



**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning**

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Area **Numbered
Policies**
Programs **SFSP**

30/60 Day Claim Procedure and Revised Claims Limitation for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), SFSP #4 (03-4)

LEGAL AUTHORITY

7 CFR § 225.9(d) and O.C.G.A. § 20-1A-4(3)

Cross Reference/See Also

SFSP/00-2 - One-Time Exception Policy

I. PURPOSE

This policy explains the 30/60-day claim for reimbursement procedure and limits the number of revised claims a sponsor may submit to Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL).

II. APPLIES TO

This policy applies to all sponsors participating in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

III. DEFINITIONS

"Sponsor" means a public or private nonprofit school food authority, a public or private nonprofit residential summer camp, a unit of local, municipal, county or State government, a public or private nonprofit college or university currently participating in the NYSP, or a private nonprofit organization which enters into an agreement with the State agency to assume final administrative and financial responsibility for Program operations.

"Day" means calendar day. When the 30th or 60th day falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday, the

claim is presumed to be due on the next business day.

IV. POLICY

It is DECAL's policy to maintain a financial management system for the SFSP. To maintain an efficient system for processing claims for reimbursement, DECAL will enforce a 30/60-day timeframe for submitting original and revised claims for reimbursement. As such, sponsors must submit an original claim within (30) calendar days to DECAL. No more than two (2) revisions may be submitted within (60) calendar days following the end of the claiming month.

As previously mentioned, DECAL will limit the number of revised claims that sponsors may submit for reimbursement. Sponsors will be permitted to submit up to two (2) revised claims in addition to, but only after, submitting an original claim to DECAL. Downward adjustments (i.e. changes made to a claim resulting in a lower reimbursement than the reimbursement of the original claim submitted) may be made at any time during the 60-day period. Downward adjustments submitted beyond the 60-day period are considered noncompliant and sponsors must submit a written explanation to DECAL's Finance Division.

Once an original claim has been revised twice, no additional revisions will be allowed unless those revisions resulted in a downward adjustment (supported by a required written explanation) or were from a DECAL review, audit, or independent audit. Revisions made following a DECAL review, audit or independent audit are not counted towards the total of two (2) claim revisions that sponsors are allotted.

When Claim Adjustments and Exceptions after 60 Days Are Otherwise Acceptable

Below are the situations in which a sponsor may request or may be asked to submit an original or revised claim after the 60-day deadline. There is no limit to the number of adjustments or exceptions available for the situations listed below.

- Late claims when the reason resulted from circumstances beyond the sponsor's control (e.g. a natural disaster, fire, flood, vandalism of records and serious illness or injury of the person responsible for submitting the report)
- Adjustments from audits or DECAL reviews
- Adjustments initiated by DECAL

When Claim Adjustments and Exceptions after 60 Days Are Noncompliant

Below are the situations in which sponsors are deemed out of compliance with the 60-day claim submission deadline. In the first two situations, the sponsor must submit the revised claim(s) for adjustment. However, in the third situation, the sponsor may request an exception to submit or revise a claim. To be clear, such an exception if granted, would cure the sponsor's noncompliance precipitated by the tardy claim submission.

- Decrease in reimbursement (requires a written explanation if being submitted beyond 60-days and a written corrective action plan for repeated requests)
- No change in reimbursement (requires a written explanation if being submitted beyond

60-days and a written corrective action plan for repeated requests)

- One-time exception every (36) months for one monthly original or revised claim (submitted beyond 60 days) that results in increased reimbursement when the tardiness is due to reasons within the sponsor's control. This exception requires both a written explanation and a written corrective action plan. For additional information on one-time exceptions, please see DECAL Policy No. SFSP/00-2 -One-Time Exception Policy, <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/SFSP/Policies.aspx>.

Claims not postmarked and/or submitted within (60) calendar days following the end of the claiming month, shall not be paid with Program funds unless FNS determines that an exception should be granted or is otherwise authorized by FNS [§225.9(d)(6)]. When the 60th day falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday, the claim is due on the next business day.

Late Claims When the Reason Results from Circumstances beyond the Sponsor's Control

A sponsor may request as many exceptions as needed for failing to submit or failing to revise a claim(s) within the 60-day deadline when the reason for the tardiness resulted from circumstances beyond the sponsor's control. Such situations include, but are not limited to, a natural disaster, fire, flood, vandalism of records, and serious illness or injury of the person responsible for submitting the report. In situations like these, the sponsor may request an exception for one or more monthly claims.

