

EMERGENCY MEAL SERVICE TOOLKIT

for

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

COVID-19



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Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019
(COVID-19) Emergency Meal Service Toolkit
USDA Child Nutrition Programs

LunchAssist Toolkit

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Dedicated to:

All of the child nutrition professionals who are working on the front lines of the COVID-19.

Disclaimer:

This resource was developed by school nutrition professionals based in the State of California. While much of the information will be relevant across the United States, regulations do vary state to state. Always refer to guidance from your State Agency.

Due to the nature of the COVID-19 outbreak, we cannot guarantee the accuracy of all information contained within this document. Please refer to the appropriate government agency for the most accurate and up to date information. If you are having a medical emergency, please dial 911.

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Gather Information

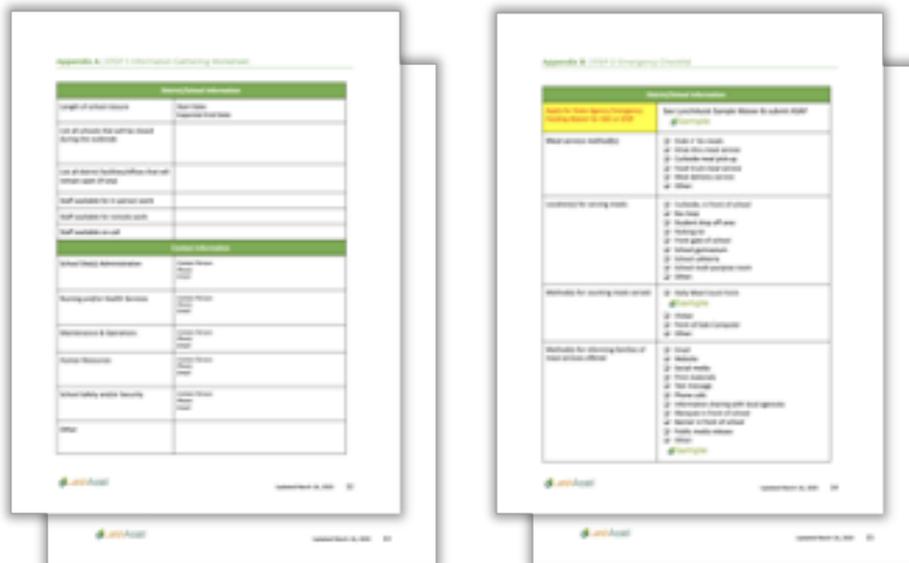
Consult with your District/School Administration to determine the course of action for feeding during the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 COVID-19 outbreak. Outline clear expectations for the Nutrition Services Department by confirming the specific district, school and meal service information.

- ❑ Complete [Information Gathering](#) worksheet.

Complete Emergency Checklist

- ❑ Complete [Emergency Checklist](#) worksheet.
- Apply for the State Agency Emergency Feeding Waiver for SSO or SFSP
- Plan meal service method of feeding during the emergency period
- Plan location for offering meals
- Plan a method for counting meals served
- Plan method for informing families of meal services offered
- Plan Menu and Menu Production Records
- Post 5-Day Emergency Menu to district website (optional)
- Plan for food safety

[FREE Resources for Child Nutrition Directors](#)



Protect Your Team and Others

Provide information for staff regarding food safety, how to protect themselves and others from the spread of COVID-19, and regulations surrounding privacy in employee's health information. Also be aware of ways to protect the financial stability of the child nutrition department.

Information below is based on current CDC guidance. Check the [CDC website](#) for the latest information.



Protect your Team and Others from COVID-19

- Clean hands often by washing hands with soap and water for at least **20 seconds**.
- Providing hand sanitizer when hand washing is not possible.
- Clean and sanitize high touch-point surfaces regularly, including meal distribution areas.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, throw the tissue in the trash and then wash your hands.
- When a tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Practice social distancing by avoiding mass gatherings and maintaining distance of approximately 6 feet from others when possible.
- Support staff by listening to concerns, answering questions, and being an modeling good behavior
- Print, share and post helpful reminders such as, “[9 Tips to Keep Kids Germ-free at School](#)”

HIPAA & Privacy Protection

Employers need to take steps to keep employees' health information confidential at all times. Managers do not need to know an employees' specific diagnosis. Instead, the manager only needs to know that the employee will be on leave and unable to work.

