

Food and Nutrition Service, USDA

§210.7

number of children enrolled in participating public schools, private schools, and residential child care institutions, respectively, as of the last day of operation in October. The final reports shall be postmarked and/or submitted no later than 90 days following the last day of the month covered by the report. States shall not receive Program funds for any month for which the final report is not submitted within this time limit unless FNS grants an exception. Upward adjustments to a State's report shall not be made after 90 days from the month covered by the report unless authorized by FNS. Downward adjustments to a State's report shall always be made regardless of when it is determined that such adjustments are necessary. FNS authorization is not required for downward adjustments. Any adjustments to a State's report shall be reported to FNS in accordance with procedures established by FNS.

(2) *Quarterly report.* Each State agency administering the National School Lunch Program shall submit quarterly reports to FNS as follows:

(i) Each State agency shall submit to FNS a quarterly Financial Status Report (FNS-777) on the use of Program funds. Such reports shall be postmarked and/or submitted no later than 30 days after the end of each fiscal year quarter.

(ii) Each State agency shall also submit a quarterly report, as specified by FNS, detailing the disbursement of performance-based cash assistance described in §210.4(b)(1). Such report shall be submitted no later than 30 days after the end of each fiscal year quarter. The report shall include the total number of school food authorities in the State, the names and locations of certified school food authorities, and for each school food authority, the total number of lunches earning the performance-based cash assistance for each month.

(3) *End of year report.* Each State agency shall submit a final Financial Status Report (SF-269) for each fiscal year. This final fiscal year grant close-out report shall be postmarked and/or submitted to FNS within 120 days after the end of each fiscal year or part thereof that the State agency administered the Program. Obligations shall be

reported only for the fiscal year in which they occur. FNS will not be responsible for reimbursing Program obligations reported later than 120 days after the close of the fiscal year in which they were incurred. Grant close-out procedures are to be carried out in accordance with 7 CFR part 3016.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 54 FR 12580, Mar. 28, 1989; 56 FR 32939, July 17, 1991; 71 FR 39516, July 13, 2006; 77 FR 25034, Apr. 27, 2012]

§210.6 Use of Federal funds.

General. State agencies shall use Federal funds made available under the Program to reimburse or make advance payments to school food authorities in connection with lunches and meal supplements served in accordance with the provisions of this part; *except that*, with the approval of FNS, any State agency may reserve an amount up to one percent of the funds earned in any fiscal year under this part for use in carrying out special developmental projects. Advance payments to school food authorities may be made at such times and in such amounts as are necessary to meet the current fiscal obligations. All Federal funds paid to any State in place of donated foods shall be used as provided in part 240 of this chapter.

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 58 FR 42487, Aug. 10, 1993]

§210.7 Reimbursement for school food authorities.

(a) *General.* Reimbursement payments to finance nonprofit school food service operations shall be made only to school food authorities operating under a written agreement with the State agency. Subject to the provisions of §210.8(c), such payments may be made for lunches and meal supplements served in accordance with provisions of this part and part 245 in the calendar month preceding the calendar month in which the agreement is executed. These reimbursement payments include general cash assistance for all lunches served to children under the National School Lunch Program and special cash assistance payments for free or reduced price lunches served to children determined eligible for such benefits under the National School

§210.7

7 CFR Ch. II (1-1-14 Edition)

Lunch and Commodity School Programs. Reimbursement payments shall also be made for meal supplements served to eligible children in after-school care programs in accordance with the rates established in §210.4(b)(3). Approval shall be in accordance with part 245 of this chapter.

(b) *Assignment of rates.* At the beginning of each school year, State agencies shall establish the per meal rates of reimbursement for school food authorities participating in the Program. These rates of reimbursement may be assigned at levels based on financial need; *except that*, the rates are not to exceed the maximum rates of reimbursement established by the Secretary under §210.4(b) and are to permit reimbursement for the total number of lunches in the State from funds available under §210.4. Within each school food authority, the State agency shall assign the same rate of reimbursement from general cash assistance funds for all lunches served to children under the Program. Assigned rates of reimbursement may be changed at any time by the State agency, *provided that* notice of any change is given to the school food authority. The total general and special cash assistance reimbursement paid to any school food authority for lunches served to children during the school year are not to exceed the sum of the products obtained by multiplying the total reported number of lunches, by type, served to eligible children during the school year by the applicable maximum per lunch reimbursements prescribed for the school year for each type of lunch.

