

**Alabama State Department of Education
Child Nutrition Programs**

Claim Submission Policy

Sponsors operating U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) submit monthly claims for reimbursement to the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE). Claims are submitted electronically through the ALSDE CNP portal. The ALSDE processes claims within 45 days of submission.

Oversight and Responsibility for Certifying and Submitting Claims

1. The highest-ranking official holds ultimate administrative and financial oversight and responsibility for operating Child Nutrition Programs, including the submission of timely, accurate, and supported claims.
2. The highest-ranking official may appoint one or more individuals to handle the preparation, certification, and submission of monthly claims.

Submission Deadlines

1. To ensure timely payment of claims, the ALSDE's claim due date is the 20th of each month following the claim month. For example, the claim for August 2025 must be submitted by September 20, 2025.
2. For the Child and Adult Care Program (CACFP) and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the federal deadline for submitting a final claim is 60 days after the last day of the full month covered by the claim. For example, the August 2025 claim should be submitted by October 30, 2025.
3. For the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), the federal deadline for submitting a claim is 60 days after the last day of operation. For example, if the last day of operation is July 11, 2026, the claim must be submitted by September 9, 2026.
4. The claim is due the next business day when the 60th day falls on a weekend or holiday.
5. All claims must be submitted through the ALSDE CNP portal.

Claim Verification

1. Sponsors conduct routine edit checks (internal control procedures) to ensure a claim is complete, accurate, and consistent.
 - a. CACFP, NSLP, and SFSP claims are based on daily meal counts, attendance and enrollment data, and types of meals in the approved application.
 - b. FFVP claims are based on records of items served and their costs.
2. The person submitting a claim in the online portal certifies it is true and correct and supported by sufficient documentation.
3. The ALSDE CNP online portal performs edit checks to validate that a claim is consistent with the types of meals, enrollment numbers, and eligibility status in the approved application.
4. Routine administrative and compliance reviews and special reviews or audits include a close inspection of documents supporting a claim for the specified review month.

- a. CACFP requires daily meal count records; free and reduced-priced meal applications (income eligibility forms), if applicable; production records; enrollment records; and attendance records.
 - b. SNP requires meal counts; production records; free and reduced-price meal applications (income eligibility forms); attendance records; records of direct certification; and documentation of special provisions (ex., Community Eligibility Provision [CEP]).
 - c. SFSP requires meal counts; production records; free and reduced-price meal applications, if applicable; and attendance records, if applicable.
 - d. FFVP requires documentation of the purchased items and costs.
5. All records supporting a claim are kept on file by the sponsor for three years or longer if a claim is part of an unresolved issue from an administrative or compliance review, special review, or audit.

Revising a Claim After the 60-Day Deadline

1. ALSDE Claim Review Process: The ALSDE may direct a sponsor to revise a claim if errors or omissions are found during the ALSDE's review of submitted claims.
 - a. An upward revision, which increases the reimbursement, is possible only if the original claim was submitted by the 60-day State deadline and the sponsor is able to submit its final report within the 90-day federal deadline.
 - b. A downward revision, which decreases the reimbursement, may be made at any time. If a sponsor submits two downward revisions after the 60-day deadline in a program year, the ALSDE Accounting section may require the sponsor to submit a corrective action plan (CAP).
2. Administrative Reviews, Compliance Reviews, Special Reviews or Audits: A prior submission may need to be revised based on a review or audit finding.
 - a. ALSDE staff or contracted auditors initially share the finding during the exit conference. The finding is formally issued in the official final report for the review and must be addressed in the CAP.
 - b. The sponsor's response to the official final report must include the proposed CAP and the ALSDE form for a revision to a monthly claim signed by the SFA superintendent or sponsor's highest ranking official.
 - c. The ALSDE Accounting section takes no action on future reimbursements until the appeal process, if any, is resolved.
 - d. The revision may be submitted only if the claim falls within three years of the current fiscal year.
 - e. The USDA Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) Regional Office approval is required if the original claim falls outside of the three-year limit. Any increase in reimbursement is subject to the availability of funds.

