

CHAPTER 36

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Authority

N.J.S.A. 18A:33-4 and 5.

Source and Effective Date

R.1997 d.9, effective December 10, 1996
See: 28 N.J.R. 4297(a), 29 N.J.R. 124(a).

Executive Order No. 66(1978) Expiration Date

Chapter 36, Child Nutrition Programs, expires on December 10, 1998.

Chapter Historical Note

Chapter 36, Child Nutrition Programs, was originally adopted as R.1975 d.161, effective June 12, 1975, and codified as N.J.A.C. 6:79, replacing prior rules on school meal programs. See: 7 N.J.R. 201(c), 7 N.J.R. 307(a). N.J.A.C. 6:79 was recodified as N.J.A.C. 6:20-9 by R.1992 d.202, effective May 4, 1992. See: 24 N.J.R. 324(a), 24 N.J.R. 1791(c). Pursuant to Executive Order No. 66(1978), N.J.A.C. 6:20-9 was readopted as a part of R.1997 d.9, effective December 10, 1996. See: Source and Effective Date.

Pursuant to Reorganization Plan No. 002-1997, which transferred the Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs from the Department of Education to the Department of Agriculture, N.J.A.C. 6:20-9 was recodified as N.J.A.C. 2:36, effective February 10, 1998. See: 30 N.J.R.870(b).

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SUBCHAPTER 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

2:36-1.1 Definitions

The following words and terms, when used in this subchapter, shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

“Agreement for School Nutrition Programs” means the agreement entered into between the Department and each sponsor pursuant to Federal regulations 7 CFR Parts 210, 215, 220 and 245.

“Application” means the notifying letter and application form issued to all parents of students enrolled in school to determine eligibility for child nutrition programs.

“Bureau” means the Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, which administers the Federal child nutrition program in the State of New Jersey.

“Child Nutrition Programs” means the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Special Milk and Split-Session Kindergarten Milk Programs, Child Care Food Programs and the Summer Food Service Program.

“Department” means the State Department of Agriculture.

“Department’s Consolidated Enrollment Report: Current School Enrollment Data” means a comprehensive report which districts are required to submit each October to the State Department of Education to provide information on school enrollment data, including the number of students eligible for free and reduced price meal benefits.

“Enrolled student” means all students enrolled in the school including pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and grades one through 12 regardless of participation in the School Nutrition Programs.

“Five percent threshold” means the point at which five percent or more of the total school enrollment of each school in the district is eligible for free or reduced price meals and/or free milk.

“Foods of minimal nutritional value” means those foods contained in the following categories as specified in the United States Department of Agriculture, regulations 7 CFR Part 210 Appendix B: soda water, water ices, chewing gum, certain candies: hard candy, jellies and gums, marshmallow candies, fondant, licorice, spun candy and candy coated popcorn.

“Hours of operation” means from the beginning of the first scheduled meal period until the end of the last scheduled meal period.

“Nutritional standards” means those standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 7 CFR Part 210 and incorporated by reference by the State Department of Agriculture. These standards govern the type and nutritional value of all food items offered as part of the school lunch and breakfast meal pattern and a la carte food items.

“Policy” means the free and reduced-price policy required by applicable regulations of the United States Department of Agriculture, 7 CFR Parts 210, 215, 220 and 245.

“School” means a school operating under the supervision of a sponsor as defined herein.

"School food authority" means the governing body which is responsible for the administration of one or more schools; and which has the legal authority to operate the National School Lunch, School Breakfast or Special Milk Program.

"School Nutrition Programs" means those programs administered by the Bureau of Child Nutrition which include the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program and Special Milk Programs.

"Sponsor" means the school district participating in any child nutrition program.

"Survey" means the procedure required of every school and sponsor to determine eligibility of every enrolled student for free and reduced-price meals regardless of whether the school has an agreement with the Department to participate in any of the School Nutrition Programs.

Amended by R.1987 d.524, effective December 21, 1987.
See: 19 N.J.R. 1599(a), 19 N.J.R. 2399(a).

Definitions substantially amended.
Amended by R.1992 d.202, effective May 4, 1992.
See: 24 N.J.R. 324(a), 24 N.J.R. 1791(c).

Recodified and added new definitions for "Child Nutrition Programs", "Department's Consolidated Enrollment Report: Current School Enrollment Data", "enrolled student", "five percent threshold", "nutritional standards", "school food authority" and "school nutrition programs"; amended "sponsor" and "survey".

2:36-1.2 Policy and Agreement for School Nutrition Programs

(a) All school districts shall adopt a free and reduced price policy pursuant to Federal regulations 7 CFR Parts 210, 215, 220 and 245 on the form prescribed by the Secretary entitled "Policy for the Free and Reduced-price Meals or Free Milk." This form is available from the Bureau of Child Nutrition, Department of Agriculture, PO Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625-0500.

(b) This policy shall be signed and returned to the Bureau no later than the end of the second calendar month for which any reimbursement can be claimed for meals and milk served under the child nutrition programs. However, for sponsors starting programs in September, the deadline for submission of the policy shall be September 30.

