
Issue Date: June 6, 2024

2024-2025 School Nutrition Program Application Packet Overview

Instructions

School Nutrition Program (SNP) operators that wish to participate in the programs in School Year 2024-2025 (SY 24-25) must have an approved 2024-2025 SNP Application Packet on file. The application must be completed in the [Harvest Child Nutrition System](#).

Application Packets **must be approved by the State agency prior to the beginning of Program operation.**

Application Packet Submission Dates

- July operators need to have their packets submitted by **Friday, June 21, 2024**, in order to be approved by July 1, 2024.
- August operators need to have their packets submitted by **Friday, July 12, 2024**, in order to be approved prior to August operation.
- September operators need to have their packets submitted by **Friday, July 26, 2024**, in order to be approved prior to September operation.

Outlined on the following pages are important reminders to School Food Authorities (SFAs) completing the School Nutrition Program Application Packet. Reference this document throughout the Application Packet process.

The system has a “Messages” tab that will display errors and show if any tabs were unvisited.

To get started, log in to the Harvest system and select “Applications” in the upper left corner. Be sure to select program year 2024-2025.

Contact Information

If you have questions about completing your application, please contact Denise Blankenship (denise.blankenship@vermont.gov, 802-828-2089) or Amanda Vassallo (amanda.vassallo@vermont.gov or 802-828-7300).



Organization Profile

Organizations applying to participate in the School Nutrition Programs must have a complete Organization Profile in the Harvest Child Nutrition System. The Organization Profile must be completed and submitted before the SNP Application can be created. To access the Organization profile, select “Applications” and under Organization Profile select “Create Application for 2024-2025”. If the SFA operated the program last year, a message will pop up asking, “Would you like to preload the application with last year’s data, if it exists? Copying data from the prior year may take a while if you have a lot of sites.” Please be sure to update any necessary information, including current dates and contact information.

In Organization Profile Page 1, the organization must indicate the county they are located in and the SAM UEI. This number, formerly known as the DUNS number, transitioned to the SAM UEI and is registered in SAM.gov, the federal database that indicates entities have not been suspended and disbarred from receiving federal funds. Please see the [SAM UEI Transition Presentation](#) for more information. If you are a returning SFA, you should already have a registered DUNS number in SAM.gov. and an automatically assigned SAM UEI from the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA). For information on how to register for a SAM UEI, please refer to [Get Started with Registration and the Unique Entity ID](#) on SAM.gov. The organization must also indicate their highest level of contact in Organization Profile Page 1. For public school SFAs this should be the superintendent.

In Organization Profile Page 2, the SFA must indicate whether they have a Vended Meals Agreement where they purchase meals, or a contract with a Food Service Management Company (FSMC). Organizations contracting with a FSMC must fill out the information related to their contract, including the primary contact, and beginning and end dates of the contract, and contract year. SFAs with a new FSMC should upload their contract into Page 2 of the Organization Profile. FSMCs renewing an existing contract should upload their [contract renewal](#) along with the additional documents listed in the renewal.

In Organization Profile Page 3, the SFA must select the Program(s) they will be participating in, School Nutrition Program (SNP), whether they operate Special Milk Program (SMP) only, their School Food Authority (SFA) type, and whether they receive USDA Foods. Once the information has been entered into each page of the Organization Profile, navigate to the Submit tab. Check the box “I attest that all information here is correct and complete.”, and click “Accept & Submit”. If you have a Food Service Management Company contract, as indicated in Organization Profile Page 2, it will also state, “Submission of this Organization Profile will be automatically accepted without AOE review. However, this does not constitute approval of the FSMC agreement. The FSMC review must be completed and approved by AOE prior to any claims processing for the school year that matches the year of this Organization Profile.”

The Organization Profile will be automatically accepted by the system.

School Nutrition Program Organization Application Packet

To access the School Nutrition Program Application Packet, select “Applications”, and under School Nutrition Program select “Create Application for 2024-2025”. If the SFA operated the program last year, a message will pop up asking, “Would you like to preload the application with last year’s data, if it exists? Copying data from the prior year may take a while if you have a lot of sites.” Please be sure to update any necessary information, including current dates and contact information, and pay particular attention to any new questions added to the application packet for SY 2024-2025.

SNP Contact Info

Please check this information carefully to ensure names, email addresses, phone numbers, and extensions (if applicable) are up to date and spelled correctly.

New this school year, in the Physical Address and Mailing Address sections, the system will require you to perform a “Validate Address” check.

