure typically requires that meals served during this time period cannot be served at a school site. The **Meal Service During Unanticipated School Closures Waiver** allows a school site to serve meals during the closure through a summer feeding program structure.

Seamless Summer Option (SSO) and Summer Feeding Service Program (SFSP) require meals be served in a congregate (group) feeding setting. The **Waiver to Allow Seamless Summer Option (SSO) Meals in a Non-Congregate Setting** lifts that requirement, allowing non-congregate feeding. This means grab-and-go or meal delivery options would be available to schools.

Due to DESE FNS proactively applying for and receiving these USDA waivers, there are no forms participating schools need to submit. Schools planning to serve meals during a closure should complete our online form here: <https://modese.wufoo.com/forms/fns-meals-service-seamless-summer-option-ss/>, which asks each LEA to provide the following information:

- County/district code and LEA name
- Name and contact information for person administering meal service
- Site/location of meal service
- Summary of meal service procedures during the closure, including times meals will be served and how many meals will be served at those times (i.e. if you choose to distribute breakfast and lunch at the same time)

LEAs should record the total number of meals served for meal reimbursement and claims.

DESE FNS urges LEAs to clearly communicate meal service procedures and instructions to families through any and all available communication platforms.

We have created a [Frequently Asked Questions document](#) with more information about the waivers. Please contact DESE FNS team members with questions at office at 573-751-3526 or [foodandnutritionservices@dese.mo.gov](mailto:foodandnutritionservices@dese.mo.gov).