

Reimbursable School Meals and Milk Programs

(National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program and School Milk Program)

The public charter school's nutrition and food services will be operated in accordance with the following requirements:

Meal Pricing Procedures

1. Reimbursable meals will be priced as a unit.
2. Reimbursable meals will be served free or at a reduced price to all children who are determined by the public charter school to be eligible for free or reduced price meals.
3. Annually, the public charter school will establish prices for reimbursable student meals. The price charged to students who do not qualify for free or reduced price meals will be established annually by the public charter school in compliance with state and federal laws.¹
4. The price charged to students who qualify for reduced price meals will be established annually by the public charter school in compliance with state and federal laws.²
5. The public charter school may operate the Special Milk Program (SMP) where students do not have access to program meals. Under SMP, the public charter school may choose one of the following options: a. Non-pricing (serve SMP milk at no charge to all students); b. Pricing programs without a free option (charge all students for SMP milk); or c. Pricing programs with a free option (distribute confidential applications for free milk and charge only those students for SMP milk who do not qualify for free milk based on the household's application or direct certification from Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)).

Application Procedures

1. Households receiving SNAP or Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) benefits, as identified by Oregon Department of Education (ODE), will be automatically eligible for free meals for the students listed on the official document. Public charter schools must access this document at least three times per year.
2. Students receiving support through the migrant education program, Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, federal Head Start and state-funded prekindergarten programs, with income eligibility criteria identical or more stringent than federal Head Start, or are in state or court placement foster care, will be automatically eligible for free meals, for the students listed on the official documents.

3. Households that submit a confidential application will be notified of their student's eligibility for free or reduced price meals. Households that are denied free or reduced price benefits will be notified in writing using the ODE template letter distributed to the public charter school annually.
4. On a case-by-case basis, when a student is known to be eligible for free or reduced price meals benefits and the household fails to submit a confidential application, the executive director or designee may complete an application for the student documenting how he/she knows the household income qualifies the student for free or reduced price meal benefits. Parents of a student approved for free or reduced price benefits, when application is made for the student by a school official, will be notified of the decision and given the opportunity to decline benefits.
5. Students who do not qualify for free or reduced price meals are eligible to participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) and will be charged "paid" prices set by the public charter school. "Paid" category students will be treated equally to students receiving free or reduced price benefits in every aspect of the public charter school's NSLP or SBP.
6. The public charter school has established a fair hearing process under which a household can appeal a decision with respect to the household's application for benefits or any subsequent reduction or termination of benefits.
7. In the event of major employers contemplating large layoffs in the attendance area of the public charter school, the public charter school will provide confidential applications and eligibility criteria for free and reduced price meals to the employer for distribution to affected employees.

Financial Management of the Nonprofit School Food Service

1. The public charter school will maintain a nonprofit school nutrition and food service operation.
2. Revenues earned by the school nutrition and food services will be used only for the operation or improvement of NSLP and SBP.
3. Lunch and breakfast meals served to teachers, administrators, custodians and other adults not directly involved with the operation of the public charter school will be priced to cover all direct and indirect cost of preparing and serving the meal.¹
4. Public charter school nutrition and food services revenues will not be used to purchase land or buildings.
5. The public charter school will limit its nutrition and food services net cash resources to an amount that does not exceed three months average expenditures.

¹For meals with portion sizes equivalent to student meals, the adult meal price will be no less than the amount of reimbursement for a free-eligible meal, plus the value of commodity foods used in the meal preparation.

6. The public charter school will maintain effective control and accountability for, and adequately safeguard, all nutrition and food services' cash, real and personal property, equipment and other assets, and ensure they are used solely for nutrition and food services purposes.
7. The public charter school will meet the requirements for allowable NSLP and SBP costs as described in 2 C.F.R. 200.
8. In purchasing nutrition and food services goods or services, the public charter school will not accept proposals or bids from any party that has developed or drafted specifications, requirements, statements of work, invitations for bids, requests for proposals, contract terms and conditions or other documents for proposals used to conduct the procurement.
9. All procurement transactions for nutrition and food services goods and services will be conducted according to state, federal and ESD procurement standards using the applicable cost thresholds.
10. In the operation of its nutrition and food services program, the public charter school will purchase food products where at least 50 percent of the ingredients are produced in the United States, whenever possible.
11. The public charter school may use facilities, equipment and personnel supported with nutrition and food services revenue to support a nonprofit nutrition program for the elderly.

Civil Rights and Confidentiality Procedures

1. The public charter school will not discriminate against any student because of his/her eligibility for free or reduced price meals.
2. The public charter school will not discriminate against any student or any nutrition and food services employee because of race, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, parental status, religion, age or disability.
3. The public charter school will assure that all students and nutrition and food services employees are not subject to different treatment, disparate impact or a hostile environment.
4. Established public charter school procedures will be followed for receiving and processing civil rights complaints related to applications for NSLP and SBP benefits and services, and employment practices with regard to the operation of its NSLP and SBP. The public charter school will forward any civil rights complaint regarding the public charter school's nutrition and food services to ODE's director of Nutrition Programs within three days of receiving the complaint.
5. The public charter school will make written or oral translations of all nutrition and food services materials available to all households who do not read or speak English.
6. The public charter school will maintain strict confidentiality of all information obtained through a confidential application for free and reduced price meals or direct certification, including students' eligibility for free or reduced price meals and all household information. The public charter school's NSLP and SBP operators are not required to release any information from a student's confidential

application for free or reduced price meals. No information may be released from a student's eligibility information without first obtaining written permission from the student's parent or legal guardian/adult household member signing the application, except as follows:

- a. An individual student's name and eligibility status may be released without written consent only to persons who operate or administer federal education programs; persons who operate or administer state education or state health programs at the state level; persons evaluating state, education assessment; or persons who operate or administer any other NSLP, SBP, SMP, Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) or the Food Stamp Program (SNAP);
- b. Any other confidential information contained in the confidential application for free and reduced price meals (e.g., family income, address, etc.) may be released without written consent only to persons who operate or administer the NSLP, SBP, SMP, CACFP, SFSP and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC); the Comptroller General of the United States for audit purposes; and federal, state or local law enforcement officials investigating alleged violation of any of the programs listed above.