School Nutrition Directors may consider creating department or District policies addressing what employees should do when they're showing symptoms of COVID-19, such as a cough and fever. At certain times it may be advisable to dismiss staff from work. Please check with your human resources department and your local health department for specific guidance and regulations.

OSHA Safety Requirements

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires employers to take reasonable precautions to ensure employee safety and prohibits employers from placing their employees in situations likely to cause serious physical harm or death.

With regard to COVID-19, employers may consider taking the following precautions:

- Allow high-risk individuals to preemptively begin working from home.



COMING SOON: E-learning for child nutrition professionals will be available on the LunchAssist website. [SUBSCRIBE TO THE LUNCHASSIST LISTSERV](#) for Child Nutrition News & Resources.

Visit the LunchAssist Website: www.lunchassist.org/covid-19.html

- Provide hand sanitizer and encourage employees to wash and sanitize their hands and common workplace surfaces frequently.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects. These surfaces may include doorknobs, keyboards, phones and light switches.
- If someone at the worksite reports becoming ill, disinfecting the work area and requiring those who work closely with the ill worker to stay home for 14 days.

“Reasonable precautions” are subject to change depending on the circumstances. Employers are advised to follow [CDC guidelines](#), now being updated daily, and to share this information with employees as appropriate. Please also consult with your human resources department and other relevant regulatory bodies.

Food Safety

In order to reduce the risk of foodborne illness, practice food safety guidelines according to your existing Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) food safety plans. Print a copy to have on hand at each feeding location.

Review the following food safety topics with your team, and update procedures as needed:

- Hand hygiene
- Cleaning and sanitizing
- Transporting meals
- Cold holding foods
- Hot holding foods
- Time and temperature control for high risk foods
- Employees excluded from food service duties

CLEANING

Sanitizing consists of treating a cleaned surface with an antimicrobial product in order to reduce or eliminate microorganisms.

VS.

You cannot sanitize a dirty surface. Cleaning should always come first.

SANITIZING

CFR 112.123
 "You must inspect, maintain, and clean, and, when necessary and appropriate, sanitize all food contact surfaces of equipment and tools used in covered activities as frequently as reasonably necessary to protect against contamination of covered produce."

MSU is an affirmative action, equal-opportunity employer. Funding for this infographic was made possible in part by the Food and Drug Administration through grant PAAR-16-157. The views expressed in the written materials do not necessarily reflect the social policies of the Department of Health and Human Services, nor does any mention of trade names, commercial practices or organization imply endorsement by the United States Government.
 Source: Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training Module 6 - Icons made by Freepik from www.flaticon.com are licensed under CC BY 3.0

Consider providing additional information regarding food safety for families to receive as they take meals off-site, such as these [Food Safety Cards](#).

Accommodating Children with Special Dietary Needs

Meals served during the COVID-19 outbreak must still comply with relevant civil rights requirements, including documented requests to accommodate children with special dietary needs.

This presents unique challenges as it may be quite difficult to anticipate which children will show up for meal service, how often they will visit the site, and, if you are serving from multiple locations, where they will go for meals.

If possible, communicate with families in need of special dietary accommodations to make a plan for when and where they will pick up special meals. In addition, consider keeping a supply of items in stock at each feeding location. An extra supply of these items may be useful for accommodating students that have a documented special dietary need and unexpectedly arrive for meal service.

Special Diet Supplies:

Dietary Need	Lactose Intolerance	Gluten Intolerance	Dairy Allergy	Nut Allergy	Fructose Malabsorption
Recommended Supplies	Lactose-free milk	Rice Chex Cheerios Corn Tortillas	Soy Milk Hummus	Sunbutter Sunflower seeds	Cheerios Unflavored milk Oranges

Financial Relief After a Disaster

Schools or school districts that are closed due to a state or federally declared disaster may apply for reimbursement to offset fixed expenses, such as salaries that continue to accrue during temporary closure. Applications for reimbursement should be submitted immediately after the disaster. Payment is contingent upon available funding. We anticipate a special plan will need to be made to support the financial well being of schools following the COVID-19 outbreak.

