



## SFSP Integrity Study FAQ for States and SFSP Sponsors

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### **What is the purpose of the SFSP Integrity Study?**

USDA's summer meal programs, including the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), provide children with the nutrition they need when school is out. USDA is committed to ensuring these programs are run efficiently, effectively, and with integrity so no child has to go without consistent meals. Through the SFSP Integrity Study, USDA is continuing its efforts to listen to States and local communities, gathering information to learn about how they oversee and implement the programs, challenges they face, and useful resources and training. The information from this study will be used to help make summer meal programs operate better to best serve the public and the American taxpayer.

### **Who is sponsoring this study?**

This study is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service, also known as USDA, FNS.

### **Who is conducting this study?**

FNS hired an independent research organization, Westat, to conduct this study. Insight Policy Research is Westat's partner on this research study. For more information about Westat, go to [www.westat.com](http://www.westat.com).

### **Who is participating in the study?**

We will conduct an online survey of all State Child Nutrition Directors. In addition, we plan to conduct one-time telephone interviews with selected State Child Nutrition Directors, SFSP sponsors and site supervisors. These interviews will gather more detailed feedback from State agencies and local communities about how FNS can better support them in implementing the SFSP. To ensure our findings reflect a full range of perspectives, we will select State Directors, sponsors and site supervisors that represent different regions, types of programs, program sizes and populations (e.g., primarily urban, rural, or suburban).

### **Is participation mandatory?**

The law governing the SFSP requires *organizations* participating in the program to cooperate in studies like this one, but your *individual* participation in this study is completely voluntary. Refusal to participate will not have any impact on your position, your organization, or child nutrition programs.

### **What is the role of study participants?**

*State CN Directors.* The web survey should take about 20 minutes to complete and will gather information on how State agencies administer and oversee the SFSP, what types of training and technical assistance they provide to sponsors, and what kinds of challenges they encounter in administering the program. Eighteen State CN Directors will also be asked to participate in a 90-minute telephone interview to explore those issues in greater depth, and to gather feedback on any additional SFSP training or resources that States would find useful.

*Sponsor Directors and Site Supervisors.* Telephone interviews with 48 sponsor directors and 48 site supervisors across the country will explore how the program operates "on the ground," the challenges they face, the types of resources or technical assistance they receive, and the kinds of resources that

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have been most useful. The interviews with sponsors and sites will last 60 minutes and 30 minutes, respectively.

### Why should I participate?

USDA needs your input to meet our commitment to providing excellent customer service to all of our diverse stakeholders.

USDA understands that good customer service involves listening to feedback, understanding the unique needs of our stakeholders, and finding ways to meet those needs. We want to hear from you so we understand how best to support you and other programs like yours in providing summer meals for eligible children.

Keep in mind that this is a research study; it is not an audit or monitoring visit. The study will not affect meal reimbursements received by participating sponsors or sites, nor will it affect any sponsor's or site's participation in the program.

### What is the expected timeline for these research activities?

The table below displays the timeline for all research activities with States, sponsors, and sites.

Activity	Expected Timeline
State CN Director Online Survey	Survey will be open for roughly 6 weeks between May - July 2020
State CN Director Telephone Interviews	August - September 2020
SFSP Sponsor Telephone Interviews	October - November 2020
SFSP Site Telephone Interviews	November - December 2020

### Will the information we provide be kept private?

Under the Privacy Act of 1974 and the System of Record Notice FNS-8 USDA/FNS Studies and Reports, any personally identifying information obtained will be kept private to the extent provided by law. All information gathered from the State Child Nutrition Directors, sponsors, and site supervisors is for research purposes only. FNS will receive redacted transcripts of the interviews from the study team, which are stripped of identifying information. Additionally, no individual persons will be identified in the written reports.

### What if I have questions? Who do I contact for more information?

For more information, you can contact Melissa Rothstein, the Project Director, at 301-315-5975 or via email at [MelissaRothstein@westat.com](mailto:MelissaRothstein@westat.com).

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is conducting this study to obtain information about the administration and oversight of the Summer Food Service Program and to identify potential barriers to ensuring the integrity and effective management of the program. Participation in this study is voluntary and the information collected will be used to determine resources, develop training, and provide technical assistance. Under the Privacy Act of 1974 and the System of Record Notice FNS-8 USDA/FNS Studies and Reports, any personally identifying information obtained will be kept private to the extent provided by law. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-XXXX. The time required to provide this information collection is estimated to average 5 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather and maintain the data needed, and complete and review the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any