

**Appendix G.8**  
**Telephone reminder script**

## State Child Nutrition (CN)/School Food Authority (SFA) Director Reminder Call Script

Hello, I am calling on behalf of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service regarding the School Meals Operations Study, or SMO. May I please speak with [STATE CN DIRECTOR/SFA DIRECTOR]?

### **IF CN DIRECTOR/SFA DIRECTOR IS NOT AVAILABLE:**

Is there a better time to call to reach [STATE CN DIRECTOR/SFA DIRECTOR]?

### **[LOG DATE/TIME FOR CALL BACK]**

### **IF NO ANSWER AND VOICEMAIL BOX NAME MATCHES CONTACT NAME, LEAVE VOICEMAIL:**

Hello, this message is for [DIRECTOR NAME]. My name is [INTERVIEWER NAME]. I am calling on behalf of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service regarding the School Meals Operations Study, or SMO.

[IF STATE AGENCY (SA): Thank you for participating in the first SMO data collection. The second SMO data collection, SMO II, includes a survey of State Child Nutrition Directors to collect information on how Child Nutrition COVID-19 nationwide waivers were used in school year 2020-2021 and how their use improved services to children. State agencies are required to participate, and full participation in the SMO Study will satisfy their statutory reporting requirements for these waivers.]

[IF SCHOOL FOOD AUTHORITY (SFA): The SMO Study includes a survey of School Food Authority Directors that focuses on Child Nutrition Program operations during COVID-19 and how the pandemic affected SFA finances. You have been selected to participate as part of a nationally representative sample, which means that your response will speak for many SFAs and is necessary to ensure the views of SFAs like yours are included. Participation in this important study is required for all selected SFAs.]

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is collecting this information to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected school food authority (SFA) operations and finances and to satisfy State agencies' congressionally mandated reporting requirements for the COVID-19 nationwide waivers pursuant to section 2202 of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (P.L. 116-127). This is a mandatory collection for State agencies and SFAs. FNS will use the information to assess how the waivers improved services to children and to inform FNS's planning, policy, and guidance related to state and local meal service operations. Because the personally identifiable information (PII) requested under this collection will not be used to retrieve survey records or data, requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974 do not apply. Responses will be kept private to the extent provided by law and FNS regulations. 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 0584-0607. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 5 minutes (.0835 hours) per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, 1320 Braddock Place, 5<sup>th</sup> floor, Alexandria, VA 22314, ATTN: PRA (0584-0607). Do not return the completed form to this address.

You should have received an email with a link to this survey on [DATE OR TIME FRAME]. The survey ends soon, so please log on today to provide your responses.]

If you have any questions or need help accessing the survey, please call our toll-free line at 1-833-440-9475 or email us at [SMOStudy@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:SMOStudy@mathematica-mpr.com). We greatly appreciate your participation.

**IF DIRECTOR IS AVAILABLE:**

Hi, my name is [INTERVIEWER NAME]. I'm calling on behalf of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service regarding the School Meals Operations Study, or SMO.

[IF STATE AGENCY (SA): The SMO Study includes a survey of State Child Nutrition Directors to collect information on how Child Nutrition COVID-19 nationwide waivers were used in SY 2020-2021 and how their use improved services to children. State agencies are required to participate, and full participation in the SMO Study will satisfy their statutory reporting requirements for these waivers.]

[IF SCHOOL FOOD AUTHORITY (SFA): The SMO Study includes a survey of School Food Authority Directors that focuses on Child Nutrition Program operations during COVID-19 and how the pandemic affected SFA finances. You have been selected to participate as part of a nationally representative sample, which means that your response will speak for many SFAs and is necessary to ensure the views of SFAs like yours are included. Participation in this important study is required for all selected SFAs.]

I'm calling to see if you have any questions about accessing or completing the survey. [ANSWER QUESTIONS].

You should have received an email with a link to this survey on [DATE OR TIME FRAME].

The survey closes soon, so please log on to complete your survey as soon as possible.

**IF DIRECTOR DOES NOT RECALL EMAIL:**

I can share some information regarding the study.

