



March 8, 2022

Happy Helpings "Thank You" Package delivered to Sponsors

Earlier this month, Happy Helpings sponsors received a package from DECAL's Nutrition Services Division. The package included a letter thanking our sponsors for partnering with DECAL to feed Georgia's kids through Happy Helpings, Georgia's Summer Food Service Program.

The package included a:

- Happy Helpings 2022 Planning Calendar
- Happy Helpings T-shirt
- Harvest of the Month Calendar

The letter also announced that following the approval of the FY22 application, sponsors will be able to order Happy Helpings branded items for kids as well as promotional items to promote meal sites.

We are excited about the new Happy Helpings brand and hope you are too!

If you plan to return to Happy Helpings this summer and did not receive a package, please reply to Cindy.Kicklighter@decals.ga.gov



PolicyStat

A More Efficient Way to Access Policies & Memorandums

Nutrition Services is excited to introduce **PolicyStat** - an *online policy management system* that will allow CACFP and Happy Helpings, Georgia's Summer Food Service Program organizations and DECAL staff to navigate, locate, and access policy documents more quickly. The system can be accessed by clicking [here](#). CACFP and Happy Helpings organizations are encouraged to take a moment to become familiar with the system. Over the next several months, various training resources will be offered on how to navigate the system, the first being the **Memo Monday Webinar, March 21, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. Register today!**

Please Note: As Nutrition Services works to perfect PolicyStat, please continue to use the current **Policy** and **Memos** links on the DECAL web site as your main resource for all Happy Helpings and CACFP related policies and memoranda.

For questions, please feel free to contact Robyn Parham at Robyn.Parham@decals.ga.gov or Sonja Adams at Sonja.Adams@decals.ga.gov.

Revised Happy Helpings Policies and Memoranda

DECAL Nutrition Services recently revised important policies and memoranda with respect to the Happy Helpings, Georgia's Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). As a reminder, sponsors are strongly advised to carefully read each policy and memorandum listed below. Further, sponsors are strongly encouraged to frequently refer to such guidance as needed. The policies and memoranda listed below can be found on the DECAL website under their applicable subheading.

Policies

- **Policy No. SFSP/04-5, *Recordkeeping Requirements for All Sponsors and Sponsored Facilities Participating in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)*.** This policy was revised to advise that compliance reviews can be announced or unannounced; and to provide further guidance regarding lost or destroyed SFSP records.
- **Policy No. SFSP/04-06, *Training Requirements for the Summer Food Service Program*.** This policy was revised to include additional definitions and to advise that DECAL will ensure effective operation of the SFSP by providing both sufficient virtual and in-person training and technical assistance to sponsors participating in the SFSP.
- **Policy No. SFSP/04-10, *Designation of the Program Contact in Organizations Participating in the Summer Food Service Program*.** This policy was revised to include additional definitions and to provide further guidance on the Principal/Program Contact's responsibility as it pertains to conducting activities in GA ATLAS; and to provide further clarification on SFSP training procedures for new SFSP sponsors.
- **Policy No. SFSP/05-14, *Sponsors Owing Outstanding Debts to the Summer Food Service Program*.** This policy was revised to include an additional definition.
- **Policy No. SFSP/10-17, *Contracting Out Summer Food Service Program Management Responsibilities*.** This policy was revised to include additional definitions and provide further guidance on SFSP management responsibilities. The title of the policy was also revised to *Summer Food Service Program Sponsor Management Responsibilities* to better align with the CACFP policy.
- **SFSP Appeal Procedures.** Revised to clarify and make a distinction between DECAL's responsibilities and Appellant responsibilities when an appeal is requested.

Memoranda

- **Policy Memorandum, *Mobile Feeding Options in Summer Feeding Programs*.** This memo was revised to advise that SFSP sponsors must complete and submit for DECAL approval, separate SFSP site applications within GA ATLAS for each mobile feeding location or vehicle stop.
- **Policy Memorandum, *SFSP Labor Cost and Benefits Documentation*.** This memo was updated to include information on contract labor and required documentation (when applicable); and to provide further guidance regarding payroll documentation.
- **Policy Memorandum, *Ensuring Sponsors Implement Adequate Oversight and Internal Controls of SFSP Operations*.** This is a newly developed memo that provides guidance to SFSP sponsors on the implementation and maintenance of adequate oversight of SFSP operations; and information regarding financial viability, administrative capability, and internal controls to ensure accountability.
- **Policy Memorandum, *Restricting the Number of Sites Sponsors in the Summer Food Service Program are Approved to Operate*.** This memo was revised to include further guidance on appeal rights for site application denials.