SNP Agency Info

This section asks for the SFA to enter the regular School Year dates of Operation and questions regarding Local Wellness Policy, Meal Charge Policy, meal counting and claiming procedures, indirect costs and annual Civil Rights training. If “Yes” is answered for the Local Wellness Policy and Meal Charge Policy questions, you will be required to upload a copy.

For those operating Universal Meals, we recommend including the following statement in the Meal Charge Policy, “Our SFA will be offering meals at no charge to all students using the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) or Provision 2. The State of Vermont will provide a Universal Meals Supplement to cover the cost of any “paid” student meals. This meal charge policy will remain in effect for a la carte items, second meals, and adult meals.”

SAM UEI and USDA Foods information is automatically generated in this section from the Organization Profile.

Determining and Hearing Official

Report the names and titles of the Determining Official, Verifying Official, and the Hearing Official. The Determining Official and the Verifying Official can be the same person. The Determining Official and the Confirming Official cannot be the same person. The Confirming Official and the Verifying Official can be the same person. Typically, the Hearing Official is the Superintendent or Head of Schools for Independent Schools.

Eligibility

This section asks how the SFA determines Free and Reduced-Price meal eligibility. If the SFA does not utilize State agency templates for the Free and Reduced-Price application, Notice to Households or Notification of Eligibility, the SFA will be required to upload the document(s) used for this process. If “Yes” is answered for the Policy Statement question, the SFA will be required to upload a copy of the updated document.

Severe need Lunch reimbursement rate determination is displayed in this section.

Ethnicity and Race Data

Using the [“click here and search for your county”](#) link provided in the instructions, the organization must search for the county in which the SFA’s central office is located to obtain ethnicity and race data of the population in that geographical area. This information must be entered for both Ethnicity and Race. Ethnicity and race are separate categories. For the White field use “White alone, percent”.

FSMC and Vended Meals

If the SFA indicated they contract with a Food Service Management Company (FSMC) in Organization Profile Page 2, the information will re-display in this tab.

Site Applications

Complete a Site Application for each of the sites where meals are served. Each SFA will display their list of Sites. In order to submit an SNP application, at least one Site must be completed and certified. Subsequent sites can be completed and certified under Revisions to the SNP.

Please note that for sites that have their information carried over from the previous year, the status of the site will show as “In Progress”.

To delete Site Applications for sites that are not operating in the current year, click the respective “Delete” link in the Action column in the Site Applications tab. If you select “Delete”, a warning message will appear that asks, “Are you sure want to delete the site application?” If you select “No”, the system will continue to display the screen with the list of Site Applications. If you select “Yes” to delete the site, the site’s status will change from “In Progress” to “Deleted” and the Action column will display “Start”. Clicking “Start” will open a brand-new application for that site.

If you would like to add new sites, please email the name of the new site to a member of the AOE Child Nutrition Programs team to have the site added by the system vendor. Please note that it usually takes a day or two for the vendor to add new sites.

Site Information

Be sure to include the correct site county in the Physical Address.

New this school year, in the Physical Address and Mailing Address sections, the system will require you to perform a “Validate Address” check.

Program Participation

Select all Programs the site will be operating.

For the meal service times, please correctly indicate whether the Start Time(s) and End Time(s) are in the AM or PM. Indicate the number of meal periods for each Program and the Start Time and End Time for each meal period.

If you plan to provide meals at no cost to all students in School Year 24-25, select CEP or Provision 2 in response to the question “Are you participating in any of the following provisions?” **If the SFA is not currently certain which provision you will be operating at this site, you may update this section and resubmit the application later.**

Ethnicity and Race Data

Enter the ethnicity and race data information for the site. This must include the actual number of students/children. The system will calculate and display the applicable percentages. The numbers entered should not add up to 100, unless there are 100 students/children at the organization. Current USDA Guidance does not allow the reporting of additional categories, such as “Two or More Races.” If there are race categories not on this list, do not report them. This may mean that your totals reported do not add up to 100%. That is not a problem. We have urged USDA to update this guidance in the future to accept additional categories. You will be asked to “Identify the source of the ethnicity and race data for the site.” This information likely comes from your registrar and student information system. The source should not be “census”.

Meal Charges

If the site is operating Provision 2 or CEP, please indicate non-pricing for Breakfast and Lunch.

We will not have targeted adult meal prices until USDA releases the School Year 2024-2025 reimbursement rates as adult meal prices are based on the applicable reimbursement rate plus the USDA Foods effective rate. Please enter an amount at least as high as the adult meal prices in School Year 2023-2024. In School Year 2023-2024, the minimum adult lunch price was \$4.70 and the minimum adult breakfast price was \$2.28.

