

FAQ on State and District Response to COVID-19 Outbreak

How are districts providing meals for students who typically qualify for Free and Reduced Lunches (FRL)?

Regional Educational
Laboratory
Northeast & Islands

From the National Center for Education Evaluation at IES

How are districts providing meals for students who typically qualify for Free and Reduced Lunches (FRL)?

1. [Many districts are adopting the Summer Food Service Program \(SFSP\) model](#) used over the summer break by distributing bag lunches from designated school locations.
2. States are requesting and [receiving waivers on some USDA regulations](#), such as:
 - Lunches must be offered group setting.
 - Students must eat in school setting.
 - Meal offerings must include fresh fruit (vs. packaged applesauce, for instance).
 - Each student can pick up only one meal.
3. Whenever possible, schools are maintaining regular kitchen staff to continue food prep in [school kitchens](#).
4. Districts like [Salt Lake City](#) are designating grab-and-go centers (such as parks or school and church parking lots) where people come to pick up bag lunches. Arrangements can be made for individuals/single families to pick up several lunches for additional distribution.
5. Schools and districts like [those in Oregon](#) are also working with local organizations (such as foodbanks, YMCA, Boys & Girls Club) to distribute food to children and families.
6. [Two bills are pending in Congress](#)—COVID 19 Child Nutrition Response Act and the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.
 - The [COVID-19 Child Nutrition Response Act](#) allows school officials more flexibility to assemble and deliver food.
 - The [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) provides supports to public health workers and their families.
7. Stay up-to-date with rapidly changing [information](#) and [policies](#) in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

Related links

- <https://www.kwtx.com/content/news/School-districts-offering-meals-despite-closures-due-to-COVID-19-concerns-568800841.html>
- <https://www.fns.usda.gov/disaster/pandemic/covid-19>
- <https://www.recorder.com/A1-School-meals-during-COVID-19-33372321>
- <https://www.abc4.com/news/health/coronavirus/how-school-districts-plan-to-feed-students-if-covid-19-outbreak-occurs/>
- <https://oregonhunger.org/covid-19>
- <https://civileats.com/2020/03/12/congress-races-to-address-food-insecurity-in-its-legislative-response-to-covid-19/>

- <https://edlabor.house.gov/imo/media/doc/Child%20Nutrition%20Waiver%20Authority%20for%20COVID-19%20Act%20Bill%20Text.pdf>
- <https://appropriations.house.gov/sites/democrats.appropriations.house.gov/files/Families%20First%20summary.pdf>
- <https://www.edweek.org/ew/collections/coronavirus-and-schools/index.html>
- <https://ccsso.org/coronavirus>

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