In California, reimbursement for prior disasters has been equal to the average daily participation (the number of meals typically served) multiplied by the average combined state and federal reimbursement rate received by the school or district in the month prior to the closure, multiplied by the number of days the school or district is closed. The California Application for Meal Reimbursement During Disaster can be downloaded from the California Department of Education (CDE) website (also linked below).

- Download [CDE Application for Meal Reimbursement During Disaster](#)
- Submit application as soon as the disaster is over
- Stay tuned for special COVID-19 Disaster Meal Reimbursement guidance and relief; [SUBSCRIBE TO THE LUNCHASSIST LISTSERV](#) for up-to-date COVID-19 Child Nutrition news & resources.

Meal Service Operations

Serving Meals

In California, all children under 18 years are eligible to receive a meal. Children must be present to receive meals. Program operators may serve meals to any child under 18 years of age, even if they do not attend the school where meals are being served.

Meals served during the COVID-19 outbreak must be unitized. Meal service must support the ability for children to take meals with them to consume off-site.

Schools may offer meals in a variety of unique and innovative ways. In California, many schools are offering a “Grab n’ Go,” “Drive-thru,” or “Curbside” meal service. Unitized meals are prepared in advance. Children take meals with them to consume off-site.

Hot, cold and/or shelf stable items may be offered. Schools may choose to offer primarily shelf-stable or cold items in order to support good food safety practices, mitigate waste and minimize staffing needs during a disaster. Individually wrapped (IW), pre-packaged items may further prevent the spread of germs, or reduce the risk of foodborne illness when meals are taken to be consumed off-site.

When serving hot meals during the COVID-19 outbreak, ensure adequate precautions are taken to prevent the risk of foodborne illness. Staff must be trained to follow all applicable hot-holding, meal transport, and time and temperature control procedures. Consider providing additional information regarding food safety to families as they take meals off-site, such as these [Food Safety Cards](#).

Social Distancing

Child nutrition program meal service during the COVID-19 outbreak has been specifically approved to promote social distancing. Practice social distancing by maintaining approximately 6 feet from others when possible. Design meal service and distribution methods to support social distancing. Consider the following:

- Rather than handing out meals, place meals on a table and allow families to grab and go.
- Take meal counts from a distance.
- Set up several tables or points of service to avoid crowding around meal pick up locations.
- Consider offering a longer window of time for meal pick up to stagger the amount of people arriving at one time.

Meal Counting

Separate meal counts and records must be maintained for meals served under a COVID-19 waiver. For schools in California, free meals are available to all children under 18. Meal counts must be recorded at the time of service. Individual students' information (names, pin numbers, etc.) does not need to be recorded. A bulk count can be taken utilizing one of the following methods.

- [LunchAssist Daily Meal Count Form for COVID-19](#)
- CDE Daily Meal Count Form SNP25a (downloadable from CNIPS)
- Clicker Meal Counts recorded on a [Clicker Meal Count Form](#)

Menu Planning Options

The maximum number of meals that may be reimbursed during the Coronavirus Outbreak Meal Service remains the same as during SFSP or SSO:

- Up to two meals, or one meal and one snack, per child, per day
- Any combination may be made *except* for lunch and supper

Seamless Summer Option

Emergency menus under the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) may follow a weekly menu that is planned according to the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program HHFKA meal patterns. The menu may be planned to follow the meal pattern requirements for a single age/grade group. This flexibility increases the ability to feed participants of all ages more easily while still meeting the meal pattern requirements. We are recommending that all schools serving under the SSO plan menus according to the K-5 age/grade groups for breakfast and lunch.

Offer versus Serve is *not* allowed during the COVID-19 outbreak. All meals must be unitized. Unitized meals must include all required components in the minimum required amounts.

The Seamless Summer Option follows the same meal pattern as NSLP and SBP.

Daily Breakfast Meal Pattern

- Fruit or Vegetable: 1 cup
- Grains: 1 oz eq
- Milk: 1 cup

Daily Lunch Meal Pattern:

- Fruit: ½ cup
- Vegetable: ¾ cup
- Grains: 1 oz eq
- Meat/Meat Alternates: 1 oz eq
- Milk: 1 cup 1 oz eq grain

At this time, vegetable subgroups **are** required in the Lunch Meal Pattern under SSO. Over the course of the week, dark green, beans and peas, red/orange, starchy, and other vegetables must be offered in the minimum required amounts.

