



DATE: June 13, 2013

MEMO CODE: SP 45-2013

SUBJECT: Updated Offer versus Serve Guidance for the
National School Lunch Program and School
Breakfast Program in School Year 2013-2014

TO: Regional Directors
Special Nutrition Programs
All Regions

State Directors
Child Nutrition Programs
All States

Offer versus Serve (OVS) is a provision in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) that allows students to decline some of the food offered. The goals of OVS are to reduce food waste in the school meals programs while permitting students to decline foods they do not intend to eat.

Attached is the updated guidance manual for operators utilizing OVS, which is optional at all grade levels for breakfast and required at the senior high school level only for lunch. As parts of the NSLP and SBP meal pattern requirements are being phased-in over multiple years, this memorandum provides guidance for School Year (SY) 2013-2014 *only*. The guidance will be revised as needed to reflect new requirements as they are phased-in.

This guidance is intended to clarify the requirements of OVS, specifically related to what students must take in order to have a reimbursable meal.

OVS at Lunch

At lunch, schools must offer students all five required food components in at least the minimum required amounts. The components at lunch are: meats/meat alternates; grains; fruit; vegetables; and fluid milk. Under OVS, a student must take at least three components in the required serving sizes. One selection must be at least ½ cup from either the fruit or vegetable component.

OVS at Breakfast

At breakfast, schools must offer students all three required food components in at least the minimum required amounts. The components at breakfast are: grains (with optional meats/meat alternates allowed); juice/fruit/vegetable; and milk. Under OVS, a student

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must be offered at least four food items and must select at least three food items. In SY 2013-2014, students are not required to take a minimum of ½ cup of fruit or vegetables for OVS.

For specific questions related to the lunch meal pattern requirements, please refer to Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) memorandum SP 10-2012 (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Policy-Memos/2012/SP10-2012ar6.pdf>), and to SP 28-2013 (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Policy-Memos/2013/SP28-2013os.pdf>) for questions related to the SBP meal pattern. Please note that SP 28-2013 has been updated to reflect consistency with the additional flexibility described in this OVS guidance.

We appreciate all you do for the School Meal Programs and look forward to continue working with you to improve the nutrition of America's children. State agencies are reminded to distribute this memo and attachment to program operators immediately. SFAs should contact their State agencies for additional information. State agencies may direct any questions concerning this guidance to the appropriate Food and Nutrition Service Regional Office.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cynthia Long". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cynthia Long

Director

Child Nutrition Division

Attachment