[IF SA: We appreciate your efforts to complete the first SMO data collection this past spring. This fall, during the second SMO data collection, SMO II, the survey gathers information needed to meet States' statutory reporting requirements for the nationwide Child Nutrition COVID-19 waivers that were used during school year 2020-2021. Federal law requires that States report on the waivers, and the SMO Study is the required reporting tool for the CN COVID-19 nationwide waivers. State agencies' full participation in SMO will satisfy their statutory reporting requirements for these waivers.]

[IF SFA: The SFA survey gathers information on program operations during SYs 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, as well as the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on SFAs. Having updated information about school-based Child Nutrition Programs will help the Food and Nutrition Service effectively oversee these programs and will inform policy decisions as well as future training and technical assistance efforts.]

Your participation is vital to understanding Child Nutrition program operations during the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensuring Child Nutrition Programs these programs contribute to a healthy future for all children—a goal we all share.

I would be happy to email you another link to the web survey. First, let me confirm your email address: [FILL EMAIL ADDRESS].

**IF HESITANT OR SKEPTICAL:**

The information you provide is critical to understanding how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted Child Nutrition Program operations, and to informing current and future policy decisions as well as training and technical assistance efforts.

[IF SA: As you know, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) (PL 116-127) requires any State Agency that elects to use a CN nationwide waiver to submit a report, no later than 1 year after electing to use the waiver that, at a minimum, summarizes its use and describes how it resulted in improved services to Program participants. The SMO Study is the required reporting tool for the CN COVID-19 nationwide waivers authorized under the FFCRA. The Food and Nutrition Service is sponsoring this study to capture the congressionally mandated data from States on these waivers, and to learn how programs like the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, summer meals programs, and Child and Adult Care Food Program operated during the pandemic. State agencies' full participation in SMO will satisfy their statutory reporting requirements for the nationwide waivers.

We recognize the administrative effort it takes to participate in research studies, and that the first State agency survey in spring 2021 was challenging to complete for some State agencies and took more time than was estimated. In response to State feedback, the SMO team took steps to streamline the second SMO State agency survey to reduce burden and increased the official burden estimate. The study will also rely on administrative data whenever possible to avoid redundant information requests.]

[IF SFA: You have been selected to participate as part of a nationally representative sample, which means that your response will speak for many SFAs and is necessary to ensure that the voices of SFAs similar to yours are heard.

We recognize the administrative effort associated with participating in research studies, and the School Meal Operations Study has been designed to reduce participant burden to the extent possible. For example, the survey focuses only on questions that cannot be answered using the administrative data you have already reported, as your State agency will be providing those data to the study team in order to avoid redundant information requests.

Under the terms of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) (PL 116-127) and Section 28 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, sampled SFAs and the 67 SAs that administer the Federal CN programs in the 50 States, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands are required to participate in this collection.

**AGREES TO PARTICIPATE:**

Great, thank you very much. We appreciate your time and effort.

Please feel free to call our toll-free helpline with any additional questions or to get help with the survey, 1-833-440-9475, or to email us at [SMOStudy@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:SMOStudy@mathematica-mpr.com).

**SPEAKING WITH A SECRETARY:**

Hi, my name is [INTERVIEWER NAME]. I'm calling on behalf of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service regarding the School Meals Operations Study, or SMO. We recently sent [DIRECTOR NAME] an email with a link to this survey. I'm calling to remind [DIRECTOR NAME] to complete the survey online and to see if they had any questions about accessing or completing the survey.

[IF SA: The SMO Study is the required reporting tool for the CN COVID-19 nationwide waivers, and State agencies' full participation in SMO will satisfy their statutory reporting requirements for waivers used during SY 2020-2021.]

[IF SFA: Participation in this important study is required for all selected SFAs.]

Can you pass that message along, or can you set an appointment for me to speak with [DIRECTOR NAME]?

## CN DIRECTOR/SFA Director Survey FAQs

**Survey URL:** [WEBSITE]

### **What is the purpose of the study?**

[The School Meals Operations Study (SMO) is the required reporting tool for the CN COVID-19 nationwide waivers, and the study will gather all of the information needed to meet States' statutory reporting requirements for the nationwide Child Nutrition COVID-19 waivers that were authorized during school year (SY) 2020-2021. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) (PL 116-127) requires any State Agency (SA) that elects to use a Child Nutrition nationwide waiver to submit a report, no later than 1 year after electing to use the waiver that, at a minimum, summarizes its use and describes how it resulted in improved services to Program participants. States' full participation in SMO will satisfy their statutory reporting requirements for Child Nutrition COVID-19 waivers in use during school year 2020-2021.

