

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

During emergencies, State agencies play a unique role in supporting on-the-ground efforts in school nutrition programs. Follow these tips to maximize effectiveness. Be aware of how long “recovery” may take. Keep communication lines open as long as necessary.

Communications

School Nutrition Programs (SNPs)

- Make and maintain contact (cell phone, email, text) with SNP Directors.
- Communicate “early and often” policies for emergency operations.
- Minimize disruptions in service to unaffected SNPs.

Other Emergency Responders

- Ensure that Emergency Feeding Organizations (EFOs) understand the procedures of school nutrition service.
- Support SNP’s positions on the use of school food inventory for emergency feeding.
- Promote connections between SNPs and county emergency managers.
- Know the process for requesting emergency aid from the State – water, ice, generators, trailers, portable freezers, etc.

USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)

- Create open lines of communication with FNS.
- Consult with FNS about possible State agency actions and other supports.

State-Level Responses

Waivers

- Secure access to needed data for waiver requests.
- Understand the waiver request process; write waivers accurately to meet needs.
- Request program waivers from FNS as needed.
- Remember – and remind SNPs about – waiver reporting requirements and deadlines.
- Provide State-level program flexibilities as needed.
- Be watchful of unintended or unexpected impact of waivers.

USDA Foods

- Know your USDA Foods State agency contact.
- Understand what USDA Foods are available to the State agency. Account for use when inventory runs low.
- Ensure USDA Foods usage tracking and reporting.

Additional Areas

- Be aware of the Stafford Act requirements.
- Focus on information technology (IT) resilience.
- Review, revise, and update the State-level emergency response plan as needed after the emergency.

This project was funded using U.S. Department of Agriculture grant funds. The USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender. The University of Mississippi is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA employer.

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Suggested Reference Citation:

Institute of Child Nutrition. (2023). *STAR webinar series – Emergency preparedness for state agencies*. University, MS: Author.

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06/06/2023