

# Emergency Meals-to-You Information and FAQs for School Districts (SDs) and School Food Authorities (SFAs)

Emergency Meals-to-You (eMTY) provides weekday breakfasts and lunches to students who were receiving those meals through the National School Lunch Program at a free or reduced price, but temporarily cannot receive school meals due to emergency school closures. EMTY mails 10 breakfasts and 10 lunches every two weeks directly to the student's home while schools are closed due to COVID-19.

## How does eligibility work?

For a family to receive eMTY boxes, there are two eligibilities that must be met: The SD (or school) must be eligible AND the individual student must be eligible.

### To be eligible, School Districts must:

- Participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP),
- Have at least 50% of enrollment eligible for free or reduced-priced meals (FRP). This requirement is covered if the SD participates in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), Note: USDA waivers changing SFSP eligibility do not change this requirement,
- Be closed for at least four weeks, and
- Fall under the designation of rural (can be checked here: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/rural-designation>).

If the SD is not eligible, but there are schools within the district that meet the above criteria, then the SD can apply on behalf of those schools. The SD would note this on the application and would only include the eligible schools on the application spreadsheet. In this scenario, schools that did not meet the criteria would not be eligible for eMTY, even though other schools in their SD were participating.

**A student is eligible for eMTY if s/he is already eligible for free or reduced-price meals at a school that is participating in eMTY.** The SD must apply and be accepted into the program *before* a student can enroll. In order to serve younger family members that are not yet in school, if one child in the household is eligible, then all children ages 1-18 living in the household can participate.

Students attending CEP participating schools are eMTY eligible because they are, for NSLP purposes, FRP eligible.

### Is a (public, private, tribal, charter, home, or other) school eligible to participate?

Regardless of the type of school, the requirements above apply. If the school participates in the NSLP and meets the other requirements, it is eligible for eMTY. If the school does not participate in the NSLP, then it is not eligible for this program which provides meals to students missing NSLP meals due to school closures.

## How is eMTY related to SFSP or SSO?

EMTY is a federal demonstration project that has similarities to SFSP and SSO, but it is not directly related to those programs. EMTY reimburses the vendors, so the SD is not an SFSP sponsor and does

not have a financial role in the operation of the program. EMTY does not require the SD to discontinue other alternative ways to ensure food access for students. In fact, we encourage SDs to create a comprehensive plan that will reach all of their students. We DO, however, expect SDs that are taking advantage of USDA's recent waivers to provide an explanation of how they are limiting duplication. For example, the SD could decide to only apply on behalf of some their eligible schools. This would be a great solution for limiting duplication of services when operating an SSO site is the best option in some neighborhoods and there is a strong desire to keep local food service staff employed. Another option would be to target individual eligibility and outreach to rural parts of the SD's attendance zone.

### **What will the family receive?**

One box per child every two weeks for the time period of the student's school closure. Each box will contain components for 20 meals: 10 breakfasts and 10 lunches. Sample items include:

- Protein: Milk, Chicken Salad, Hummus, Beef Stick, Bean Dip, Cheese, Sunflower Kernels,
- Whole Grains: Tortilla Chips, Corn Chips, Crackers, Oatmeal Bars, Cereal,
- Vegetables: Salsa Cup, Marinara Cup, 100% Veg/Fruit Juice,
- Fruit: Applesauce, Raisins, Craisins, Fruit Cup, 100% Fruit Juice.

### **Can eMTY accommodate special dietary needs?**

Boxes cannot be customized and cannot accommodate special dietary needs or food allergies.

### **What is the application process?**

1. Eligible SFAs will complete the application that is available on the Meals-to-You website,
2. The SFA will upload and complete the spreadsheet in step 2 of the application. The SFA should change the name of the file to include the district name and state,
3. When the SFA receives a confirmation email, they will attach the school spreadsheet and submit it to the appropriate state agency,
4. The state agency will review the application for accuracy and submit the application to eMTY, verifying that the SFA is in good standing. The SA will submit the application to [info+DistrictApplications@mealstoyou.org](mailto:info+DistrictApplications@mealstoyou.org) with subject line: eMtY application: SFA/State,
5. EMTY will review the application. When an application is approved, several things will happen. Baylor will:
  - a. Notify the SFA and negotiate an enrollment window that meets the SFAs needs,
  - b. Add the school to the enrollment section of the website,
  - c. Provide outreach language and materials to the SFA.
6. Then a couple things happen concurrently:
  - a. The SFA will conduct outreach to their families,
  - b. Families will begin applying.
7. Family enrollment will last for the designated time period week,
8. Baylor will check addresses and enrollment,
9. Boxes of food containing will be delivered at the agreed-upon times.

### **Can an SFA continue MTY the summer months?**

At this point, we are only authorized to provide meals till a school returns or the end of the school year.

### **How are the boxes delivered?**

Most packages are shipped UPS ground. We can deliver to a street address with UPS or to a P.O. Box with the U.S. Postal Service. We highly recommend that families sign up for [UPS My Choice](#) or [USPS Informed Delivery](#). Both are completely free, and they'll notify you any time a box is on the way to you.

**How do SFAs extend the end-of-service date provided at the time of their application if their school closure gets extended?**

We expect this will often be the case, so will contact the SFA when their end-of-service dates is coming up to see if they need to change it.

**How can homeless students participate?**

Since we are mailing food, we have to have a mailing address. That can happen in two ways:

- The SFA can provide an address for all homeless students (see below for guidance), or
- The family can put any mailing address that they have access to – extended family, friend, community center, church, etc.

**Is it possible to ship a bunch of meals to the same site, and then either deliver them or have the families pick them up?**

We will need to work this out with you. Our preference is that you deliver the boxes to the families. If families are able to pick them up at a central location, the SFA should consider if a curbside delivery model is a better option. Either way, we will need two things:

- UPS or USPS must be able to document delivery to the central location (the school itself or a responsible community organization), and
- Some kind of verification / documentation of the final stage of delivery.

**EMTY only provides breakfast and lunch, correct? If SDs want to provide dinner meals to families and meals on the weekend, the program isn't set up for that?**

This program mails 10 breakfasts and 10 lunches every two weeks. It is intended to offer meals to students that are otherwise missing those 10 breakfasts and 10 lunches provided by schools.

**Can a school district work with an existing vendor?**

If you want to work with your current vendor to deliver meals to your students, you are welcome to do that on your own. There is no need for you to participate in emergency Meals-to-You. You do need to follow USDA's guidance (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/covid-19-meal-delivery>) concerning meal delivery and ensure you are operating within your state agency's guidance as well.

**Are there templates set up to inform families about this program?**

Yes. They SFA gets these when they've been approved.

**Are territories included?**

Territories interested in applying (or a USDA staff member wanting to discuss the viability of a territory application) should contact [info@mealstoyou.org](mailto:info@mealstoyou.org) with TERRITORY QUESTION in the subject line. We will set up an individual consultation.