



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Sponsors of the National School Lunch Program

FROM: Shannon K. Yearwood, Bureau Chief *Shannon K. Yearwood*
Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs

DATE: February 24, 2025

SUBJECT: Operational Memorandum No. 03-25
Requirements for Submitting the Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement
for School Year 2025-26

The Healthy Food Certification (HFC) statute ([C.G.S. Section 10-215f](#)) requires that every year, local boards of education or governing authorities (BOE) for public schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) must determine and certify whether all food items sold to students separately from reimbursable meals will or will not meet the [Connecticut Nutrition Standards](#) (CNS). These standards also apply to all foods offered in reimbursable snacks for the Afterschool Snack Program (ASP).

“Public schools” include all public schools, regional educational service centers, the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS), charter schools, interdistrict magnet schools, and endowed academies.

This memo provides the required BOE motion language and step-by-step instructions for submitting the HFC application for school year (SY) 2025-26. Please review this Operational Memorandum carefully to ensure accurate and timely submission of the HFC Statement.

HFC Eligibility Requirements for BOEs opting to implement HFC

To be eligible for HFC during SY 2025-26 (July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026), the BOE must conduct the HFC votes by **July 1, 2025**. All votes must use the **exact motion language** provided in attachment 1.

All BOEs **must** vote on whether to participate in the healthy food option of HFC.

- If the BOE votes “yes” to the healthy food option, a vote on whether to allow food exemptions is **required**. The BOE may choose to vote on whether to allow beverage exemptions.
- If the BOE votes “no” to the healthy food option, a vote on whether to allow food exemptions is **not** required. The BOE may choose to vote on whether to allow beverage exemptions.

Beverage exemptions are defined by a separate statute (C.G.S. Section 10-221q) and are not part of the annual HFC Statement. If the BOE does not vote to allow beverage exemptions, only [allowable beverages](#) can be sold to students on school premises at all times.

Refer to attachment 1 for the required motion language and a summary chart of the required votes.

HFC Application Process for SY 2025-26

All public school sponsors of the NSLP must complete the steps below to meet the HFC application deadline of **July 1, 2025**, for school year 2025-26.

1. Schedule the required HFC votes at a BOE meeting **well before** July 1, 2025, to allow sufficient time for the BOE to approve the **draft** minutes before they are submitted to the CSDE. The HFC Statement must include the **final** BOE-approved minutes. If the district chooses to allow beverage exemptions, the CSDE recommends that the BOE conducts the vote on beverage exemptions at the same time as the HFC votes.
2. Conduct the BOE votes and prepare the BOE minutes. The final BOE-approved minutes must: 1) include the required language in attachment 1; and 2) indicate the results of each vote. Do not submit the final BOE-approved minutes until requested by the CSDE (refer to step 3).
3. **May 2025:** Complete the online HFC application module in the CSDE's Connecticut Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System). Upload the final BOE-approved minutes indicating the results of the HFC votes. The CSDE will notify sponsors when the HFC application module and instructions are available.

For more information, visit the "[Annual HFC Application](#)" section of the CSDE's HFC webpage. Training on the HFC application process is available in the CSDE's video, [Completing the Application Process for Healthy Food Certification](#).

For HFC compliance resources, visit the "[Guidance and Resources](#)" section of the CSDE's HFC webpage. Training on the HFC requirements is available in the CSDE's training program, [Complying with Healthy Food Certification](#).

For questions or additional information, please contact Susan Fiore at 860-807-2075 or susan.fiore@ct.gov or Teri Dandeneau at 860-807-2079 or teri.dandeneau@ct.gov.

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Attachments: (1)

Important: This is a numbered Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) operational memorandum that contains important program information. Please read carefully and retain for future reference. All CSDE operational memoranda are posted on the CSDE's [Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.