



NEWS RELEASE

STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

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MDE to Request Federal Waivers for Child Nutrition, Emergency Food Assistance & Commodity Supplemental Food Programs

LANSING, MICH. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) announced today it will request a series of federal waivers of statutory and regulatory requirements in child nutrition, emergency food assistance, and commodity food programs, in accordance with federal guidance.

The MDE is requesting waivers from the U.S. Department of Agriculture on:

- The Child Nutrition Program on behalf of all sponsors determined to be in good standing in the state of Michigan;
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), on behalf of all TEFAP-eligible recipient agencies (ERAs) determined to be in good standing in the state of Michigan; and
- The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) on behalf of all local agencies determined to be in good standing in the state of Michigan.

Child Nutrition Program

The MDE is preemptively seeking the discretion to waive meal pattern requirements for Child Nutrition Program sponsors continuing to serve meals during the state of emergency.

The waiver would allow MDE to grant individual exceptions to Child Nutrition Program sponsors that are experiencing a disruption in food supply and are unable to serve meals that meet federal meal pattern requirements.

Child Nutrition Program sponsors need to request exceptions from the MDE. Upon approval of the waiver from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), further guidance will be issued to Child Nutrition Program sponsors in Michigan.

For questions about Michigan's Child Nutrition Programs, contact the Office of Health and Nutrition Services' Director, Diane Golzynski, at 517-241-5374 or mde-schoolnutrition@michigan.gov.

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The Emergency Food Assistance Program

Regarding the TEFAP, MDE will be seeking federal approval to waive the regulatory requirement to collect a full household eligibility record from each household receiving commodity foods, effective immediately.

ERAs that participate in TEFAP help ensure children and families do not experience a lapse in food security during times of personal hardship. ERAs include community action agencies and food banks that help feed communities in every part of Michigan. The waiver will allow ERAs flexibilities in distributing food to families in need. The waiver will also allow for minimal interaction among ERA staff, volunteers, and households to minimize potential exposure to the coronavirus.

For questions about Michigan's TEFAP resources and information about local agencies distributing emergency foods, contact Household Programs Consultant Liana Bennett at 517-241-5349 or BennettL4@michigan.gov.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program

For the CSFP, MDE will be seeking federal approval to waive the regulatory requirement that local agencies provide a food package to participants according to the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) required package components, effective immediately. Under the waiver, agencies will be able to provide food packages with as many foods as are available.

Local agencies that participate in CSFP help ensure eligible seniors do not experience a lapse in food security. Local agencies include community action agencies, non-profit organizations, and food banks that help feed communities in every part of Michigan. The waiver will allow local agencies added flexibilities in the food package to ensure seniors registered in the program continue to receive food to the extent possible.

For questions about Michigan's CSFP resources and information about local agencies distributing emergency foods, contact Household Programs Consultant Liana Bennett at 517-241-5349 or BennettL4@michigan.gov.

Additional unemployment resources for employees can be found [here](#) and for employers [here](#).

Updates will be posted to Michigan.gov/Coronavirus and CDC.gov/Coronavirus.

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