(c) *Reimbursement limitations.* To be entitled to reimbursement under this part, each school food authority shall ensure that Claims for Reimbursement are limited to the number of free, reduced price and paid lunches and meal supplements that are served to children eligible for free, reduced price and paid lunches and meal supplements, respectively, for each day of operation.

(1) *Lunch count system.* To ensure that the Claim for Reimbursement accurately reflects the number of lunches and meal supplements served to eligible children, the school food authority shall, at a minimum:

(i) Correctly approve each child's eligibility for free and reduced price lunches and meal supplements based on the requirements prescribed under 7 CFR part 245;

(ii) Maintain a system to issue benefits and to update the eligibility of children approved for free or reduced price lunches and meal supplements. The system shall:

(A) Accurately reflect eligibility status as well as changes in eligibility made after the initial approval process due to verification findings, transfers, reported changes in income or household size, etc.; and

(B) Make the appropriate changes in eligibility after the initial approval process on a timely basis so that the mechanism the school food authority uses to identify currently eligible children provides a current and accurate representation of eligible children. Changes in eligibility which result in increased benefit levels shall be made as soon as possible but no later than 3 operating days of the date the school food authority makes the final decision on a child's eligibility status. Changes in eligibility which result in decreased benefit levels shall be made as soon as possible but no later than 10 operating days of the date the school food authority makes the final decision on the child's eligibility status.

(iii) Base Claims for Reimbursement on lunch counts, taken daily at the point of service, which correctly identify the number of free, reduced price and paid lunches served to eligible children;

(iv) Correctly record, consolidate and report those lunch and supplement counts on the Claim for Reimbursement; and

(v) Ensure that Claims for Reimbursement do not request payment for any excess lunches produced, as prohibited in §210.10(a)(2), or non-Program lunches (i.e., a la carte or adult lunches) or for more than one meal supplement per child per day.

(2) *Point of service alternatives.* (i) State agencies may authorize alternatives to the point of service lunch counts provided that such alternatives result in accurate, reliable counts of the number of free, reduced price and paid lunches served, respectively, for

Food and Nutrition Service, USDA

§210.7

each serving day. State agencies are encouraged to issue guidance which clearly identifies acceptable point of service alternatives and instructions for proper implementation. School food authorities may select one of the State agency approved alternatives without prior approval.

(ii) In addition, on a case-by-case basis, State agencies may authorize school food authorities to use other alternatives to the point of service lunch count; provided that such alternatives result in an accurate and reliable lunch count system. Any request to use an alternative lunch counting method which has not been previously authorized under paragraph (2)(i) is to be submitted in writing to the State agency for approval. Such request shall provide detail sufficient for the State agency to assess whether the proposed alternative would provide an accurate and reliable count of the number of lunches, by type, served each day to eligible children. The details of each approved alternative shall be maintained on file at the State agency for review by FNS.

(d) *Performance-based cash assistance.* The State agency must provide performance-based cash assistance as authorized under §210.4(b)(1) for lunches served in school food authorities certified by the State agency to be in compliance with meal pattern and nutrition requirements set forth in §210.10 and, if the school food authority participates in the School Breakfast Program (7 CFR part 220), §220.8 or §220.23, as applicable.

(1) *State agency requirements.* State agencies must establish procedures to certify school food authorities for performance-based cash assistance in accordance with guidance established by FNS. Such procedures must ensure State agencies:

(i) Make certification procedures readily available to school food authorities and provide guidance necessary to facilitate the certification process.

(ii) Require school food authorities to submit documentation to demonstrate compliance with meal pattern requirements set forth in §210.10 and §220.8 or §220.23, as applicable. Such documenta-

tion must reflect meal service at or about the time of certification.

(iii) Certification procedures must ensure that no performance-based cash assistance is provided to school food authorities for meals served prior to October 1, 2012.

