



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

January 14, 2019  
CE Edition

No attachments with this issue



## TX-UNPS Updates



### **Important Security Update Reminder**

Planned security updates in the TX-UNPS system will require users to use the most current versions of their browsers starting January 25, 2019. Starting January 25, 2019, you will no longer be able to access TX-UNPS if you are using an outdated version of your preferred browser. In order to continue to be able to access TX-UNPS, TDA asks all users to [click here](#) and complete the following instructions.

### **2019 Texas Summer Mandate Notification and Waiver**

Texas Legislation requires school districts in which 50% or more of the enrolled children are eligible to receive free/reduced price NSLP meal benefits to participate in a summer meal program, based on the March 2018 claim. All mandated school districts received an email notification of their requirement as well as instructions for submitting their intent in TX-UNPS.

Please submit your intent for summer 2019, or submit a mandate waiver request in TX-UNPS by the January 31, 2019 deadline. More information as well as the instructions and the notification letter that CEs received can be found at [www.squaremeals.org/summerwaivers](http://www.squaremeals.org/summerwaivers).

## Policy News

### ***Additional Guidance: Eligibility for Employees Who Are Furloughed or Not Receiving a Salary***

When a household experiences a change in economic circumstances, the household may submit a household meal application based on the change in circumstances. Furloughed employees or employees that are required to work without pay are considered to be a change in economic circumstances. Please remember, once eligibility is determined, the eligibility determination stays in affect for the rest of the school year. The household may request to return to a previous eligibility when the household recovers financially, but is not required to do so.



### ***Additional Guidance: Direct Certification System***

At this time, there are no changes to process for conducting Direct Certification in Texas-ELMS because of the government shutdown. TDA will post information on any changes on the TX-UNPS bulletin and bi-weekly.

### ***Additional Guidance: Student Eligibility Data***

When a CE uses a food service management company (FSMC) to assist in making eligibility determinations, the FSMC cannot refuse to share student eligibility data with the CE. The FSMC may provide information and ask questions about the appropriate use of data to assist the CE, but the FSMC cannot refuse to share the data with the CE.

### ***New Form Release***

A **new** Extended/Expanded Learning Time - Afterschool Programs for NSLP & CACFP Form has been posted and released.

USDA allows sites to offer a snack or meal before the end of the school day if the school (1) operates an extended/expanded instructional day and (2) ends the extended/expanded school day one hour later than the school would have ended if not providing an extended / expanded instructional day. If the site will be offering a snack or meal before the end of the school day, the CE will submit this form (or alternate containing the same information) with the site application to demonstrate that the site meets the criteria for the extended/expanded meal time flexibility.

This form is intended to be used by CEs to (1) assist in determining if a site is eligible to offer a snack or meal before the end of the school day and (2) submit a request for approval to offer a snack or meal before the end of the school day.

All CEs that operate an Afterschool Care Program or CACFP At Risk must use this form or a similar form that contains the same information in order to obtain approval to offer a snack or meal service before the end of the school day

- CEs that currently use this flexibility must complete the form and receive approval from TDA before continuing implementation of this flexibility in School Year 2019-2020.
- If a CE plans to use this flexibility for School Year 2019-2020 for the first time, the CE must complete the form and receive approval from TDA before implementing the flexibility.
- If a CE plans to operate an afterschool program in School Year 2019-2020 and will not use this flexibility, this form is not required to operate the program.

This **new** form can be accessed [here](#) on the SquareMeals website in the School Nutrition Programs Forms table, as well as on the CACFP AT-Risk Afterschool Forms table [here](#).

## Texas Farm Fresh Initiative



### ***Farm Fresh Initiative Survey Currently Open***

TDA is collecting information from NSLP CEs regarding current participation in the Farm Fresh Initiative. Information gathered in this survey will be used to guide program staff in developing resources helpful to Texas CEs, as well as help Texas farmers and ranchers that want to sell products to schools. Survey results will be made public in the coming months.

All CNDs participating in the NSLP have received an e-mail invitation to participate. As you are working with districts during the upcoming weeks, please encourage them to complete the survey by March 18, 2019. Thank you in advance for your assistance!

Districts in your region can access the survey [here](#).

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

This newsletter provides a monthly update on farm to school and includes resources such as funding opportunities, a schedule of upcoming trainings and webinars, and more. Archive issues of the E-Harvest are available [here](#). **Subscribe today!**

Connect with your partners at TDA today at [FarmFresh@TexasAgriculture.gov](mailto:FarmFresh@TexasAgriculture.gov).

## USDA Foods Updates

### **Upcoming Deadlines**

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) has opened the School Year (SY) 2020 National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Contract Packet in TX-UNPS for Contracting Entities (CEs) wanting to participate in USDA Foods. CEs can now go in and complete their contract packets.



The following are applicable FDP deadlines for **SY 2020**:

**Friday, February 1, 2019:** FDP Contract Packet and Checklist items must be completed and submitted.

**Thursday, February 7, 2019:** The Farm to School survey will display in the survey menu and will remain open until COB Tuesday, July 31, 2019.

**Monday, February 11, 2019:** DoD Fresh entitlement distribution will be completed. Check the Weekly Commodity Bulletin for your DoD Fresh entitlement balance.

**Friday, March 1, 2019:** Survey requests for all Annual and Processing Surveys close COB.

[Previous Issue](#)



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This product is funded by USDA. This institution is an equal opportunity provider

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