Submitting an Original or Revised Claim After the 60-Day Deadline

1. A sponsor may request an exception to the 60-day deadline for submitting an original claim or revising a prior claim when the delay is caused by a situation beyond its control, such as a natural disaster, flood, or serious injury of the individual responsible for claim submission.
 - a. The sponsor submits a written request to the ALSDE program administrator, including a detailed explanation of the circumstances that caused the sponsor to miss submitting a claim on time.
 - b. If the program administrator finds merit in the request, it is forwarded to the ALSDE Accounting section.
 - c. If the ALSDE Accounting administrator finds merit in the request, it is forwarded to the USDA Regional Office for a final decision.
 - d. There is no limit on the number of requests for an exception that may be submitted based on a situation beyond the sponsor's control.
 - e. Some sponsors have appeal rights:
 - i. CACFP sponsors have 15 days to request an appeal (administrative review) to the USDA FNS Regional Office if the ALSDE decides not to forward a late claim or revised claim to the FNSRO for an exception consideration.
 - ii. SNP sponsors may not appeal to the USDA Regional Office if the ALSDE decides not to forward a late claim or revised claim to the FNSRO for an exception consideration.
 - iii. SFSP sponsors have 14 days to appeal to the USDA FNS Regional Office if the ALSDE decides not to forward a late claim or revised claim to the FNSRO for an exception consideration.
 - iv. Decisions by the USDA FNS Regional Office may not be appealed.
2. A sponsor may request a one-time exception (OTE) to the 60-day deadline for submitting an original or revised claim that increases reimbursement when the delay is caused by factors under the sponsor's control.
 - a. The OTE request must include an approvable corrective action plan (CAP) to address the underlying problem that caused the sponsor to miss submitting the original or the revised claim on time. An approvable CAP includes:
 - i. Actions to be taken to avoid any future late claim resulting from the same cause or other causes
 - ii. A statement that the sponsor understands that the one-time exception is only available once in a 36-month period for each Child Nutrition Program for circumstances beyond its control
 - iii. The signature of the sponsor's designated official or other senior level official as approved by the ALSDE program administrator.
 - iv. Sufficient detail to demonstrate that completion of the actions to be taken by the sponsor ensure future claims will be submitted on time.
 - b. The CAP must be approved by the CACFP, NSLP, or SFSP Program Administrator prior to granting the OTE request.
 - c. If the ALSDE program administrator grants the OTE request, the sponsor may submit a new or revised claim.
 - d. Only one claim month may be included in the OTE request.

- e. An OTE request may be submitted only once every three years. The claim month determines when the three-year timeframe begins.
 - i. An OTE may be granted for each Child Nutrition Program if the sponsor participates in multiple programs. For example, a sponsor operating both CACFP and SFSP may request an OTE for CACFP in 2026 and for SFSP in 2027.
 - ii. An OTE may only be used one time within the same Child Nutrition Program. For example, a CACFP sponsor offers both childcare centers and at-risk afterschool childcare. It received an OTE in May 2024 for its childcare centers. It is not eligible to request another OTE for its childcare centers or its at-risk afterschool childcare program until May 2027.
- f. The ALSDE has the authority to approve or deny an OTE request without consulting the USDA FNS Regional Office.

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Appendix: Links to Resources

NSLP Monthly Claims

7 CFR 210.8(b)

[7 CFR 210.8\(b\)](#)

NSLP Fiscal Action

7 CFR 210.18(l)

[7 CFR 210.18\(l\)](#)

SFSP Reimbursements

7 CFR 225.9(d)

[7 CFR 225.9\(d\)](#)

CACFP Program Payment Procedures

7 CFR 226.10

[7 CFR 226.10](#)

CACFP Fiscal Action

7 CFR 226.14(a)

[7 CFR 226.14\(a\)](#)

USDA CACFP Independent Child Care Handbook (2014)

Part 5: Program Payments

[CACFP Independent Childcare Centers Handbook | Food and Nutrition Service](#)

State Agency Guidance on 60-Day Claim Submission Deadline (2018)

Guidance for Local and State Agencies on 60-Day Claim Submission and 90-Day Reporting Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs

[60-Day Claim Submission and 90-Day Reporting Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs | Food and Nutrition Service](#)

Summer Food Service Program Administration Guide (2024)

Unit 3: Program Finances

[Summer Food Service Program Administration Guide](#)