Minimum amounts of meats and grains also still need to be met. The amounts vary depending on the length of your menu planning week, usually between 3 and 5 days.

In California there is no requirement for SFAs to monitor compliance with the calories, saturated fat or sodium requirements.

Summer Food Service Option

If an SFA has participated in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) at any time during the current year, or in either of the two prior calendar years, then the state agency may approve their waiver request to operate meal services during the COVID-19 outbreak under the SFSP.

The SFSP allows for higher reimbursement and a more simplified menu planning option. However, the California Department of Education is required to monitor SFSP operators that serve meals, even during the COVID-19 outbreak. These visits may be conducted at the discretion of the CDE. Please contact the state agency to determine if and when you will receive a visit from Field Services during the COVID-19.

Offer versus Serve is not permitted in the SFSP. All meals must be unitized. Unitized meals must include all required components in the minimum required amounts.

The SFSP has a unique meal pattern. There are no weekly requirements, subgroups, or whole grain requirements.

Daily Breakfast Meal Pattern

- Fruit: ½ cup
- Grains: 1 oz eq
- Milk: 1 cup

Daily Lunch Meal Pattern:

- Fruit or Vegetable: ¾ cup
- Grains: 1 oz eq
- Meat/Meat Alternates: 1 oz eq
- Milk: 1 cup 1 oz eq grain

Meal Pattern Flexibilities

During a declared state of emergency, California schools may offer just one type of milk, or serve meals without milk if needed.

In California, Education Code (EC) Section 49505 exempts school districts and county offices of education from serving all required meal components of a reimbursable meal during a state or federally declared disaster.

Additional flexibility has been requested by various state agencies. Congress passed legislation allowing USDA to permit additional flexibilities during the COVID-19 outbreak. At the time of writing, California Department of Education has not clarified guidance on this topic beyond the items listed above.

Sample 5-Day Emergency Breakfast Menu

K-5 Breakfast	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Fruits: 5 (1)	(½) Apple slices (½) Orange juice	(½) Applesauce (½) Raisins	(½) Banana (½) Apple juice	(½) Orange (½) Applesauce	(½) Grapes (½) Orange juice
Grains: 7 (1)	(2) Cereal & Grahams	(2) Yogurt & Granola	(2) Cereal & Grahams	(2) Yogurt & Granola	(2) Cereal & Grahams
Milk: 5 (1)	(1) 1% White (1) NF White	(1) 1% White (1) NF White	(1) 1% White (1) NF White	(1) 1% White (1) NF White	(1) 1% White (1) NF White

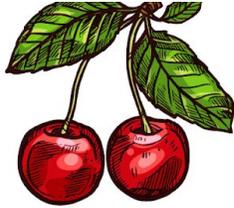
Sample 5-Day Emergency Lunch Menu

K-5 Lunch	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Fruits: 2.5 (½)	(½) Frozen Berries	(½) Peaches	(½) Apples	(½) Kiwi	(½) Oranges
Veggies: 3.75 (¾)					
DGV: ½ cup		(½) Broccoli			
ROV: ¾ cup	(½) Fruitables Plus, Gold Rush		(½) Fruitables Plus, Gold Rush		(½) Fruitables Plus, Gold Rush
BPV: ½ cup				(½) Hummus	
SV: ½ cup					(½) Jicama sticks
OV: ½ cup		(¾) Fruitables Plus, Power Punch			
Additional: 1	(½) Baby carrots		(½) Cucumbers	(¾) Fruitables Plus, Tropical Twist	
Grains: 8 (1)	(2) Large Granola 2 oz eq	(1) Whole Grain Crackers	(2) Whole Wheat Turkey Sandwich Bread	(1) Whole Wheat Mini Pretzels	(2) Sunbutter & Jelly Sandwich Bread
M/MA: 8 (1)	(2) 8 oz Yogurt	(1) Cheese Cubes	(2) Whole Wheat Turkey Sandwich, 2 oz eq Turkey	(1) String Cheese	(2) Sunbutter & Jelly Sandwich, 4 Tbsp Sunbutter
Milk: 5 (1)	(1) 1% White (1) NF Milk	(1) 1% White (1) NF Milk	(1) 1% White (1) NF Milk	(1) 1% White (1) NF Milk	(1) 1% White (1) NF Milk

[Click HERE to Download Blank 5-Day Emergency Menu Templates](#)

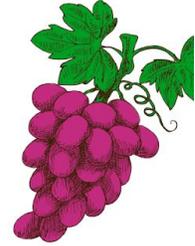
Sample Lunch Menu

The menu below is a 5-day sample lunch menu that complies with the Seamless Summer Option K-5 meal pattern for use during the Coronavirus Outbreak Meal Service.



