

This information is to keep you informed of any changes in policies and procedures and of new communication originating from the State Office this month.

February 1, 2019 CE Edition

No attachments with this issue

Registration Still Open!

2019 SFSP Conference

(Now known as the Community Nutrition Conference)

February 11-13, 2019
Georgetown, Texas

Check out the agenda [HERE!](#)

This year we are combining the SFSP conference and the CACFP conference to give you more bang for your travel buck. We're featuring new sessions in this year's agenda.

Register for the conference by **February 6th** [HERE!](#)

Registration is at no charge to you. *All new sponsors must take mandatory training at their local ESC or online at Squaremeals.org. Conference attendance will not count toward mandatory training.*



TX-UNPS Updates



Program Year 2019 Applications - Due Dates

Applications opened on January 15, 2019. It is in your best interest to submit the SFSP application packet as early as possible to allow for any needed corrections prior to, or by, the due date. Application packets **MUST BE** complete by the designated due date to be eligible for approval.

March 15, 2019 is the last day to submit a complete SFSP application packet to TDA if applicant is requesting advance payments. Application packets submitted after this date will not be eligible to receive advance payments for Summer 2019.

April 15, 2019 is the last day to submit a complete SFSP application packet to TDA for all new SFSP applicants, and all renewing SFSP CEs that are Not in Good Standing (including CEs with a temporary deferred Serious Deficiency (SD) for SFSP 2018, CACFP 2018 and/or CACFP 2019).

Policy News

Procurement



Written Procurement Procedures

CEs must develop and use their own documented procurement procedures which reflect all applicable federal, state and local laws. Written procurement procedures must include the position(s) which are responsible for carrying out each step, as well as the timing the actions will take place. The procedures must provide that proposed procurement actions will be reviewed by the CE's officials to avoid the purchase of unnecessary or duplicative items, and where appropriate an analysis shall be made of lease versus purchase alternatives, and any other appropriate analysis to determine which approach would be the most economical. The level of detail of the CE's procedures should be reflective of the CE's operations.

Detailed guidance on written procurement procedures may be found in Chapter 6 – *Procurement and Bid Procedures*, of the [TDA SFSP Supplemental Handbook](#).

Conflicts of Interest: Less-than-Arms Length Transactions

CEs participating in the SFSP are required to disclose and identify any conflicts of interest and potential conflicts of interest including less-than-arms-length transactions that inhibit TDA from making an informed assessment of whether a particular cost is allowable. A less-than-arms-length transaction is one under which one party to the transaction is able to control or substantially influence the actions of the other(s). Such transactions include, but are not limited to, those between divisions of an organization; organizations under common control through common officers, directors or members; and an organization and a director, trustee, officer, key employee of the organization or immediate family, either directly or through corporations, trusts or similar arrangements in which a controlling interest is held. All related-party transactions are less-than-arms-length transactions.

CEs must disclose annually any conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest including related party transactions, less-than-arms-length transactions, and any ownership interest in equipment, supplies, vehicles and facilities when it submits its budget to TDA as part of its application packet for participation in the SFSP.

Detailed guidance on conflicts of interest may be found in Chapter 6 – *Procurement and Bid Procedures*, of the [TDA SFSP Supplemental Handbook](#).

Procurement Ethics

CE must write a code of standards of conduct that govern the performance of its officers, employees, or agents who engage in procurement. The written code will prohibit conflicts of interest and potential conflicts of interest. This written code must prohibit the solicitation of gifts, travel packages, or anything of monetary value from prospective contractors and must also provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations of the standards.

Detailed guidance on procurement ethics and the requirement for a written code of conduct may be found in Chapter 6 – *Procurement and Bid Procedures*, of the [TDA SFSP Supplemental Handbook](#).

