

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM STATE WAIVER REQUEST

1. State agency submitting waiver request and responsible State agency staff contact information:

Alaska Department of Education and Early Development
Child Nutrition Programs
Gavin Northey, Program Manager
gavin.northey@alaska.gov
(907) 465-8708

2. Region: Western Region

3. Eligible service providers participating in waiver and affirmation that they are in good standing:

Alaska DEED/CNP requests to waive the pre-approval visit at the state agency level as specified in 7 CFR 225. This waiver is intended for the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, Child Nutrition Program (DEED CNP) and is expected to be limited in use.

4. Description of the challenge the State agency is seeking to solve, the goal of the waiver to improve services under the Program, and the expected outcomes if the waiver is granted. [Section 12(I)(2)(A)(iii) and 12(I)(2)(A)(iv) of the NSLA]:

We are requesting authorization for Alaska DEED CNP to conduct off-site pre-approval visits for new sponsors before operating, with a follow-up on-site visit during their first four weeks of operation, in lieu of the requirement as stated in 7 CFR 225. We are also requesting for the authority to waive the pre-approval visit altogether for school food authorities in good standing in the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program, as applicable, and sponsors in good standing in the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

The state's size, rural transportation challenges, and the early start to short operating periods impact the state agency's ability to conduct a pre-approval visit before operations begin. Other monitoring requirements as outlined in regulations will continue to be met while utilizing this waiver. Currently, DEED CNP is planning to conduct summer ARs in person; this waiver will only be utilized for pre-approval visits.

5. Specific Program requirements to be waived (include statutory and regulatory citations). [Section 12(I)(2)(A)(i) of the NSLA]:

7 CFR 225.7(d) Pre-approval visits.

6. Detailed description of alternative procedures and anticipated impact on Program operations, including technology, State systems, and monitoring:

Alaska DEED CNP anticipates that the waiver will help the state agency address challenges in meeting monitoring requirements without compromising program integrity. Alaska DEED CNP will utilize tools to aid the off-site pre-approval review, including photos and videos. For new sponsors, an onsite visit will still occur within the first four weeks of operations to ensure that program integrity is upheld. For SFAs and sponsors that are in good standing with CACFP and NSLP, the corresponding program will be consulted during application review, which will allow Alaska DEED CNP to verify the applicant sponsor's financial or

administrative capability for operating the program. Other monitoring requirements will not be waived. The combined off-site review and on-site visit allows Alaska DEED CNP to identify potential compliance issues and provide technical assistance to the new sponsors before they complete their first full month of operations. It will also let the state agency use the limited time before program application deadlines and the start of program operations to focus on application reviews and program support for other sponsors.

7. Description of any steps the State has taken to address regulatory barriers at the State level. [Section 12(l)(2)(A)(ii) of the NSLA]:

No barriers exist at the State-level.

8. Anticipated challenges State or eligible service providers may face with the waiver implementation:

No anticipated challenges.

9. Description of how the waiver will not increase the overall cost of the Program to the Federal Government. If there are anticipated increases, confirm that the costs will be paid from non-Federal funds. [Section 12(l)(1)(A)(iii) of the NSLA]:

No anticipated increased federal costs.

10. Anticipated waiver implementation date and time period:

May 1, 2023 - April 30, 2024

11. Proposed monitoring and review procedures:

Aside from the requested waiver, monitoring of sponsors' operations under the requested waiver will follow administrative review regulations consistent with 7 CFR 225 review requirements.

12. Proposed reporting requirements (include type of data and due date(s) to FNS):

DEED will provide information on requirements delayed due to this waiver, as requested by USDA.

13. Link to or a copy of the public notice informing the public about the proposed waiver [Section 12(l)(1)(A)(ii) of the NSLA]:

[Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, Child Nutrition Programs \(https://education.alaska.gov/cnp\)](https://education.alaska.gov/cnp) *pending*

14. Signature and title of requesting official:

Name: Gavin Northey
Title: Child Nutrition Programs Manager
Alaska Department of Education and Early Development

TO BE COMPLETED BY FNS REGIONAL OFFICE:

FNS Regional Offices are requested to ensure the questions have been adequately addressed by the State agency and formulate an opinion and justification for a response to the waiver request based on their knowledge, experience, and work with the State.

Date request was received at Regional Office:

Check this box to confirm that the State agency has provided public notice in accordance with Section 12(I)(1)(A)(ii) of the NSLA

- **Regional Office Analysis and Recommendations:**