WISCONSIN SCHOOL NUTRITION

IN A NUTSHELL

Meal Counting & Claiming

All school food authorities (SFAs) operating the USDA child nutrition programs are required to have a meal counting and claiming system that accurately counts, records, consolidates, and reports the number of meals claimed for reimbursement. Reimbursement by student eligibility is provided for each meal served to students that meets meal pattern requirements. Student meal counts must be taken at the Point of Service (POS). The POS is the point where it can be determined that a reimbursable meal has been served to an eligible student. Monthly claims are submitted to DPI for each USDA child nutrition program operated by the SFA. It is vital that claims are reported accurately as overclaims will require the SFA to repay DPI and underclaims result in the SFA not receiving the reimbursement they are entitled to.

Site-Based Claiming

- Meals are claimed by program and by each site participating in the program at the SFA.
- Each program claim template will automatically populate the participating sites, based on the approved School Nutrition Online Contract.
- Meals must be claimed at the students enrolled school site.
- School codes are found on Schedule A of the approved School Nutrition Online Contract.

Internal Controls

SFAs are required to have internal controls on the meal counting and claiming system. Before a claim is submitted, an edit check is required to be completed by the SFA. The edit check reviews the claim to ensure it is accurate. Each participating school site must have its own edit check. Adult meals, incomplete meals, or a la carte items may not be claimed for reimbursement.

Edit Checks:

- Must include:
    - Monthly meal counts by student eligibility category (free, reduced, and paid).
    - Number of eligible students per eligibility category.
    - Applies the attendance factor to calculate the attendance adjusted eligibles for each eligibility category.
        - Attendance Factor (AF): The average daily attendance divided by enrollment (this is a percentage).
- Must be reviewed for questionable meal counts prior to submitting the monthly claim.
- Daily meal counts by eligibility category may never exceed the number of eligible students.
- Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) schools are also required to complete edit checks before submitting monthly claims.
- Manual or electronic edit checks are both allowable.
    - SFAs completing the edit check manually: Utilize a Template to ensure all requirements are met.

Electronic Edit Checks

- If using an electronic meal counting and claiming system, the SFA must ensure it is using the system's correct edit check report.
- Monthly transaction summary report or activity report is not a suitable edit check. Running the edit check report is not enough. The SFA must review the edit check data.
- SFAs should contact their software vendor if they have questions about how to access their edit check reports.

Submitting Claims

The Site-Based Claiming Manual should be referenced for step-by-step instructions on submitting the monthly claims for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP). Reference the Special Milk Program Claiming Manual if your SFA participates in this program.

When & Where:

- Monthly claims are submitted through Online Services.
- Each Child Nutrition Program has a separate claiming portal within Online Services.
- Claims are submitted after the last calendar day of the claiming month.
    - Only the June claim may be submitted before the last calendar day of the month.
- Must be submitted within 60 calendar days from the last day of the claiming month.
- Only one exception for late claims every 36 months per program.

Claiming Deadlines:

Claiming Month	Last Day for Receipt of Claim
January	April 1 (March 31 on leap years)
February	April 29
March	May 30
April	June 29
May	July 30
June	August 29
July	September 29
August	October 30
September	November 29
October	December 30
November	January 29
December	March 1 (February 29 in leap years)

Federal Reimbursements:

- Claims are typically processed on Tuesday mornings. The online claiming system is unavailable while claims are being processed.
- Payments are issued on the first Monday following processing.
- Only one claim per program may be unprocessed in the claim system at a time.
- Refer to the *Reimbursement* section of the Financial Management Webpage for the current school year's reimbursement rates.

Claim Data

Student Approved Free

- Enter the highest number of students who are approved for free meals during the claiming month at each site.
- For CEP sites, this is calculated by multiplying the site's free claiming percentage by enrollment.

Student Approved Reduced

- Enter the highest number of students approved for reduced meals during the claiming month by site.
- CEP sites will have 0 recorded in this column.

Operating Days

- The number of days the site served meals during the claiming month.
- This may be different for each site.

Enrollment

- Enter the highest number of students enrolled at the school who have access to the meal while in attendance during the claiming month. Students must only be counted once in total enrollment, even if their eligibility changes during the month.
- Do not include enrolled students who do not have access to the meal in the enrollment, e.g., half-day kindergarten students.

Average Daily Attendance (ADA):

- This is the average number of students attending school who, on any given day, have access to the meal program.
- ADA is calculated monthly.
- ADA is a whole number and always rounded up.
- Some SFAs use their software to calculate the ADA. If you are unsure how to access the ADA report in the software your district uses, contact your vendor for guidance. If software is unavailable, utilize the Average Daily Attendance Calculation Tool.

Free Student Meals

- Enter the number of meals served to free eligible students at each non-CEP site during the claiming month.

Reduced Student Meals

- Enter the number of meals served to reduce eligible students at the site during the claiming month.
- CEP sites will have 0 meals recorded in this category.

Paid Student Meals

- Enter the number of meals served to paid students at each non-CEP site during the claiming month.

Total CEP Meals

- Enter the total number of meals served to students at the CEP site.
- The free and paid claiming percentages approved in the SFA's online school nutrition contract will auto-calculate the number of free and paid lunches to claim.

Best Practices

- Enter the reimbursement claim within 15 days of the end of the month.
- Download a new claiming template for each program every month.
- Use Chrome as your internet browser when using Online Services.
- Enter the data on the claim template correctly. The site numbers are often not in order from smallest to largest, leading SFAs to claim incorrectly. Accurate claim data by site is very important for ensuring accurate reimbursement and eligibility for certain programs. .