

Summer Food Service Program
(SFSP)
TX-UNPS Frequently Asked Questions
(FAQs)



New! Q: Who should I call to check my application status?

A: The fastest way to check status is by logging on to TX-UNPS and you can do this anytime day or night. If you must call please wait 15 days from submission so that, TDA staff has had a chance to review your application.

New! Q: My application is in submitted status but I need to add a site, how do I do that?

A: Once your application is submitted it becomes locked until it is in 'returned for corrections' status or 'approved' status. New sites can be added any time during the program year with an amendment, after the application packet is approved. For CEs that did not have any serious deficiencies and were not required to file manual claims for validation purposes, it may be faster to submit the application packet with returning sites and then add new sites by amendment after initial approval.

New! Q: Some of my information is already filled in but it isn't correct?

A: TDA staff entered CE application information into TX-UNPS last year. However, it may not be the most updated information and you should always carefully review all information before submitting.

Q: Is there training for the TX-UNPS SFSP module?

A: Yes, several short training videos are available on the TX-UNPS training page,
http://www.squaremeals.org/FampNResources/TXUNPSProgramResources/TX_UNPSTraining.aspx CEs can view these videos any time of day and refer back to them as needed. If you don't know where to start refer to the Getting Started in TX-UNPS for SFSP.

Q: Who will get a user ID and password for TX-UNPS?

A: In September 2011, the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) compiled a list of SFSP Authorized Representatives (ARs) with active user ID and password in SNAPs. ARs on this list will have a TX-UNPS User ID and Password automatically generated for them unless they already have access

to TX-UNPS or the Contracting Entity (CE) they are associated with has requested they be deleted. CEs with ARs that do not have a user ID and password automatically generated may request access for them by completing the FND101 when it becomes available in early January.

Q: I already have access to TX-UNPS, what will happen when the SFSP module implements?

A: ARs that currently have access, because they operate a nutrition program that has already implemented for TX-UNPS (i.e. NSLP, CACFP), will click the SFSP tile after SFSP implementation in mid-January to access that module.

Q: How and when will I get my user ID and password for TX-UNPS?

A: User ID and Passwords will be sent to ARs in two separate emails for security purposes. The emails will be sent within a few minutes of each other on the day TX-UNPS implements for SFSP in mid-January. When you receive these emails you may access the system.

Q: Will ARs have access to submit and modify both applications and claims?

A: Yes, ARs will have access to both applications and claims. However, ARs will not access claims screens until they are ready to file a claim later this year. CEs may request modified access for ARs if they do not wish them to have access to both claims and applications.

Q: I have ARs that already have access to TX-UNPS to operate other nutrition programs (i.e. NSLP, CACFP), will they automatically have access to the SFSP module of TX-UNPS when it implements?

A: They will not have access, unless they were active in SNAPs and specifically listed as the AR for SFSP when TDA compiled that information in September 2011.

Q: Is this year's application different from last year's application?

A: The application in TX-UNPS is almost identical to the paper application from last year.

Q: I'm a private non-profit (PNP) that would like an advance; do I need to submit my application early?

A: March 15, 2012 is the application deadline for a PNP CE requesting an advance. The advance payments won't run until the usual May time frame.

Q: How long will it take to fill out the entire application?

A: For returning SFSP CEs, a good deal of the 2011 contract information (including sites), will already be in TX-UNPS but may need to be updated. CEs will vary in how long it takes them to complete the application.

Q: How long will it take TDA to approve the application?

A: Additional staff will be on-hand to process applications. CEs will enter applications directly into TX-UNPS which eliminates the step of mailing and/or waiting on TDA staff to data enter the application in TX-UNPS. This will decrease processing time in most cases. Processing time will vary from application to application.

Q: Will we submit sites on a spreadsheet like last year?

A: No, CEs will not submit spreadsheets for sites like last year. Sites will be in TX-UNPS.

Q: If TX-UNPS catches the errors how come I have to wait for approval?

A: Approval will not be instantaneous because there is always a human element in application processing. TX-UNPS will catch most mistakes, which will cut down on processing time, but it is not designed to catch all mistakes. This was done purposely because TDA wants certain elements reviewed by staff. The goal of TX-UNPS is to streamline application approval not to completely automate it.

Q: How can I speed up the approval process?

A: Most importantly, correct all errors, provide everything that is requested and be sure to follow each screen all the way through, 'Submit' AND 'Finish'.

Q: Do we have to redo our budget if it is the same as last year?

A: The budget screen is only required if the CE is new to SFSP or is a PNP. However, you need to update your existing budget if you anticipate changes.

Q: How do I account for in kind services in the budget?

A: In kind services don't have to be counted in the operation costs but they need to be accounted for so that proper credit is given. Example - one operation last year had no food costs because the food was donated. This needs to be accounted for in the application. When TDA is analyzing the VCA, there must be a complete picture of the entire operation and its program plans.

Q: Do I have to wait for review before a new site is approved?

A: Yes, additional sites, including mobile sites that have never been approved or have never worked with another sponsor, will require review. Once a TDA field office has completed a review they will contact our application processing staff and let them know the site has been reviewed.

Q: Does a CE have to be at a site when it is reviewed?

A: Someone on the CE side should be onsite to assist TDA staff doing a review if the site is locked or would be otherwise inaccessible.

Q: Will VCA takes as long to process as it did last year?

A: If a CE passed VCA last year and there are no significant changes, processing

should be much faster this year.

Q: Can we just have one TDA staff member assigned to review our application?

A: Applications will not be assigned to a single TDA staff member for review. If that individual were out, it would slow application processing for the applications assigned to that staff member. Same concept applies to calling (877) TEX-MEAL for help rather than contacting an individual TDA staff member. When CEs contact the TEX-MEAL line it rings on several people's phone so there is always someone to answer it. When CEs contact an individual, that person could be out, possibly for an extended time.

Q: Do I really need to have an alternate feeding site for inclement weather?

A: No, CEs need an inclement weather feeding plan for bad weather. The alternate feeding plan should address how child safety and food safety issues would be handled in inclement conditions. For example, it could include not serving during rain or having fans on-hand for very hot days. In TX-UNPS, CEs that indicate they have an outdoor or mobile site will be required to select one of the following options from a drop-down menu, 'Serve indoors', 'Cancel meal for the day', 'Other' (specify).

Q: If I want to close a site early, will TX-UNPS generate an error because of the start and end dates I put in the application?

A: The start and end dates are used to verify that the operating days are equal to, or less than what is in the application. There will not be an issue if a CE shuts down earlier than the projected end date.

Q: How will I do field trips?

A: There is a screen in TX-UNPS for field trips.

Q: How do ISDs submit the summer mandate form?

A: ISDs will complete the summer mandate form online in TX-UNPS.

Q: Can I get a list of schools that waived summer mandate so I can service those sites?

A: ISDs that cannot provide service are encouraged to seek partners that can provide service. However, TDA cannot supply lists to individual CEs or organizations because this gives the appearance of preferential treatment and is against policy. There are new criteria for the waiver process posted at squaremeals.org.

Q: I added an AR when I received the email listing my current ARs. Why wasn't that AR added?

A: An email went out to CEs listing their Authorized Reps (ARs) listed in SNAPs in early December. This was an opportunity to delete ARs. Now CEs can add ARs by filling out the FND101 and submit according to the instructions.