Nutrition and Menu Planning

1. Meals served for reimbursement will meet the recommendations of the most current Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
2. Meals served for reimbursement will meet at least the minimum NSLP and SBP requirements for food items and quantities.
3. Meals served for reimbursement will:
 - a. Meet all calorie range requirements by grade level;
 - b. Meet the maximum standards set for saturated fat;
 - c. Meet the maximum standards set for sodium by grade level; and
 - d. Meet the requirement for zero grams of trans fats.
4. The public charter school will use the offer versus serve option when serving program lunches to students below senior high school grades. Students below high school grades will be required to take three of the five food items, including one-half cup of fruit or vegetable offered in program lunches.
5. The public charter school will use the offer versus serve option when serving program breakfasts to students below senior high school grades. Students below high school grades will be required to take three of the four food items, including one-half cup of fruit offered in program breakfasts.
6. A copy of the public charter school board minutes adopting the offer versus serve policy for students below high school grades for program lunches and/or for all students in the public charter school for program breakfasts, as applicable, will be made available upon request.

Use and Control of Commodity Foods

1. The public charter school will accept and use commodity foods in as large a quantity as may be efficiently utilized in the reimbursable lunch and breakfast programs.
2. The public charter school will maintain necessary safeguards to prevent theft or spoilage of commodity foods.
3. The value of commodity foods used for any food production other than NSLP and SBP shall be replaced in the food service inventory.

Accuracy of Reimbursement Claims

1. The public charter school will claim reimbursement only for reimbursable meals served to eligible children.
2. All meals claimed for reimbursement will be counted at each dining site at a “point of service” where it can be accurately determined that the meal meets NSLP and SBP requirements for reimbursement.
3. The person responsible for determining reimbursability of meals will be trained to recognize a reimbursable meal under the menu planning approach used at the public charter school.
4. The public charter school official signing the claim for reimbursement will review and analyze monthly meal counts to ensure accuracy of the claim, before submitting the claim to ODE.
5. Annually, by November 15, the public charter school will verify a random sample of applications according to NSLP verification requirements. Instructions for completing the verification process will be sent by ODE to the public charter school in October each year.

Food Safety and Sanitation Inspections

1. The public charter school will maintain necessary facilities for storing, preparing and serving food and milk.
2. Semiannually, the public charter school will schedule food safety inspections with the county Environmental Health Department or Oregon Department of Human Resources for its dining site.
3. The public charter school will maintain health standards in compliance with all applicable state food safety regulations at each school or dining site under its jurisdiction.

General USDA NSLP/SBP/SMP Requirements

1. The public charter school will ensure that no student is denied a meal as a disciplinary action.
2. Breakfast will be served in the morning hours, at or near the beginning of the student’s school day.
3. Lunch will be served between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

4. The public charter school will provide substitute foods for students with a disability that restricts their diet when supported by a written statement from a state-licensed health care professional, who is authorized to write medical prescriptions. Substitutions will be provided only when a medical statement from the licensed health care professional is on file at the school. The medical statement must state the nature of the child's impairment so its effect on the student's diet is understood, and what must be done to accommodate the impairment. The public charter school will not charge more than the price of the school meal, as determined by the child's eligibility status, for meals with the accommodation.
5. The public charter school will control the sale of competitive foods.
6. The public charter school will ensure that potable drinking water will be available to students, free of charge for consumption in the place where meals are served during meal service.²
7. The public charter school will notify all households of its meal charge requirements early in the school year. The public charter school's meal charging requirements are as follows:

Students may charge no more than two meals. Any student exceeding two charged meals shall not be allowed to charge the price of further meals until the account has been paid in full but will be allowed to purchase a meal if the student pays for the meal when it is received. At least one written warning shall be provided to a student and his/her parent prior to denying meals for exceeding the public charter school's charge limit. Students or parents of students may prepay meal costs.

8. The sale of foods in competition with the public charter school's lunch (NSLP) or breakfast (SBP) programs will be allowed in dining sites during lunch and breakfast periods with Board approval only when all income from the food sales accrues to the benefit of the public charter school's nutrition and food services or accrues to a school or student organization approved by the Board. A copy of the public charter school board minutes approving and defining competitive food sales will be made available upon request.

Record Keeping

The following documents will be maintained by the public charter school for three years after the current school year or longer, in the event of an unresolved audit(s), until the audits has been completed:

1. All currently approved and denied confidential applications for free and reduced price meals and all current direct certification documents, eligibility verification documents and membership or enrollment lists;
2. Financial records that account for all revenues and expenditures of the public charter school's nonprofit nutrition and food services programs, including procurement documents;

²To comply with Section 504 as it relates to a student's severe food allergy, such as milk, gluten, nut or soy, and including but not limited to diabetes, colitis, etc.

3. Records (i.e., recipes, ingredient lists and nutrition fact labels or product specifications) that document the compliance with nutrition standards for all program and competitive foods available for sale to students at a school campus;
4. Documents of participation data (i.e. meal counts) from each school in the school to support claims for reimbursement;
5. Production and menu records;
6. Records to document compliance with Paid Lunch Equity;
7. Records to document compliance with Revenue from Non-program Foods and;
8. Internal program monitoring documents for NSLP and SBP.