# SNP Memo #2020-2021-35


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: December 14, 2020

TO: Directors, Supervisors, and Contact Persons Addressed

FROM: Sandra C. Curwood, PhD, RDN, ***Sandy***

## SUBJECT: RCCI Program Transition to SFSP/SSO

The purpose of this memo is to provide public and private residential child care institutions (RCCIs) with additional information from the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Services (USDA-FNS) related to operation of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO), and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) during school year (SY) 2020-2021.

### Providing Meals under the SFSP or SSO

The *Nationwide Waiver to Allow SFSP and SSO Operations through SY 2020-2021* allows states to grant approval for school food authorities (SFAs) and non-school sponsoring organizations to operate the SFSP until June 30, 2021. This waiver will allow sponsors to provide meals to children and teens in the community free of charge. The same flexibilities that were offered this summer have been extended through June 2021. Extension of these waivers will allow for easier access to meals. Meals can be served in non-congregate settings, are available to children and teens in areas below 50 percent free and reduced-price eligibility, may be picked up by parents or guardians, and served without time restrictions.

SFAs operating as RCCIs are permitted to operate the SFSP/SSO under the *Nationwide Waiver to Allow SFSP and SSO Operations through SY 2020-2021* in order to safely serve nutritious meals during COVID-19. Similarly, RCCIs may benefit from the additional flexibilities provided by the SFSP/SSO during COVID-19.

RCCIs that meet the definition of a school (7 CFR 210.2 (Schools)) and public or nonprofit private SFAs are eligible to sponsor the SFSP/SSP (7 CFR 225.14(b)(1)). Additionally, the *Nationwide Waiver to Allow SFSP and SSO Operations through SY 2020-2021* states that SFAs may choose to serve meals through the SFSP or SSO, or may opt to participate under the school meal programs. Therefore, this waiver may apply to SFAs responsible for meal service at an RCCI.

SFAs providing meal service at RCCIs were not explicitly authorized to operate the SFSP/SSO under the flexibilities offered during SY 2019-2020, because, due to their residential nature, RCCIs were able to continue to serve children onsite. The flexibility was offered to traditional schools due to disruptions in onsite instruction. During SY 2019-2020, SFAs were able to participate in the SFSP/SSO because the school closures were considered unanticipated school closures. Because RCCIs were not closed, but continued to provide meals to children housed onsite, they were not considered operating under an unanticipated school closure. However, for SY 2020-2021, USDA-FNS is extending the summer programs due to COVID-19; this allows all SFAs, including RCCIs, to consider operating the SFSP or SSO.

### Implementing the SFSP or SSO

RCCIs can elect to start the SFSP or SSO and claim meals starting on January 1, 2021. The [2020-2021 SFSP/SSO Waiver Survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/sfsp-sso-waivers) must be completed in order to operate the SFSP or SSO from January to June 30, 2021. In addition, an approved SFSP or SSO fiscal year (FY) 2020-2021 SNPWeb application must be on file to claim January meals.

For ease of transitioning programs, the Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Nutrition Programs (VDOE-SNP) encourages RCCIs to switch to the SSO program. Switching over from the NSLP and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) to the SSO would require submitting SSO site applications within the school nutrition programs SNPWeb application packet and would not change the overall operations of the programs.

RCCIs choosing to transition to the SFSP are required to submit a SY 2020-2021, SFSP application packet in SNPWeb and participate in mandatory SFSP training hosted by the VDOE-SNP. More information will be provided in a separate communication to RCCI sponsors choosing the SFSP.

### Important Note for SFAs Operating the SFSP

The Code of Virginia, 8VAC20-580-20, requires all SFAs with 25 percent or more free or reduced-price meal eligible students to serve breakfast throughout the school year. This regulation applies to any meal program implemented during the academic school year, including the SBP, SSO, and SFSP.

The VDOE-SNP will provide sponsors additional information as it becomes available. Please contact your assigned regional specialist if you have any questions, or Andrea Nannery, VDOE-SNP Coordinator, by email at andrea.nannery@doe.virginia.gov.

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