Infant Formula Safety

Similac, Alimentum, and EleCare powdered infant formulas

made in Michigan recalled

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently announced it is investigating consumer complaints of Cronobacter sakazakii and Salmonella Newport infections. All of the cases are reported to have consumed powdered infant formula produced from Abbott Nutrition's Sturgis, Michigan facility.

As a result of the ongoing investigation, along with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and state and local partners, **the FDA is alerting consumers to avoid purchasing or using certain powdered infant formula products produced at this facility.** This is an ongoing investigation, and the firm is working with the FDA to initiate a voluntary recall of the potentially affected product.

The FDA is advising consumers not to use Similac, Alimentum, or EleCare powdered infant formulas if:

- **the first two digits of the code are 22 through 37; and**
- **the code on the container contains K8, SH or Z2; and**
- **the expiration date is 4-1-2022 (APR 2022) or later.**

The FDA is investigating complaints of four infant illnesses from three states. All four cases related to these complaints were hospitalized and Cronobacter may have contributed to a death in one case.

For more information from FNS, [click here](#).

It's Never too Early to Start Planning for Summer 2022

Providing summer meals is a year-round effort. At any point throughout the year, there are things you can do to prepare for next summer! [Click here](#) for more information on proactive planning for sponsors.

March/April

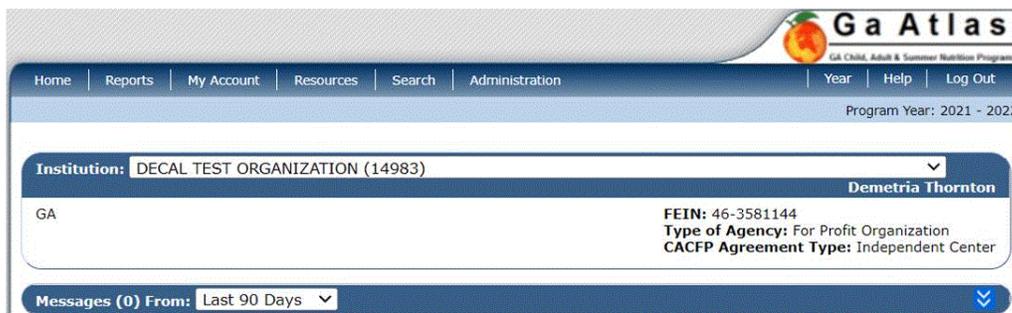
- Review sites and ensure you are aware of their locations, operational hours, staff, and dates for monitoring.
 - Think about how meals will be delivered to the sites and how many will be served.
 - Complete pre-operational site visits.
 - Ensure administrative staff are trained. Finish application and renewal forms.
 - Contract with a food service management company, if necessary.
 - Check with DECAL to determine if there are any potential sites lacking sponsors or areas lacking sites and sponsors and consider extending service to those areas.
-

Does your organization operate as a Food Service Management Company (FSMC)?

Organizations that operate as a FSMC are required to carefully complete and upload the [Sponsor Serving as a FSMC form](#) in the attachment list in GA ATLAS. Upon completion, please notify Sonja Adams via email at Sonja.Adams@decal.ga.gov.

Reminder: Check your Email Messages in GA ATLAS

Don't forget you can check the messages you receive from Nutrition Services within GA ATLAS. Navigate to the home page and you will see a section for messages just below your institution's information.



Nationwide Waivers:

Happy Helpings, Georgia's Summer Food Service Program

Serving Meals during Unanticipated School Closures

Recent nationwide waivers allow flexibility for SFSP during unanticipated school closures. For the purposes of these waivers, unanticipated school closures only occur when instruction is not provided to children. If a school plans to offer virtual learning or a mix of in-person classes and virtual learning, then the school would be considered open and not in an "unanticipated school closure" status.

