

**Child Nutrition Program
Tennessee Department of Education Waiver Request
For School Meal Programs SY 22-23**

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

Tennessee Department of Education
Child Nutrition Program
Andrew Johnson Tower,
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243
(939)203-0208

Sandy Dawes, State Director of School Nutrition
Sandy.Dawes@tn.gov

2. Region:

Southeast

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

The Tennessee School Nutrition Program is in good standing with the regional and national office.

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(I)(2)(A)(iii) and 12(I)(2)(A)(iv) of the NSLA]:

Tennessee Department of Education seeks to support streamlined access to nutritious NSLP, SBP meals in the wake of COVID-19. As sponsors transition from Pandemic operations to normal program operations, it is important that they still have opportunities for flexibility with program operations and reduced administrative burden. The goal of the waiver is to provide necessary program flexibilities to sponsors who provide meal service despite high rates of COVID-19 in the area as well as reduce the administrative burden on sponsors who continue to feel the impact from the Pandemic in areas such as staffing shortages. The Tennessee Department of Education is mindful that although rates of COVID-19 are declining, COVID-19 is still present in Tennessee and local program operators may need to revert to Pandemic operations quickly for reduced periods of time. School Food Authorities may need the ability to make program changes quickly to continue to provide school meals to students. Waiver requests will be reviewed individually and will be approved only on a case-by-case basis in areas experiencing high incidence rates of COVID-19. The expected outcome if this waiver is granted is that local program operators will have the ability to create plans for meal service operations in multiple scenarios in advance so that they can act quickly when necessary. The State Agency will have

the ability to provide various program flexibilities to local program operators who need to shift program services due to rising rates of infection.

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

See checklist.

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

If the waiver request is approved, there will be no significant impact to technology, state systems or monitoring.

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]:

There are no regulatory barriers at the State level.

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

There are no anticipated challenges to service providers with implementation of the waiver. The state does expect to see continued improved services for SFAs.

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]:

The waiver will not result in increased program costs.

10. Anticipated waiver implementation date and time period:

See attached checklist for implementation date and time periods.

11. Proposed monitoring and review procedures:

See checklist, Monitoring SNP programs under requested waivers will follow review regulations for each program. This practice will be consistent with 7 CFR 210, 220, and 225 review requirements

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

All FNS required reports will be submitted in a timely manner according to USDA requirements.

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]: <https://www.tn.gov/education/snp-resources/snp-forms.html>

Signature and title of requesting official:



Title: Tennessee Department of Education State Director of School Nutrition Programs

Requesting official's email address for transmission of response:

Sandy.Dawes@tn.gov

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

Regional Office Analysis and Recommendations