Under these circumstances, the sponsor must submit to DECAL a written explanation describing the events and circumstances that prevented compliance with the claim submission requirements. The request must be written in sufficient detail to enable DECAL and USDA's Southeast Regional Office (SERO) to make a fair decision. If DECAL deems that the sponsor's request warrants consideration, it will submit the exception request to USDA SERO. The sponsor must maintain sufficient documentation to support the request.

Note: Sponsors may appeal DECAL's decision not to forward a late or revised claim to USDA SERO for exception consideration [7 CFR §225.13(a)]. However, a USDA SERO decision to deny the use of any exception is not appealable.

Combined Claims for Reimbursement

With approval from the State agency, sponsors have the flexibility to combine the monthly claims for reimbursement. The combined claim must be submitted within 60 days of the last day of operation. Sponsors may not submit a combined claim for meal reimbursements that crosses fiscal years. In addition, State agencies must ensure that the correct reimbursement rates are applied for meals claimed for months when different reimbursement rates are in effect. With approval from the State agency, sponsors have the flexibility to combine the claim for reimbursement in the following ways:

- A. For 10 operating days or less in their initial month of operations with the claim for the subsequent month;
- B. For 10 operating days or less in their final month of operations with the claim for the preceding month; or
- C. For 3 consecutive months, as long as this combined claim only includes 10 operating days or

less from each of the first and last months of program operations.

Suggestion to Sponsoring Organizations

DECAL encourages sponsoring organizations to submit their original claims for reimbursement by the 15th of each month or sooner. DECAL also recommends that sponsors instruct their facilities to submit their claim information by the 5th of each month or sooner, in order for the sponsor to submit a timely original claim to DECAL.

V. PROCEDURES

Submitting an Original Claim for Reimbursement (30-days)

Sponsors must submit claims for reimbursement in the GA ATLAS web-based system (by selecting "add original claim") to receive reimbursement for meals served during the claiming month. A complete and substantially accurate original claim must be submitted within (30) calendar days following the end of the claiming month. Once an original claim is submitted to DECAL, it cannot be edited further before processing. DECAL's Finance Division will process the claim and transmit any reimbursement to the sponsor by an electronic funds transfer to the sponsor's designated checking account. If a sponsor submits an original claim after the 30-day deadline, the claim will be suspended and remain unpaid until the sponsor submits a written corrective action plan to the Finance Division.

Submitting Revised Claim(s) for Reimbursement (60-days)

After a sponsor has submitted an original claim for reimbursement within (30) calendar days following the end of the claiming month, it will have up to two (2) opportunities to revise the original claim within the 30/60-day timeframe.

The revision(s) to the original claim must be submitted through the GA ATLAS web-based system within (60) calendar days following the end of the claiming month.

Sponsors must select "add original claim" on the web-based system and the system will automatically label the claim as a revision for the claim month selected. Additional revisions beyond the second revision will not be accepted by GA ATLAS unless the additional revisions resulted from a DECAL review, audit, or independent audit.

Since sponsors are limited to submitting two (2) revised claims, sponsors must ensure that the original claim contains the most complete and accurate claim information before submitting it via GA ATLAS. Revisions made following reviews/audits are not counted towards the two (2) claim revisions sponsors are allowed. In this situation, the reviewer/auditor will submit review/audit revisions to the DECAL's Finance Division for processing.

As referenced previously, claims not postmarked and/or submitted within (60) calendar days following the end of the claiming month, shall not be paid with Program funds unless FNS determines that an exception should be granted or is otherwise authorized by FNS [§225.9(d)(6)]. When the 60th day falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday, the claim is due on the next business day.

One-Time Exceptions

A sponsor must request a one-time exception for one monthly original claim or a revised claim that results in an increased reimbursement when the tardiness is due to reasons within the sponsor's control. Per DECAL Policy No. SFSP/00-2, such an exception may only be granted to a sponsor once every (36) months.

Note: A claim submission deadline schedule and forms relating to late claim and/or exception requests are available for sponsors' use. Such forms can be found on DECAL's website under "SFSP Claims Information." Late claim request forms are also available through GA ATLAS.

VI. COMMENTS

For questions concerning this policy, please contact the Policy Administrator at (404) 651-8193.