

Seamless Summer Option (SSO) Information for the 2021-2022 School Year

Unlike the previous school year waivers, the new set of waivers for SY 2021-2022 did not extend the option for school food authorities (SFAs) or non-school sponsors to operate the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) in SY 2021-2022. Schools will instead choose to operate the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Seamless Summer Option (SSO) or the regular NSLP and School Breakfast Program (SBP).

This means that schools will **return to the school meal pattern**, which emphasizes healthy eating with a focus on fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and sensible calorie levels. However, FNS has issued a **targeted meal pattern waiver** to give schools the flexibility they need to provide a safe meal service in SY 2021-2022. In recognition of the additional costs of serving safe meals during the COVID-19 pandemic, FNS is also allowing **schools operating SSO to receive the higher SFSP reimbursement rate** in SY 2021-2022.

Note: The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is not an option for the academic 2021-2022 SY

Topic	Seamless Summer Option (SSO)	National School Lunch Program (NSLP)/School Breakfast Program (SBP)
Eligible Sponsors	SFAs with an approved NSLP School Nutrition Contract for the 2021-2022 SY.	SFAs with an approved NSLP School Nutrition Contract for the 2021-2022 SY
Eligible Participants	Students enrolled in a school of high school grade and under determined by the State Agency; including persons enrolled in a school program for the mentally or physically disabled; and persons under 21 enrolled in an RCCI.	Students enrolled in a school of high school grade and under determined by the State Agency; including persons enrolled in a school program for the mentally or physically disabled; and persons under 21 enrolled in an RCCI.
Meal Service Locations	Schools, RCCIs, non-school sites (as needed)	Schools, RCCIs
Meal Cost for Children	Meals are free for all children	Meal cost and reimbursement is based on student's free, reduced-price, and paid eligibility
Types of Meals	Two Meals (no snack except if participating in CACFP afterschool snack or supper) Breakfast Lunch	Breakfast Lunch Afterschool Snack
Maximum Number of Meals	Maximum two meals per day. Breakfast Lunch FNS encourages schools to consider participating in CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals.	There is no maximum; all meal programs may be served
Meal Pattern	Must meet NSLP and SBP meal pattern standards. Meal patterns and OVS flexibilities may be granted in specific circumstances	Must meet NSLP and SBP meal pattern standards. Meal patterns and OVS flexibilities may be granted in specific circumstances
Meal Time Service Requirements	Meal Service Times Waiver No Meal Service Time Requirements	Meal Service Times Waiver No Meal Service Time Requirements
Times of Operation	When school is in session as established by the school district, including summer school.	When school is in session as established by the school district, including summer school.
USDA Foods	37 cents per meal	37 cents per meal.

Topic	SSO		NSLP
Reimbursement Rates	Type of Meal		School Year 2021-22 Reimbursement Rates 2020-2021 (mt.gov) Updated in July 2021 for SY 2021-2022
	Breakfast	\$2.4625	
	Lunch or Supper	\$4.3175	
	Snack	\$1.0200	
	Through December 31, 2021. Rates will change based on the Consumer Price Index January 1, 2022. SFSP rates only allowed in SSO for SY 2021-2022 .		
Monitoring Required of SFA/Sponsors	Onsite Monitoring Requirements Waiver To ensure continued program integrity, SFAs are encouraged to complete a desk audit of counting, claiming, and meal pattern compliance for each site.		Onsite Monitoring Requirements Waiver
State Agency Monitoring	Limited Administrative Review for SFAs due for an NSLP Review Onsite Monitoring Requirements Waiver		Administrative Reviews Onsite Monitoring Requirements Waiver
Public Notification	For SY 2021-2022, schools participating in SSO should provide the public release that all meals will be offered free through SSO. OPI will provide a template for schools to use to meet this requirement.		SFAs must provide the public release to media and other organizations to inform the public of participation in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs. OPI will provide a template for schools to use to meet this requirement.