



Getting Started with TX-UNPS for SFSP

Texas Unified Nutrition Programs System (TX-UNPS) is a web-based system the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) is implementing to operate nutrition programs in Texas. TX-UNPS automates many time-consuming manual processes and gives you access to view more of your information. You will use the new system to submit application packets, file claims and manage your Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). This letter has step by step instructions to help you prepare for this transition. This is a big step forward and TDA is committed to providing the highest degree of customer service through this change and in the future.

Timeline

January 15, 2012 – TX-UNPS opens for SFSP application packet submittal.

March 15, 2012– Application packet deadline if you would like to be eligible to request an advance. If you do not submit your application packet by this deadline you will not be eligible to request an advance at any time during this program year.

April 15, 2012 – Application packet deadline if you are not going to request an advance during this program year.

Step 1 – Know your resources

TX-UNPS Project Page

<http://TXUNPS.TexasAgriculture.gov>

Bookmark this page or add it to your favorites and check it weekly for the latest information. When you are ready to fill out your application packet you can log on to TX-UNPS by clicking the big orange button. The project page has Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), links to training, user manuals and links to all resources listed in this letter. New or updated information is clearly marked so that you can find it easily. The 'Breaking News' section at the top is a quick reference for hot topics or issues. More comprehensive resources are listed further down the page. This site includes information about TX-UNPS implementation for all of the nutrition programs. Be sure you are reading information intended for you, the SFSP Contracting Entity (CE).

TX-UNPS Training Page

<http://www.squaremeals.org/FampNResources/TXUNPSProgramResources/TXUNPSTraining.aspx>

The training page has resources to help you learn how to use TX-UNPS. There are several videos you can view whenever you like, as many times as you like. The videos are about 15 minutes long and show someone filling out an actual SFSP application packet in TX-UNPS. This page also has links to program resources, handbooks, forms and various support materials. TX-UNPS training is not the same as the program training. Program training is on the Summer Feeding Programs Page referenced below.

Summer Feeding Programs Page

<http://www.squaremeals.org/Programs/SummerFeedingPrograms.aspx>

This page is a resource for the general public and for you, the CE operating the summer feeding program. The general public can use this page to find feeding sites or program news. You can find helpful information regarding required program training, policy, forms, outreach strategies and materials and various other resources on this page.

Email Updates

Emails with important, and sometimes urgent, information are sent from

foodandnutrition@TexasAgriculture.gov. Please add this email address to your contacts so messages from TDA don't get caught in your spam filter. Save these emails or flag them so you can easily refer to them, as needed.

Step 2 – Educate yourself

- Take a moment to look around the TX-UNPS Project Page so you are familiar with the resources there.
- Watch the SFSP training videos on the TX-UNPS Training Page.
- Read the FAQs, the SFSP Application Tracking Chart and 'Who to Call' on the TX-UNPS Project Page.
- Check the TX-UNPS Project Page weekly for updates and new support materials.

Step 3 – Accessing TX-UNPS

The way you will initially access TX-UNPS depends on your current status. Find the phrase below that best describes you, for your specific access information.

I am already a user of TX-UNPS, and I had an active SNAPS User ID in September 2011:

You already have access to TX-UNPS because you are operating one of the nutrition programs that has already implemented (SNP, CACFP). You can access the SFSP module by clicking the SFSP tile you see when you log on to TX-UNPS. Individuals within an organization that operates multiple nutrition programs will only have access to the TX-UNPS modules for the programs they are specifically associated with.

I am a CE that is brand new to SFSP or I am a CE that used to have access to SNAPS, the system we used last year, but my user ID and password became inactive:

You will need to submit the FND101 form posted on the TX-UNPS Project Page. The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) will process this form in 3 to 5 days from receipt and generate a TX-UNPS user ID and password for you. The user ID and password will be emailed to the address provided on the FND101.

I am a CE that does not currently use TX-UNPS but I did have an active user ID and password in SNAPS last year:

If you had an active user ID and password for SNAPS in September 2011, a new TX-UNPS user ID and password were automatically generated and emailed to you upon implementation. If you did have a user ID and password in SNAPS but it was listed as inactive in September 2011, a TX-UNPS user ID and password were not automatically generated for you. Refer to the preceding paragraph addressing CEs that have a SNAPS user ID and password that became inactive.

Step 4 – Know what to expect and what to look out for

- TDA designed TX-UNPS to streamline the application process, not to automate it. TDA staff still manually reviews each application and may return it for corrections.
- The application packet consists of several parts including, the Contracting Entity Application, Budget Detail (for new CEs or for renewing CEs that are Private Non Profit), Management Plan, Food Production Facility List (if applicable), Checklist Summary and at least one Site Application. Each part of the entire application packet that applies to you must be complete and error free before the system will allow you to submit.
- Checklist items are supporting documents for your application that need to be physically mailed, emailed or faxed to TDA.
- To find out which parts of the application packet and which checklist items apply to you, refer to the SFSP Application Tracking Chart posted on the TX-UNPS Project Page.
- Per federal regulations, TDA staff shall notify the applicant within 15 days if the application is incomplete. TDA shall notify the applicant of approval or disapproval within 30 days of receiving a complete application.
- Once you have submitted your application it will become locked and you cannot make changes to it until it is in 'returned for corrections' or 'approved' status.
- The fastest way to check the status of your application is to log on to TX-UNPS. The information housed in TX-UNPS is the **only** information regarding application status.
- If the status reads 'returned for corrections' you should review each part of the application packet. Be sure to read the 'Comments to Contracting Entity' sections in the Contracting Entity Application and Site Applications to obtain instructions provided by TDA. Resubmit the application packet when you have ensured all corrections have been addressed.
- Always seek technical assistance from your regional TDA office to help you submit a complete and accurate application. CEs submitting applications that are incomplete and/or inaccurate multiple times will be denied.
- If you participated last year and did not have any serious deficiencies and were not required to file manual claims for validation purposes, you may decrease the approval processing time for your application packet by initially submitting returning site(s) applications along with a budget (if applicable) that accounts for your entire projected summer operation. After the application packet receives the initial approval, submit amendments to add any new sites. You may submit an amendment to add a new site any time during the program year.
- CEs new to SFSP, and all of their sites, are required to have a pre-approval visit from TDA before the application packet can be approved. A pre-approval visit is also required for amendments adding new sites.
- You must carefully review your application packet information before submitting. If you participated last year, some application fields may be prepopulated. However, this information may not be accurate.