In the event of an unanticipated school closure, SFSP organizations must request/certify use of a waiver using the USDA waiver module in GA Atlas. SFSP organizations must use the **FY 2021-2022 Program Year** link when certifying. A list of available waivers in the event of an unanticipated school closure can be found [here](#) (see [Child Nutrition Waiver Update to Address Meal Service During Unanticipated School Closures and Supply Chain Issues - September 22, 2021](#) and Responses #101 through #105).

For additional information on unanticipated school closures, see DECAL memorandum, ["Meal Service During Unanticipated School Closures, March 13, 2020."](#)

For information on requesting a waiver, please access the following resources:

- [USDA Waiver User Guide](#) – Provides step by step instructions on how to submit a waiver request in GA Atlas (applies to both CACFP and SFSP).
- [July Memo Monday Webinar](#) - Discusses procedure updates when requesting a waiver using the USDA Waiver feature in GA ATLAS.

For general questions on requesting a USDA Nationwide Waiver, please contact Tammie.Baldwin@decalfga.gov.

DECAL Participation of Nationwide Waivers Due to COVID-19

For full details, please click on the links to read the actual waiver memo, or [click here](#) for a complete list of the Nationwide Waivers due to COVID-19.

Child Nutrition Waiver Update

On September 22, 2021, the USDA issued the memorandum *Child Nutrition Waiver Update to Address Meal Service During Unanticipated School Closures and Supply Chain Issues*. This memorandum announced a new set of Child Nutrition Program waivers for school year 2021-2022 for SFSP programs serving meals during unanticipated school closures.

(Note: the following waivers are only for sponsors operating during unanticipated school closures. We don't yet know whether these waivers will be available to all sponsors during the traditional SFSP months.)

Area Eligibility

Allows Program operators to locate Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) open sites in areas that do not meet area eligibility requirements. ****Waiver in effect through June 30, 2022****

Meal Time Waiver

This waiver allows program operators the flexibility to adjust the times meals and snacks are provided in order to streamline operations. ****Waiver in effect through June 30, 2022****

Non-Congregate Feeding

The requirement that meals be served in a congregate setting and must be consumed by participants on site is waived during the public health emergency. ****Waiver in effect through June 30, 2022****

Parent Pick-Up

Under this waiver, program operators in a state with an approved waiver allowing non-congregate meal distribution during COVID-19-related operations may distribute meals to a parent or guardian to take home to their eligible children. ****Waiver in effect through June 30, 2022****

Service of Meals at School Sites

The requirement that limits the operation of SFSP during unanticipated school closures to non-school sites is waived. Program operators may serve meals at school sites during unanticipated school closures. ****Waiver in effect through April 30, 2022****

Closed Enrolled Eligibility

Under this waiver, for all States, Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and National School Lunch Program Seamless Summer Option (SSO) closed enrolled sites during the COVID-19 public health emergency may determine site eligibility through area eligibility without collecting income eligibility applications. ****Waiver expired September 30, 2021****

First Week Site Visits

FNS waives, for all States, the requirement that Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors are required to visit each of their sites at least once during the first week of operation. (2) This waiver applies to State agencies administering and local organizations that have operated the SFSP successfully in the previous year, and SFSP sponsors in good standing that have successfully participated in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) or the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). ****Waiver expired September 30, 2021****

Onsite Monitoring Waiver for Sponsors

For sponsors only - FNS waives that SFSP monitoring requirements included at 7 CFR 225.15(d) be conducted on site. ****Waiver expired September 30, 2021****

Meal Pattern Flexibilities

The requirement to serve meals that meet the meal pattern requirements is waived during the public health emergency. ****Waiver expired June 30, 2021****

Get Informed: Upcoming Training Opportunities for April

Nutrition Services provides a monthly Training Announcement that includes all training sessions offered in the upcoming month(s). The following training sessions will be offered during the month of **April**.

Upcoming Training and Technical Assistance April 22, 2022 - Memo Monday!

This webinar will provide an overview of the following new and/or revised policy memorandums for the Happy Helpings, Georgia's Summer Food Service Program.