Micro-Purchase Threshold Increase on January 1, 2019

Effective January 1, 2019, the micro-purchase threshold is increased from \$3,500 to \$10,000. Therefore, for procurements of supplies or services equal to or less than \$10,000, CEs may follow the micro-purchase procurement method, unless the CE has a more restrictive micro-purchase policy in place. The increased micro-purchase threshold is only applicable to those procurements conducted on or after January 1, 2019. CEs must continue to follow the existing small purchase threshold (\$50,000) as described in Chapter 6 – *Procurement and Bid Procedures*, of the [TDA SFSP Supplemental Handbook](#).

Texas Farm Fresh Initiative



Eat Local. Teach Local. Be Social.

TDA is bringing the 2nd annual Summer Farm Fresh Challenge to participants of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) statewide! The challenge will occur June 10-21, 2019. Pledge your participation in the Summer Farm Fresh Challenge by May 24th to receive supportive materials such as buttons and stickers. The Summer Farm Fresh Challenge encourages summer meal programs to serve more local foods, teach children about the importance of Texas agriculture, and share this message with families and community members. SFSP and SSO contracting entities (CEs) interested in participating in this exciting challenge can register at Squaremeals.org/FarmFreshChallengeSFSP.

Stay Connected — Subscribe to TDA's Farm Fresh E-Harvest Newsletter

The E-Harvest Newsletter provides a monthly update on farm fresh activities and includes resources such as funding opportunities, a schedule of upcoming trainings and webinars, and more. [Subscribe today!](#)

Resources

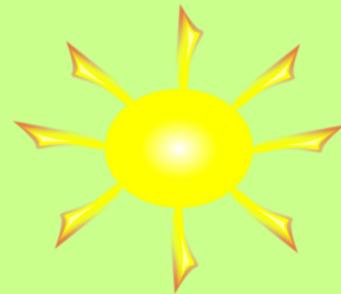
Helpful Resources for Summer Feeding Programs

USDA provides several [SFSP Handbooks](#) on its website including the Administrative Guidance for Sponsors (AGS).

TDA provides additional guidance that clarifies and/or supplements policy provided by USDA in the AGS and USDA policy memos in the [TDA SFSP Supplemental Handbook](#).

Information on the Seamless Summer Option may be found in Section 12 of the [NSLP Handbook: Administrator's Reference Manual \(ARM\)](#).

Be sure to visit [SquareMeals](#) during the application process and throughout operation of the SFSP for the latest updates and information.



Advance Payments

Advance payments are financial assistance made available to a CE for the operation and administration of the SFSP prior to the month in which such costs are incurred. These advances must be requested by the CE and are based on information provided by the CE in its SFSP application. TDA will deduct the amount of the advance payment from future payments to the CE. The CE, along with its responsible principals, must pay back TDA for any advances that are not offset by SFSP reimbursements.

For CEs that plan to request an advance payment, an application to participate in the SFSP must be submitted no later than March 15, 2019. A CE must be in good standing and must have successfully operated the SFSP and any other CNP it operates. For example, CEs in serious deficiency may not be eligible for advances or may only be eligible for a reduced advance payment. TDA makes its determination based on the particular circumstances of the CE. Except for school food authorities, CEs must conduct training sessions covering SFSP duties and responsibilities for the CE's staff and for site personnel before receiving a second advance.

Detailed guidance on advance payments may be found in Chapter 9 – *Program Costs and Reimbursements*, of the [TDA SFSP Supplemental Handbook](#).

Required SFSP Training

Please be aware that the web-based SFSP training is available [here](#), but has NOT been updated with the information on the USDA rescinded waivers. If a CE wants to take that class for the mandatory training requirement before the updates are incorporated, they will get credit, but will still be responsible for the information regarding the rescinded waivers. The course will be updated soon.

If you prefer to receive your training in person, each Education Service Center will present a six hour class. All new sponsoring organizations are required to receive this training in order for the organization to be eligible to participate in SFSP. The Child Nutrition Conference this month will not be offering the required training, but will be offering many other types of exciting learning opportunities. Additional training topics may also be available at your [local ESC](#).

Previous Issue



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

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