(iv) Within 60 calendar days of a certification submission or as otherwise authorized by FNS, review submitted materials and notify school food authorities of the certification determination, the date that performance-based cash assistance is effective, and consequences for non-compliance;

(v) Disburse performance-based cash assistance for all lunches served beginning with the start of certification provided that documentation reflects meal service in the calendar month the certification materials are submitted or, in the month preceding the calendar month of submission; and

(vi) For school year 2012–2013, State agencies must conduct on-site validation reviews for a sample of certified school food authorities. State agencies must:

(A) Ensure that all certified school food authorities are subject to review and randomly select at least 25 percent of certified school food authorities for an on-site validation review; except that, all large school food authorities, as defined in §210.18(b)(6) must be included in the sample selected; and

(B) Conduct validation reviews that include, at a minimum, observation of a meal service for each type of certified menu, review of production records for observed meals to ensure they are consistent with the menus on which certification was based, and a review of documentation submitted for certification to ensure that ongoing meal operations are consistent with certification documentation.

(vii) In years subsequent to the year certified, through School Year 2014–2015, State agencies must require school food authorities to submit an annual attestation of compliance with meal pattern requirements as new requirements are phased in. The attestation must be provided to the State agency as an addendum to the written agreement required in §210.9(b).

§210.8

7 CFR Ch. II (1–14 Edition)

(2) *School food authority requirements.* School food authorities seeking to obtain performance-based cash assistance must submit certification documentation to the State agency in accordance with State agency certification procedures, including documentation to support receipt of performance-based cash assistance. School food authorities must attest that the documentation provided is representative of the ongoing meal service within the school food authority. Required documentation includes a nutrient analysis and a detailed menu work sheet with food items and quantities or, a simplified nutrient assessment as well as a detailed menu worksheet with food items and quantities, and/or other materials specified in guidance issued by FNS. In years subsequent to the year of certification, through School Year 2014–2015, school food authorities must submit an annual attestation of compliance with meal pattern requirements as new requirements are phased in. The attestation must be provided to the State agency as an addendum to the written agreement required in §210.9(b). School food authorities certified to earn performance-based cash assistance must maintain documentation of compliance, including production and menu records, and other records, as specified by FNS. School food authorities must make appropriate records available to State agencies upon request.

(e) The State agency shall reimburse the school food authority for meal supplements served in eligible schools (as defined in §210.10(n)(1)) operating after-school care programs under the NSLP in accordance with the rates established in §210.4(b).

[53 FR 29147, Aug. 2, 1988, as amended at 54 FR 12581, Mar. 28, 1989; 56 FR 32939, July 17, 1991; 58 FR 42487, Aug. 10, 1993; 60 FR 31207, June 13, 1995; 65 FR 26912, May 9, 2000; 77 FR 25034, Apr. 27, 2012]

§210.8 Claims for reimbursement.

(a) *Internal controls.* The school food authority shall establish internal controls which ensure the accuracy of lunch counts prior to the submission of the monthly Claim for Reimbursement. At a minimum, these internal controls shall include: an on-site review of the lunch counting and claiming system

employed by each school within the jurisdiction of the school food authority; comparisons of daily free, reduced price and paid lunch counts against data which will assist in the identification of lunch counts in excess of the number of free, reduced price and paid lunches served each day to children eligible for such lunches; and a system for following up on those lunch counts which suggest the likelihood of lunch counting problems.

(1) *On-site reviews.* Every school year, each school food authority with more than one school shall perform no less than one on-site review of the lunch counting and claiming system employed by each school under its jurisdiction. The on-site review shall take place prior to February 1 of each school year. Further, if the review discloses problems with a school's meal counting or claiming procedures, the school food authority shall: ensure that the school implements corrective action; and, within 45 days of the review, conducts a follow-up on-site review to determine that the corrective action resolved the problems. Each on-site review shall ensure that the school's claim is based on the counting system authorized by the State agency under §210.7(c) of this part and that the counting system, as implemented, yields the actual number of reimbursable free, reduced price and paid lunches, respectively, served for each day of operation.

(2) *School food authority claims review process.* Prior to the submission of a monthly Claim for Reimbursement, each school food authority shall review the lunch count data for each school under its jurisdiction to ensure the accuracy of the monthly Claim for Reimbursement. The objective of this review is to ensure that monthly claims include only the number of free, reduced price and paid lunches served on any day of operation to children currently eligible for such lunches.

(i) Any school food authority that was found by its most recent administrative review conducted in accordance with §210.18, to have no meal counting and claiming violations may:

(A) Develop internal control procedures that ensure accurate meal counts. The school food authority shall submit any internal controls developed