- **SFSP Policy #17 - Summer Food Service Program Sponsor Management Responsibilities**
- **SFSP Labor Cost and Benefits Documentation dated February 7, 2020 (revised January 15, 2022)**
- **Mobile Feeding Options in the Summer Food Service Program dated January 15, 2022 (v.2)**
- **Restricting the Number of Sites Sponsors in the Summer Food Service**

Happy Helpings, Georgia's Summer Food Service Program Training

Do you plan to serve summer meals during the FY 2021-2022 program year? If so, please plan to participate in **one (1)** of the upcoming *Happy Helpings* training sessions. All sessions will be offered virtually.

Experienced Sponsor Training (1 day)

March 23, 2022



New Sponsor Training (2 days)

March 30-31, 2022

April 13-14, 2022

April 27-28, 2022

In Case You Missed It: Webinar Recordings Are Now Available!

If you missed a *webinar*, please visit the [Training and Technical Assistance](#) webpage for previously recorded webinars. This month's training highlight is the *December 2020 Memo Monday*. It discusses requirements for obtaining a Food Service Permit, how to complete the Food Service Permit Inquiry Form and FAQs addressed by the Department of Public Health.

Team Nutrition Web Quizzes *New Quiz Added!*

USDA's Team Nutrition has developed interactive ten-question web quizzes as a fun way to introduce a variety of nutrition topics. The quizzes can be used during staff training and other nutrition events. Upon completion of each quiz, quiz takers receive a score along with a link to resources that can help expand their knowledge on the topic and build their nutrition skills. Quiz takers can also view a printable version of the questions and answers upon quiz completion. These web quizzes are also available as a widget. Please see a list of available quizzes below:

- [Infant Nutrition Quiz \[Spanish\]](#)
- [Toddler Nutrition Quiz \[Spanish\]](#)
- [Meal Components Quiz](#)
- [School Gardening Quiz *New!*](#)

Nutrition Ed Nook *Rooting for You!*

The March Harvest of the Month ([English](#) and [Spanish](#)) is root vegetables (carrots, beets, radishes). Root vegetables grow underground at the base of a plant. These vegetables from the earth bring vitamins, minerals, starches, and sugars to help supply the body's needs. To get the good from these vegetables, eat some raw, some cooked. And prepare them in different ways. Root vegetables include carrots, beets, and radishes, among others.



Carrots are available fresh, frozen, canned, and as 100% juice for good nutrition and convenience. If selecting fresh, choose well-shaped, smooth, firm, crisp carrots with deep color and fresh, green tops. Carrots are typically planted in the spring and may take anywhere from 2 to 4 months to mature. Orange carrots are the most recognized, however, carrots can also be red, purple, white, or yellow in color. Carrots provide important nutrients, including vitamins A and K, biotin, and phytochemicals.

Beets are available fresh and canned for good nutrition and convenience. If selecting fresh, choose beets with firm, smooth skins and non-wilted leaves if still attached. Smaller ones are more tender. Fresh beets are available year-round but might be less expensive and fresher from July through October. Beets are packed with nutrients, including fiber, iron, folate, potassium, and antioxidants.

Radishes are crisp, crunchy, and come in different varieties and sometimes have different flavors. Radishes are at the peak of freshness during April and May. Radishes come in multiple types. Radishes can come in many different colors, red, pink, white, and purple. Some radishes can be spicy, and some can be milder. Radishes are a good source of vitamin C, which is good for a healthy immune system and skin. They are also a good source of fiber and potassium. Radishes can be eaten raw or cooked.

Integration:

- [Glazed Carrots](#)
- [Mashed Carrots](#)
- [Beet Dip](#)
- [Un-beet-able Berry Smoothie](#)
- [Crunchy Vegetable Wraps](#)
- [Zucchini Coleslaw](#)

Education:

- *Grow* a root vegetable of your choosing – research the best season or weather to grow your root vegetable.
- *Make* different root vegetable recipes to share with participants to see which vegetable and recipe they enjoy the most.
- *Talk* with families about how participants can help with meal preparation including thoroughly rinsing and drying root vegetables to be cooked in a dish. **Bonus:** send root vegetables recipes home for families to try together!

Conversation:

- Have your participants tried any root vegetables (carrots, beets, radishes) before?
- What is their favorite way to eat root vegetables?
- What other root vegetables, not including carrots, beets, and radishes, do they like to eat?

