

School Nutrition Programs

New Applicant Checklist

Below is a step-by-step checklist to assist organizations through the application process for the School Nutrition Programs (SNP). Steps should be completed in the order they appear. Questions can be submitted to snpnewapplicant@isbe.net.

Step 1: Review SNP Requirements

The School Nutrition Programs are federal programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Organizations that operate these programs must follow state and federal regulations as described in the following resources. **Organizations applying for the Special Milk Program or Afterschool Snacks only should communicate with an ISBE staff person on which resources apply.**

- Review the [Training Resources for New Applicants](#)
- Read the [SNP Administrative Handbook](#)

Step 2: Determine Food Service Director

All School Food Authorities (SFA) must have a dedicated Food Service Director who is responsible for administration and oversight of the meal program. **The Food Service Director must be an employee of the SFA.**

- Determine a staff member who will be the Food Service Director

Step 3: Determine Meal Service Type

The following are general descriptions of the types of meal service options. Mark all that apply. **Organizations applying for the Special Milk Program only may skip this step.**

- Self-Operated: The School Food Authority employed staff are responsible for managing all aspects of the school food service program including, but not limited to, ordering, preparing, and serving meals.
- Food Service Management Company (FSMC): The FSMC manages some aspects of the school food service program. Generally, the FSMC conducts product ordering, prepares and serves the meals and/or manages the school meal program(s).
- Vended Contract: The Vendor provides the meals only (generally pre-packaged/pre-plated) and does not manage any aspect of the school food service. However, if the Vendor's employees are responsible for the management of the program and/or for the final preparation and/or serving of pre-packaged/pre-plated school meals, the contract becomes a FSMC contract and is no longer considered a vended meals contract.
- School-to-School Agreement: The School Food Authority contracts with another School Food Authority to provide meals.

Step 4: Begin Application Process

To begin the SNP application process, submit the following forms to snpnewapplicant@isbe.net.

- [New Applicant Form](#)
- [W-9 Form](#)
- Federal 501(c)(3) tax-exempt letter (non-public entities only)
- Copy of Residential License (RCCIs only)

Applicants must also complete the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) registration process and be qualified to do business with the State of Illinois.

- Complete [GATA requirements](#)

Step 5: Begin Contract Process (if applicable)

If you plan to contract for meals, contact the ISBE Procurement Team to let them know you are applying to be a SNP sponsor and what type of contract you are interested in. **Organizations that will be self-operated may skip this step.**

- Email information to nutritionprocurement@isbe.net

Step 6: Complete Questionnaire

Upon receipt of your initial paperwork, an ISBE Nutrition Department staff member will contact you. If all applicable documents are completed, they will provide you with a questionnaire.

- Return completed New Site and Civil Rights Questionnaire

Step 7: Complete In-Person Training (if available)

If an in-person SNP Orientation is available, staff from your organization who will be working with the meal program must attend. If the SNP Orientation is not available, then staff must view all online trainings provided on the list of training resources from step one. **Organizations applying for the Special Milk Program or Afterschool Snacks only should communicate with an ISBE staff person on which resources apply.**

- Attend in-person SNP Orientation
- Complete list of [training resources](#) (SNP Orientation not available)

Step 8: Complete Menu Certification Process

Daily and weekly meal pattern requirements must be followed in the School Nutrition Programs. SFAs must submit one week of menus to be reviewed by ISBE staff for compliance. Information on the menu certification process can be found [here](#). Organizations planning to be self-operated will complete these materials themselves. **Organizations planning to contract for meal service should work with their contractor to complete these materials, therefore, the meal service contract must be awarded before completing this step.**

- Submit applicable [USDA Certification of Compliance Worksheet\(s\)](#)
 - Simplified Nutrient Assessment tab complete **OR**
 - USDA-approved software nutrient analysis complete
- Submit copy of corresponding weekly menu

Step 9: Complete Technical Assistance (TA) Visit

An ISBE monitor will be assigned to you to complete a TA visit, which can be in-person, on the phone, or on video conference. Your monitor will provide you with one-on-one assistance in any areas you need help with. They will also ask questions regarding your plans for operation.

- TA visit complete

Step 10: Complete Pre-Operational (Pre-Op) Visit

Your ISBE monitor will complete an in-person Pre-op visit, which must take place within the first 30 days of operating your meal program. If the meal program is found to be compliant with federal and state regulations, your monitor will recommend that you are approved to operate the program. If the program does not meet all regulations, a corrective action plan and/or a follow-up visit may be required. **Please note that the official start date of your program must be based on documentation supporting full compliance with all federal and state requirements, as well as applicable federal timeline regulations. Therefore, a start date and consequent reimbursement cannot be guaranteed.**

- Pre-op visit complete
- Corrective action plan submitted (if applicable)
- Follow-up visit complete (if applicable)

Step 11: Submit Web-Based Illinois Nutrition System (WINS) Application

WINS is the system used to submit the annual SNP renewal application and monthly claims for reimbursement. WINS is also used to complete other required SNP tasks. Once you are approved as a sponsor to operate the School Nutrition Programs, an ISBE staff member will work with you to set up online access to WINS and provide instructions on completing the application.

- Obtain ISBE Web Application Security (IWAS) access (if needed)
- Obtain WINS access (if needed)
- Complete Sponsor and Site applications
- Submit first monthly reimbursement claim (subsequent monthly claims are due by [these dates](#))