



Food and
Nutrition
Service

DATE: March 15, 2021

Braddock
Metro Center

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1320
Braddock
Place
Alexandria,
VA 22314

SUBJECT: Child Nutrition Emergency Operational Costs Reimbursement
Programs: State Agency Implementation Plan Template and Q&A
Guidance

TO: Regional Directors
Special Nutrition Programs
All Regions

State Directors	State Directors
Child Nutrition Programs	Food Distribution Programs
All States	All States

Issuing Agency/Office:	FNS/Child Nutrition Programs
Title of Document:	Child Nutrition Emergency Operational Costs Reimbursement Programs: State Agency Implementation Plan Template and Q&A Guidance
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Date of Issuance:	March 15, 2021
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Summary:	(1) This memorandum provides further implementation guidance for the Child Nutrition Emergency Operational Costs Reimbursement Programs established in Sec. 722 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (the Act). (2) This memorandum applies to State agencies administering the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and Child and Adult Care Food Program. (3) This memorandum details further instructions and administrative procedures for participation in the reimbursement program established in Sec. 722 of the Act, which makes funding available via State agencies to program operators for the purposes of covering emergency operating costs incurred during the public health emergency.
Disclaimer:	The contents of this guidance document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

This memorandum announces the release of the State agency supplemental Implementation Plan Templates for use in the Child Nutrition Emergency Operational Costs Reimbursement Programs. These documents will be used by State agencies to guide the development and structuring of the implementation plan(s), as provided for in the State applications, and must be submitted to the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) as a condition of receiving funding under these reimbursement programs. The due date for these implementation plans is **May 10, 2021**.

Separate implementation plan templates are provided for the School Programs Emergency Operational Costs Reimbursement Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program Emergency Operational Costs Reimbursement Program (Attachments B and C). An implementation plan must be completed for each reimbursement program in which the State agency has elected to participate.

As a reminder, State implementation plans should be submitted directly to **SM.CNOperationalCosts@usda.gov** with a CC to the appropriate FNS Regional Office, and include the following elements:

- 1) An estimate of the number of program operators eligible for payments, organized by recipient type (i.e., SFAs, CACFP institutions, day care homes, etc.);
- 2) An estimate of total funding amount needed by the State agency in order to effect such payments, organized by reimbursement month;
- 3) Any substantive updates to the process by which payments are calculated and disbursed to program operators, if applicable;
- 4) A projected timeline for disbursement of payments to program operators;
- 5) A narrative description of how the State agency will accomplish the following:
 - Ensure the accuracy of payment calculations;
 - Notify program operators of payments and complete related solicitations and outreach; and
 - Collect and document summary information on the use of these funds by the State and each program operator.

In addition, the implementation plan templates include an assurance statement covering the applicability of standard Child Nutrition monitoring and recordkeeping requirements as they relate to the issuance/usage of funds made available under these reimbursement programs.

State agencies may commence work on their supplemental implementation plan(s) if they have already submitted their application for the Child Nutrition Emergency Operational Costs Reimbursement Programs to FNS. However, they are advised not to submit their supplemental implementation plan prior to receiving a formal application acceptance

letter from FNS, which will be provided in PDF format via email attachment. FNS is currently working expeditiously to process application materials submitted by State agencies to date.

Lastly, a new set of Q&As is included with this guidance release (Attachment A), addressing questions regarding the implementation plan template, the payment calculation formula, and other topics. Further Q&A guidance addressing additional topics should be expected in the future.

The table on the following page highlights some key dates and deadlines as they relate to implementation of and participation in the reimbursement programs:

Key Dates and Deadlines	
February 25, 2021	Application due to FNS including participation status and narrative disbursement plan
May 10, 2021	Supplemental implementation plan due to FNS
June 30, 2021	States should begin disbursing funds to program operators
July 31, 2021*	States should request additional funds from FNS, as appropriate
September 30, 2021	Funds availability (obligation) deadline
January 31, 2022	Funds distributed to program operators (liquidation) deadline; recovery process begins
March 31, 2022	All unliquidated funds returned to FNS; implementation report due

*This date has been changed from August 31, 2021, as referenced in previous FNS guidance published on January 26, 2021, to better ensure that State agencies have sufficient time to obligate funds following award.

State agencies with questions should contact the appropriate FNS Regional office.



Jessica Saracino
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Attachments:

- A. Emergency Operating Costs QA #2
- B. School Meals State Implementation Plan Template
- C. CACFP State Implementation Plan Template