Share your Harvest of the Month stories and menu integration of root vegetables with Nutrition Health Educator, Diana Myers, MS, RD, LD at diana.myers@dec.al.gov!



DECAL's Nutrition Spotlight: *Meet Shericka Blount, Application Specialist*

During the past six years, Shericka Blount has served as an Application Specialist for DECAL's Nutrition Services Division.

In this role, she is responsible for processing application documents along with monitoring, reviewing, and ensuring compliance with federal regulations and state policies for both federal Nutrition programs: Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and Happy Helpings, Georgia's Summer Food Service Program. Providing service to the citizens of

Georgia is what she likes best about her job.

Collectively, she has 15 years of experience working with USDA programs. She worked nine years in various Department of Human Services state agencies determining eligibility for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid and Temporary and Needy

Assistance for Families (TANF) programs with a final role as Senior Eligibility Worker.

Shericka is originally from Portsmouth, Virginia. She earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Bluefield College in Virginia and a master's degree in human behavior from Capella University.

In her leisure time, she enjoys reading, crocheting and spending time with family which includes her 18-year-old daughter and eight-year-old son.

Dates to Remember

| DATE: | MARCH 2022 |
|-------------|---|
| March 21 | • Memo Monday: PolicyStat |
| March 23 | • Experienced Sponsor Training |
| March 30-31 | • New Sponsor Training |
| April 13-14 | • New Sponsor Training |
| April 22 | • Memo Monday |
| April 27-28 | • New Sponsor Training |

Happy Helpings Resources:

The following documents were covered in previous newsletters:

- [Reimbursement Rates for Summer 2022](#)
 - [COVID Resources for Sponsors](#)
 - [Updated CDC Guidance for Operating Early Care & Education/Child Care Programs](#)
 - [After School Programs Required to Apply for License or Exemption to Participate in At-Risk](#)
 - [Annual Year End Reconciliation Notice](#)
 - [Nutrition Services announces New Brand Identity for the Summer Food Service Program: Happy Helpings](#)
 - [Claim Deadlines announced for FY2022](#)
 - [How to Submit a Waiver Request](#)
 - [Transitioning from SFSP to CACFP At Risk Afterschool Meals](#)
 - [Income Eligibility Guidelines for FY 2022](#)
 - [Questions and Answers for Child Nutrition Program Operations in School Year 2021-2022](#)
 - [What to do if you have lost or destroyed records](#)
 - [SFSP Reimbursement Rates for 2021](#)
 - [Updated SFSP Sponsor Monitoring Guidance during COVID-19](#)
 - [Waiver to Claim Meals Prior to SFSP Approval](#)
 - [How to File a SFSP Claim for Reimbursement](#)
 - [Budgeting for SFSP](#)
 - [Pre-Award Costs and Advance Requests](#)
 - [USDA extends Flexibilities for Summer 2021](#)
 - [Suspension and Debarment Certification Requirement](#)
 - [Update: Procurement Templates \(Formal and Informal Documents\)](#)
 - [Virtual Vendor Summit Replay](#)
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How was my Customer Service?

Provide feedback on your experience with



Click on the icon at right to participate in the customer service survey. Responses are anonymous.

NEW DECAL Download *Pre-K to College Sweepstakes*



The old saying “time flies when you’re having fun” doesn’t just apply to fun. Before you know it those four-year olds in Georgia’s Pre-K Program will be headed off to technical school or college. Just like we want them to be prepared for kindergarten, we also want kids and their families to be prepared for that next step in their educational journey. That’s why each year we join Path2College 529 Plan and

Georgia Student Finance Commission for our Pre-K to College Sweepstakes.

This is the fifth year for the sweepstakes which is currently underway and joining us on this week’s DECAL Download to talk about it is Mitch Seabaugh, the Executive Director of the Path2College 529 Plan, and Meghan McNail the Summer Transition Program and Outreach Manager for Georgia’s Pre-K Program.

[Click here to listen.](#)

Have a suggestion for a future podcast? Let us hear from you at decaldownload@decals.ga.gov.



Nutrition Division

Marketing & Outreach Team

Cindy Kicklighter

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