(c) The Agreement for School Nutrition Programs shall contain the policy referred to in (a) above and shall be submitted in accordance with the application prescribed by the Secretary pursuant to 7 CFR § 210.9, 215.7, 220.7 and 245.10.

Amended by R.1987 d.524, effective December 21, 1987.
See: 19 N.J.R. 1599(a), 19 N.J.R. 2399(a).

Substituted "Agreement for School Nutrition Programs" for "school feeding agreement".

Amended by R.1992 d.202, effective May 4, 1992.
See: 24 N.J.R. 324(a), 24 N.J.R. 1791(c).

Added new (a) and (c) regarding the adoption of free and reduced price policies in all school districts; recodified from N.J.A.C. 6:79-1.2. Administrative Correction to (a).
See: 24 N.J.R. 2712(c).

Case Notes

Statute authorizing exemption from mandatory school lunch program upheld against due process constitutional challenge. Robbani v. Burke, 77 N.J. 383, 390 A.2d 1149 (1978).

2:36-1.3 Eligibility

The Bureau shall administer Statewide eligibility standards pursuant to Federal regulations 7 CFR Part 245 for Determining Eligibility for Free and Reduced Price Meals and Free Milk in Schools. Such standards shall be used by all sponsors participating in the child nutrition programs.

Amended by R.1987 d.524, effective December 21, 1987.

See: 19 N.J.R. 1599(a), 19 N.J.R. 2399(a).

Substituted "administer" for "establish".

Amended by R.1992 d.202, effective May 4, 1992.

See: 24 N.J.R. 324(a), 24 N.J.R. 1791(c).

Recodified and added reference to Federal regulations and recodified from N.J.A.C. 6:79-1.3.

2:36-1.4 Survey

(a) By the last school day prior to October 16 of each school year, each school, under the supervision of its sponsor, shall survey the parent or guardian of each student enrolled to determine which students are eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals and/or free milk. The purpose of the survey is to determine the five percent threshold as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:33-4.

(b) This survey shall be conducted using the "Application for Free and Reduced Price Meals or Free Milk" as prescribed by the Secretary pursuant to Federal regulations (7 CFR Part 245). This application shall be distributed to the parent or guardian of every student enrolled in the school.

(c) The results of this survey shall be included in the Department of Education's Consolidated Enrollment Report: Current School Enrollment Data for the school year in which the survey is made.

Amended by R.1987 d.524, effective December 21, 1987.

See: 19 N.J.R. 1599(a), 19 N.J.R. 2399(a).

Added "which shall include" to text.

Amended by R.1992 d.202, effective May 4, 1992.

See: 24 N.J.R. 324(a), 24 N.J.R. 1791(c).

New due date added in (a) and purpose; at (b) required use of specific application; at (c) requires submission of information in specific report and recodified from N.J.A.C. 6:79-1.4.

2:36-1.5 Application

(a) The Bureau shall prepare an application which shall be used by all school districts. A copy of the application used by each school district must be filed with the Bureau together with the policy described in N.J.A.C. 2:36-1.2.

(b) The parent or guardian shall be given at least two weeks from the date of receipt of the application to complete and submit the application to the school district which must provide adequate assistance to parents in completing these applications.

(c) Applications in languages other than English must be provided where non-English speaking parents are possible applicants. (An application in Spanish and French is available upon request from the Bureau.)

(d) Upon receipt of the completed application, the district must determine each student's eligibility for a free or reduced-price meal and/or free milk from the information submitted. Each student shall be offered free or reduced-price meals and/or free milk as soon as eligibility has been determined. If the school has reason to question the information provided, the student affected must continue to receive the free or reduced-price meals and/or free milk until completion of the appeal procedures set forth in the sponsor's policy pursuant to Federal regulations (7 CFR § 245.7 Hearing Procedure for Families and School Food Authorities).

(e) Any school may authorize free or reduced-price meals and/or free milk on the recommendation of a teacher, nurse or other school official, based on known economic need, in cases where parents will not or cannot apply for free or reduced-price meals and/or free milk for their children. A school official must complete applications for these students.

Amended by R.1987 d.524, effective December 21, 1987.
See: 19 N.J.R. 1599(a), 19 N.J.R. 2399(a).

Deleted text "said information is found to be incorrect by" and substituted "completion of" in (d).

Amended by R.1992 d.202, effective May 4, 1992.
See: 24 N.J.R. 324(a), 24 N.J.R. 1791(c).

Replaced term "sponsor" with "school district"; added reference to Federal regulations in (d) and recodified from N.J.A.C. 6:79-1.5.

2:36-1.6 Participation requirements

(a) Any school in which five percent or more of the school enrollment is found to be eligible for free or reduced-price meals shall offer lunch to all students enrolled in that school. Free and reduced price lunches must be offered to all qualifying children. Such lunches shall meet minimum nutritional standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (7 CFR §§ 210.10 and 220).

(b) Any school may participate in the National School Lunch Program.

(c) The school food authority shall maintain a non-profit school food service. All revenues are to be used only for the operation or improvement of the school food service.

