



CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM STATE WAIVER REQUEST TEMPLATE

Child Nutrition Programs are expected to be administered according to all statutory and regulatory requirements; waivers to the requirements are exceptions. However, Section 12(l) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. 1760(l), provides authority for USDA to waive requirements for State agencies or eligible service providers under certain circumstances. When requesting the waiver of statutory or regulatory requirements for the Child Nutrition Programs (CNP), including the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), the Special Milk Program (SMP), and the School Breakfast Program (SBP), State agencies and eligible service providers should use this template. State agencies and eligible service providers should consult with their FNS Regional Offices when developing waiver requests to ensure a well-reasoned, thorough request is submitted. State agencies and eligible service providers are encouraged to submit complete waiver requests at least 60 calendar days prior to the anticipated implementation date. Requests submitted less than 60 calendar days prior to the anticipated implementation should be accompanied by an explanation of extenuating circumstances.

For more information on requests for waiving Program requirements, refer to SP 15-2018, CACFP 12-2018, SFSP 05-2018, *Child Nutrition Program Waiver Request Guidance and Protocol- Revised*, May 24, 2018.

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

Rachel Findley, Senior Director, Office of School Nutrition & Auxiliary Services
rachel.findley@dpi.nc.gov
984-236-2901

2. Region:

Southeast

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

Craven County Schools is in good standing with NCDPI. There are no outstanding corrective actions.

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

When school is out of session, particularly during extended breaks, many children experience learning loss and a related decline in academic skills and knowledge. This issue is often exacerbated by inadequate nutrition, which disproportionately affects low-income students. In rural communities, such as Craven County, serving nutritious food to children through pickup or home-delivered meals when school is out of session is an excellent way to ensure North Carolina's most vulnerable students have the nutrition they need to retain what they have learned and prepare them physically for the work ahead when they return to their studies.

Craven County Schools current free and reduced percentage is 56%. Additionally, more than 50% of these schools are in rural areas where access to food is minimal. Craven County Schools would like to serve students meals under SSO during a long school break which will allow students to continue to have access to nutritious meals and eliminate food insecurity among our most vulnerable population within the community. This holiday break begins on Monday, December 22, 2025, and extends to Thursday, January 8, 2026. Craven County Schools would like to serve non-congregate meals under SSO on all days of this extended holiday break, excluding December 25, 2025, and January 1, 2026.

During the summer of 2025, Craven County Schools opened several new summer meal sites to provide non-congregate meals to several of the rural locations in the county. The approval of those additional sites allowed Craven County Schools to offer 17,000 thousand more meals to their students living in rural areas during the summer months, highlighting the need in this community to provide access to meals when school is not in session.

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

To continue to meet the nutritional needs for Craven County's most vulnerable students during long breaks, we are requesting waivers of the following regulations:

Congregate Meal Service: 42 U.S.C. 1753(b)(1)(A), 42 U.S.C. 1761(a)(1)(D), 7 CFR 225.6(i)(15)

Meal Service Times 7 CFR 210.10(l), 7 CFR 220.8(l), 7 CFR 225.16(c)(1), (2)

Parent and Guardian Meal Pickup: 42 U.S.C. 1761(f)(3), and Program regulations at 7 CFR 210.10(a), 7 CFR 220.2 (Breakfast), 7 CFR 220.8(a), 7 CFR 225.2 (Meals), and 7 CFR 225.9(d)(7).

Meal Service at School Sites: 42 U.S.C. 1761(c)(1) & 7 CFR 225.6(h)(1)(iv)

OVS: 42 U.S.C. 1758(a)(3), and Program regulations at 7 CFR 210.10(e)

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

There are no alternative procedures that can be used to allow for this waiver. Programmatic impacts could be NCDPI staff time to review and approve the application and complete appropriate monitoring activities.

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]:

The state agency is unable to address the regulatory barrier since this waiver is requesting to waive statutory requirements to operate non-congregate SSO sites during a long school break.

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

NCDPI does not anticipate any challenges related to the implementation of this waiver. Certain service providers may need to order more food and supply items to allow for this waiver to be implemented.

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(l)(1)(A)(iii) of the NSLA]:

Providing meals to students during the long-extended holiday break will not increase the overall cost of the program to the federal government. Craven County Schools decreased instructional days from 176 days to 154 days for SY 2025-2026. If Craven County Schools did not decrease the number of instructional days, the SBP and NSLP would still operate for the 22 additional instructional days that were excluded from the SY 2025-2026 school year compared to the SY 2024-2025 school year.

10. Anticipated waiver implementation date and time period:

The waivers will be used during the long-extended holiday break from December 22nd through January 8th, with the exceptions of government holidays, which include December 25th and January 1st.

11. Proposed monitoring and review procedures:

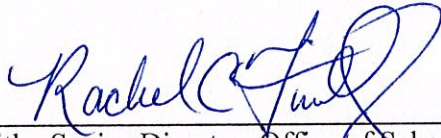
All required monitoring through SSO would be completed as well as all NCM monitoring. NCDPI will monitor these NCM sites during their operation per NCDPI administrative review procedures.

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

Reporting for SSO and non-congregate meals will be provided via the timeline outlined by USDA.

13. 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]:

14. Signature and title of requesting official :



Title: Senior Director, Office of School Nutrition & Auxiliary Services
Requesting official's email address for transmission of response:
rachel.findley@dpi.nc.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(l)(1)(A)(ii) of the NSLA

• Regional Office Analysis and Recommendations: