

Meal Counting Flexibility

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MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

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VISION

To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens

MISSION

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community

Why are we doing this?

- Opportunity for you to simplify meal counting procedures in CERTAIN circumstances
- Quicker, more efficient process
- Reduce administrative burden

Does this Apply to You?

ONLY applicable for the following

- CEP Schools
- Special Provision schools that serve Lunch **and** Breakfast – NOT in a base year

Regulatory Authority - 7 CFR 210.7(c)(2)

(ii) In addition, on a case-by-case basis, State agencies may authorize school food authorities to use other alternatives to the point of service lunch count; provided that such alternatives result in an accurate and reliable lunch count system. Any request to use an alternative lunch counting method which has not been previously authorized under paragraph (2)(i) is to be submitted in writing to the State agency for approval. Such request shall provide detail sufficient for the State agency to assess whether the proposed alternative would provide an accurate and reliable count of the number of lunches, by type, served each day to eligible children. The details of each approved alternative shall be maintained on file at the State agency for review by FNS.

Allowable Scenarios

The SA **MAY** allow simplified meal counting procedures,

IF the school is CEP or Special Provision (Lunch & Breakfast, non-base year),

AND it implements one of the following possible scenarios (see next slide)

Possible Scenarios

1. Parent Pick Up
2. Door-to-Door Bus Delivery
3. Meals in the Classroom

**ALTERNATE COUNTING SYSTEMS
REQUIRE PRE-APPROVAL**

Scenario 1: Parent Pick Up

- Follow existing Parent pick-up waiver requirements
- Students within a family/household must be verified
- Must have a master list of each household and the students within each household
- Must have a system to positively identify the family/household when they come through the line

Scenario 1: Parent Pick Up, Example

- The district assigns a unique number to each household
- District provides each household a dashboard sign with unique family ID and number of **students**
- Sign may not be easily copied, such as including a logo, is on school colored paper, etc.
- Family number and the number of meals provided are recorded at pick up (these records **must** be retained)

Scenario 1: Parent Pick Up, continued

- Daily sheets and the master list must be retained
- No need to enter each student's number into the POS
- District must have a check system to ensure the same family number is not used more than once each day and/or at multiple schools on a single day
- A percentage of sheets and numbers should be verified regularly

Scenario 2: Door-to-Door Delivery on Buses

- Similar to parent pick-up, but meals are delivered rather than picked up
- The district assigns a unique number to each household/home
- District maintains a master list of each household and the students within each household

Scenario 2: Deliveries, Example

- Each bus has a route list that contains the address and family/bus route number for each home on the route
- Route list includes the number of **students** in each home
- As meals are delivered, the home number and total number of meals delivered are recorded
- Ex: If delivering 2 days worth of lunches and breakfasts at one time, record 2 breakfast meals and 2 lunch meals for each student in the home

Scenario 2: Deliveries Example, continued

- Someone trained in meal counting **MUST** be present on the bus to take the counts every day.
- It is **NOT** allowable to count the number of meals sent out on the bus.
- It is allowable to leave meals on doorsteps
- Parents must **OPT IN** to bus delivery. It would be possible for them to specify delivery to an alternate address as long as it is within the district / route

Scenario 2: Door Delivery, continued

- Daily route/count sheets and the master list must be retained
- No need to enter each student's number into the POS
- District must have a check system to ensure the same house number is not used more than once each day
- A percentage of sheets and numbers should be verified regularly

Scenario 3: Meals to the Classroom

- For meals delivered to the classroom, it may be possible to develop a counting system that does not require entering each student into the POS
- The district/SFA must be able to prove that meal counting will be accurate and no duplicate meals are served to students

Scenario 3: Meals to the Classroom

- The district/SFA must ensure that **students cannot change classrooms within the meal service time**
- Someone trained in meal counting **MUST** take the classroom counts every day
- The entire meal must be served to a student for it to be counted as a reimbursable meal

Scenario 3: Meals to the Classroom

- Meal Count sheet must record the classroom name or number
- Must take a visual head count of meals served (not ordered)
- Simple, tick or tally mark sheet would be sufficient
- No need to enter each student's number into the POS

Scenario 3: Meals to the Classroom

- Some students may bring a meal from home or simply do not wish to receive the school meal
- Do NOT count students who do not ask for a meal
- Meal counts may not be based on attendance or meals ordered
- All daily count sheets must be retained

If allowing any combination of meal pick-up, bus delivery, and students on-site, the district MUST develop a system to prevent duplicate meals or the waiver cannot be approved

Questions



Non- Discrimination Statement

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Full Statement

<http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/docs/child-nutrition/usda-nondiscrimination-statement-2016.pdf?sfvrsn=2>



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