(d) The school food authority shall limit its net cash resources to an amount that does not exceed three months' average expenditures for its non-profit school food service.

Amended by R.1987 d.524, effective December 21, 1987.
See: 19 N.J.R. 1599(a), 19 N.J.R. 2399(a).

Added (c).

Amended by R.1992 d.202, effective May 4, 1992.
See: 24 N.J.R. 324(a), 24 N.J.R. 1791(c).

Required that all qualifying students be offered free and reduced price lunches and recodified from N.J.A.C. 6:79-1.6.

2:36-1.7 Nutritional standards

Nutritional standards established by the Department for lunches and breakfasts served under the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program or as mandated by N.J.S.A. 18A:33-4 shall be identical to those established in the United States Department of Agriculture regulations at 7 CFR § 210.10 and Part 220 respectively. These Federal regulations and all subsequent amendments are adopted herein by reference as published in the Department's Nutritional Standards for School Nutrition Programs available through the Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, Department of Agriculture, PO Box 500, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0500.

Amended by R.1992 d.202, effective May 4, 1992.

See: 24 N.J.R. 324(a), 24 N.J.R. 1791(c).

Adopted by reference USDA Nutritional Standards for School Nutrition Programs and recodified from N.J.A.C. 6:79-1.7.

2:36-1.8 Review and evaluation

(a) Each sponsor's implementation of its policy shall be reviewed and evaluated by the Bureau on a continuing basis.

(b) Federal and State child nutrition program funds may be withheld and/or fiscal action taken against sponsors (see: 7 CFR § 210.19(c), 215.12(a) and 220.14(a)) found not to be in compliance with applicable Federal regulations (7 CFR Parts 210, 215 and 220).

(c) Sponsors shall not alter or amend standards set forth in their policy without prior approval by Bureau.

R.1974 d.198, effective July 19, 1974.

See: 6 N.J.R. 302(e).

Amended by R.1992 d.202, effective May 4, 1992.

See: 24 N.J.R. 324(a), 24 N.J.R. 1791(c).

Added references to Federal regulations and recodified from N.J.A.C. 6:79-1.8.

2:36-1.9 Maximum charge

(a) The Bureau shall annually establish the maximum per meal and milk charge pursuant to 7 CFR § 210.2 and 215.8(c); however, sponsors may appeal to the Bureau to increase such maximum per meal or milk charges.

1. The maximum milk charge shall be established based on the rate of reimbursement from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) per ½ pint of milk, consideration of the annual average statewide student price/charge for milk and the average cost of a ½ pint of milk as purchased from the dairy.

2. The maximum meal charge shall be established based on the rate of reimbursement from the USDA for a free meal minus the rate of reimbursement from the USDA for a paid meal, and consideration of the annual average statewide student price/charge for a paid meal in the elementary, middle and secondary grades.

(b) Adult meal prices shall be established to cover all costs associated with the production and service of the adult meal.

Amended by R.1983 d.71, effective March 21, 1983.

See: 14 N.J.R. 1248(b), 15 N.J.R. 440(a).

Deleted old (a) concerning sponsors establishing milk prices.

Amended by R.1992 d.202, effective May 4, 1992.

See: 24 N.J.R. 324(a), 24 N.J.R. 1791(c).

Added new (a)1 and 2 and new (b) specifying how maximum charges are established and recodified from N.J.A.C. 6:79-1.9.

2:36-1.10 Competitive food policy

(a) The sale or free promotion of extra food items of minimal nutritional value on the school property at any time before the end of the last lunch period shall not include those items prohibited by regulations promulgated by the United States Department of Agriculture for the administration of child nutrition programs and as contained in the Department's nutritional standards as referenced in N.J.A.C. 2:36-1.7. This policy also applies to all school districts required to make school lunch available pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:33-4 regardless of participation in the National School Lunch Program.

(b) All income derived from the sale of food and beverage items within a school during the hours when the school lunch and school breakfast programs are in operation must accrue to the accounts of said programs.

Amended by R.1987 d.524, effective December 21, 1987.

See: 19 N.J.R. 1599(a), 19 N.J.R. 2399(a).

Deleted old text in (a) and added new.

Amended by R.1992 d.202, effective May 4, 1992.

See: 24 N.J.R. 324(a), 24 N.J.R. 1791(c).

Free promotion of extra food items of minimal nutritional value prohibited and recodified from 6:79-1.10.

2:36-1.11 Meal accountability

Sponsors shall count and record daily, at the point of service, the number of meals or milks served by category (free, reduced price and paid).

As amended by R.1983 d.71, effective March 21, 1983.

See: 14 N.J.R.1248(b), 15 N.J.R. 440(a).

Repealed nonfood assistance.

New Rule, R.1987 d.524, effective December 21, 1987.

See: 19 N.J.R. 1599(a), 19 N.J.R. 2399(a).

Recodified from N.J.A.C. 6:79-1.11 by R.1992 d.202, effective May 4, 1992.

See: 24 N.J.R. 324(a), 24 N.J.R. 1791(c).