



Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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MEMORANDUM

To: School Food Authorities

**From: Robert Leshin, Director
Office for Food and Nutrition Programs**

Date: May 14, 2020

Subject: Waiver of Local School Wellness Policy Triennial Assessments in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs

Pursuant to the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (the FFCRA) (P.L. 116-127) and based on the exceptional circumstances of this public health emergency, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is establishing a nationwide waiver to support schools unable to complete a triennial assessment of the local wellness policies by June 30, 2020, due to school closures as a result of COVID-19. This waiver applies to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or the School Breakfast Program (SBP).

Based on the July 1, 2017 implementation of the local school wellness policy regulations, the first triennial assessments are due on June 30, 2020. FNS recognizes that due to the current public health emergency, it is vital to provide a revised deadline of these requirements to ensure LEAs can continue to focus on providing meals safely to children. Section 2202(a) of the Act permits the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a waiver, COVID-19: Child Nutrition Response #18, for all States and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has elected to utilize this waiver. FNS waives, for all LEAs, the above regulatory requirements and provides a new first triennial assessment deadline of June 30, 2021.

LEAs choosing to accept the new regulatory deadline should complete their first assessment by June 30, 2021 and a second triennial assessment by June 30, 2024. If an LEA feels they can complete their first triennial assessment by the original deadline of June 30, 2020. DESE encourages LEAs that are prepared to complete their assessments on time and continue with the standard triennial assessment timeline.

If you have any questions please reach out to Nicole Good at Nicole.Good@doe.mass.edu.

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