LUNCH MENU

GRAB N' GO MEAL SERVICES



SAMPLE MENU: SSO K5 MEAL PATTERN

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Yogurt & Granola Baby Carrots Frozen Berries 100% Veggie Juice Milk	Cheese Cubes Whole Grain Crackers Broccoli Peaches 100% Veggie Juice Milk	Turkey Sandwich on Whole Grain Cucumbers Sliced Apples 100% Veggie Juice Milk	Mini Pretzels String Cheese Hummus Cup Kiwi 100% Veggie Juice Milk	Sunbutter & Jelly Sandwich Jicama Sticks Oranges 100% Veggie Juice Milk

IMMUNE-BOOSTING TIPS

- Get 7-9 hours of sleep
- Drink at least 8 cups of water per day
- Eat a mostly plant-based diet
- Fill 1/2 your plate with colorful vegetables
- Eat healthy fats (fatty fish, nuts, olives)
- Move your body (stretch, dance, walk)
- Eat probiotic-rich foods (yogurt, miso, curtido)
- Eat prebiotic-rich foods (vegetables, beans)
- Cook with garlic
- Minimize desserts and added sugar



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.
Menu is subject to change.



Food Production

Generate production records for your staff to use during the closure, to match your Emergency 5-Day Menu.

- Print [Blank Emergency Menu MPR](#) to fill out by hand, if necessary.
- Distribute Emergency Menu using online and printed media.

Evaluate your district's production kitchens, storage areas, and serving sites to determine which kitchen(s) to designate as central kitchens during the emergency. If the central kitchen is not in operation as a result of the closures, production should be moved to individual schools. Food Service staff can be relocated per estimated meals at each serving site.

If storage space is limited, the delivery schedule may need to be changed to accommodate more frequent, smaller deliveries. Some districts may find it helpful to work with frozen food distributors to borrow a refrigerated truck and/or work with Facilities to rent a mobile freezer container for food storage, if needed.

Meals may be served anywhere on campus, including front parking lots, bus loops, cafeterias and multi-purpose rooms.

Need Ideas for Remote Work?



COMING SOON. Please check the LunchAssist website for free online training modules, launching soon! [SUBSCRIBE TO THE LUNCHASSIST LISTSERV](#) to receive notifications when remote training modules are available.

After the Disaster (Return-to-Work)

Schools that are closed due to a state or federally declared disaster may apply for reimbursement to offset fixed expenses, such as salaries. Applications should be submitted immediately after the disaster. Payment is contingent upon available funding. *MB CNP-02--2015*

State disaster reimbursement is equal to the average daily participation multiplied by the average combined state and federal reimbursement rate, multiplied by the number of days the school or district is closed. Complete your state's [Application for Meal Reimbursement During Disaster](#) (CA application linked).

5-Day SSO Emergency Breakfast Menu

K-5 Breakfast	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Fruits: 5 (1)					
Grains: 7 (1)					
Milk: 5 (1)					

5-Day SSO Emergency Lunch Menu

K-5 Lunch	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Fruits: 2.5 (½)					
Veggies: 3.75 (¾)					
DGV: ½ cup					
ROV: ¾ cup					
BPV: ½ cup					
SV: ½ cup					
OV: ½ cup					
Additional: 1					
Grains: 8 (1)					
M/MA: 8 (1)					
Milk: 5 (1)					

5-Day SFSP Emergency Breakfast Menu

Breakfast	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Fruit/Veg: ½ cup					
Grains: 1 oz eq					
Milk: 1 cup					

5-Day SFSP Emergency Lunch Menu

Lunch	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 Different Fruit/Veg: ¾ cup total					
Grains: 1 oz eq					
M/MA: 2 oz eq					
Milk: 1 cup					

References and More Resources

Please visit the LunchAssist website for a list of policy references and memos, which are being updated regularly during this time. New resources are being added daily.

<http://www.lunchassist.org/covid-19.html>