If the site does not charge for adult meals, please indicate if adults are charged on an a la carte basis. If adults are not charged on an a la carte basis, please indicate

what source of non-federal funds are used to pay for adult meals in the text box provided.

School Breakfast Program

This section asks about the School Breakfast Program (SBP) meal service methods and Offer Versus Serve implementation.

If the site has Pre-K students that are “non-co-mingled”, meaning these students are not in the same service area at the same time as other age/grade groups (i.e. meals are served in the classroom), then the Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP) meal pattern must be followed for Pre-K students, and the attestation box must be checked.

In the “Kitchen Type” question, if meals are prepared by a Food Service Management Company (FSMC) at that site, select “Vended”. If they are prepared by a FSMC at another kitchen, select “Vended Satellite” and indicate the name of the Production Kitchen. If there is no contract for meals and they are prepared at that site, select “Self-Prep”. If there is no contract for meals and they are prepared at another kitchen, select “Self-Prep Satellite”.

National School Lunch Program

This section asks about the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) meal service methods and Offer Versus Serve implementation.

If the site has Pre-K students that are “non-co-mingled”, meaning these students are not in the same service area at the same time as other age/grade groups (i.e. meals are served in the classroom), then the Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP) meal pattern must be followed for Pre-K students, and the attestation box must be checked.

High schools (schools with grades 9, 10, 11, or 12) are required to operate the Offer versus Serve (OVS) provision at lunch or request an exception from the State agency. If you answer “No” to the question “Will Offer vs. Serve be implemented for Lunch?”, a text box will appear with the prompt, “If no, please explain”.

In the “Kitchen Type” question, if meals are prepared by a Food Service Management Company (FSMC) at that site, select “Vended”. If they are prepared by a FSMC at another kitchen, select “Vended Satellite” and indicate the name of the Production Kitchen. If there is no contract for meals and they are prepared at that site, select “Self-Prep”. If there is no contract for meals and they are prepared at another kitchen, select “Self-Prep Satellite”.

After School Snack Program

In school year 2024-2025, if the site had 50% or more Free and Reduced eligibility (F&R) in December 2023, this percentage will display, and the site will be eligible to

serve and claim all snacks as free. If the site was not 50% or higher in December 2023, there is the option to establish area eligibility based on another school in the attendance area. For example, if the site is a high school, and an elementary school in the attendance area is at least 50% F&R, the elementary school's site eligibility information can be used to serve and claim all snacks as free at the high school.

In the "Kitchen Type" question, if meals are prepared by a Food Service Management Company (FSMC) at that site, select "Vended". If they are prepared by a FSMC at another kitchen, select "Vended Satellite" and indicate the name of the Production Kitchen. If there is no contract for meals and they are prepared at that site, select "Self-Prep". If there is no contract for meals and they are prepared at another kitchen, select "Self-Prep Satellite".

Special Milk Program (SMP)

If this program is not checked off in the Program Participation tab, a message on this tab will display "This program was not selected in the Program Participation tab, therefore this tab does not need to be completed."

SSO Site Info and SSO Meals

If this program is not checked off in the Program Participation tab, a message on this tab will display "This program was not selected in the Program Participation tab, therefore this tab does not need to be completed." However, these tabs must still be visited in order to submit the site application.

Certification

Once the information entered is accurate and complete, navigate to the "Certification" tab. Click the box to certify that the information is true and correct and then click "Save & Submit". Once the Site Application is submitted you may then click "Return to Main Application" to navigate back to the main Site Applications tab, with the summary page of all sites.

Submission and State Agency Review

Each tab must be visited, and each Site Application *and* the School Nutrition Program Application packet must be certified and submitted. Once the Site Application(s) and the School Nutrition Program Application packet have been certified and submitted, the State agency reviewers will assess the packet. If there are changes that need to be made, the reviewers will return the packet and include comments and questions in the "Review" tab on the right-hand side of the packet screen. Once the necessary changes have been made, re-submit the entire SNP Packet for approval.

Common Application Packet Errors

- In the Ethnicity and Race Data tab of the Site Application, the participant numbers entered add up to 100. They should not add up to 100 unless there are 100 children at the site.
- In the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program tabs of the Site Application, in the types of meal service models section, if there is non-co-mingled Pre-K breakfast, be sure to select Breakfast in the Classroom. If there is non-co-mingled lunch, be sure to select “Other” and indicate meals are served in the classroom. If there are non-co-mingled Pre-K meals, the number provided for the number of points where meal counts are taken must be greater than 1.

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