[IF SA: Having updated information about school-based Child Nutrition program operations will help the Food and Nutrition Service manage these programs effectively and inform current and future policy and budget decisions. Further, the School Meal Operations Study aims to gather information that will help States, school food authorities, and schools better serve children.]

[IF SFA: This important study will also gather information on program operations during school years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, as well as the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on SFAs. Study data will inform potential topics for training and technical assistance, as well as upcoming policy decisions. Having updated information about the operation of school-based Child Nutrition Programs, and how the COVID-19 pandemic affected those operations, will help the Food and Nutrition Service manage these programs effectively and help States, school food authorities, and schools better serve children.]

### **Will States need to submit additional information to the Food and Nutrition Service on the COVID-19 Child Nutrition waivers?**

FNS intends for the second SMO data collection to collect all of the information needed to meet States' statutory reporting requirements for the nationwide COVID-19 Child Nutrition waivers that were used during school year 2020-2021. Completion of the survey and administrative data request will satisfy States' reporting requirements for the nationwide COVID-19 Child Nutrition waivers authorized under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.

### **When is the State CN Director/SFA Director survey due?**

[IF SA: The survey closes in [DATE], so we need your completed survey as soon as possible.]

[IF SFA: The survey closes in [DATE], so we need your completed survey as soon as possible.]

### **Can I have a hard copy of the State CN Director/SFA Director survey?**

Yes, but web responses promote higher data quality and make it easier for you to identify and complete only the questions that apply to you, so we encourage you to take it through our secure online platform.

**I am not [NAME]. You have the wrong person.**

COLLECT THEIR NAME, TITLE AND DISTRICT AFFILIATIONS, MARK THE CASE FOR REVIEW.

## State Child Nutrition (CN) Reminder Call Script

Hello, I am calling on behalf of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service regarding the regarding the School Meals Operations Study, or SMO. May I please speak with [STATE CN DIRECTOR]?

### **IF CN DIRECTOR IS NOT AVAILABLE:**

Is there a better time to call to reach [STATE CN DIRECTOR]?

### **[LOG DATE/TIME FOR CALL BACK]**

### **IF NO ANSWER AND VOICEMAIL BOX NAME MATCHES CONTACT NAME, LEAVE VOICEMAIL:**

Hello, this message is for [DIRECTOR NAME]. My name is [INTERVIEWER NAME]. I am calling on behalf of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service regarding the School Meals Operations Study, or SMO.

Thank you for your past participation in the SMO Study. The third SMO data collection, SMO III, includes a survey of State Child Nutrition Directors to collect information on how Child Nutrition COVID-19 nationwide waivers were used in school year 2021-2022 and how their use improved services to children. State agencies are required to participate, and full participation in the SMO Study will satisfy their statutory reporting requirements for these waivers.

You should have received an email with a link to this survey on [DATE OR TIME FRAME]. The survey ends soon, so please log on today to provide your responses.

If you have any questions or need help accessing the survey, please call our toll-free line at 1-833-440-9475 or email us at [SMOStudy@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:SMOStudy@mathematica-mpr.com). We greatly appreciate your participation.

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I'm calling to see if you have any questions about accessing or completing the survey. [ANSWER QUESTIONS].

You should have received an email with a link to this survey on [DATE OR TIME FRAME].

The survey closes soon, so please log on to complete your survey as soon as possible.

**IF DIRECTOR DOES NOT RECALL EMAIL:**

I can share some information regarding the study.

We appreciate your efforts to complete the previous SMO data collections. This summer, during the third SMO data collection, the survey gathers all of the information needed to meet States' statutory reporting requirements for the nationwide Child Nutrition COVID-19 waivers that were used during school year 2021-2022. Federal law requires that States report on the waivers, and the SMO Study is the required reporting tool for the Child Nutrition COVID-19 nationwide waivers. State agencies' full participation in SMO will satisfy their statutory reporting requirements for these waivers.

Your participation is vital to understanding Child Nutrition program operations during the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensuring these programs contribute to a healthy future for all children—a goal we all share.

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**IF HESITANT OR SKEPTICAL:**

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Food Program operated during the pandemic. State agencies' full participation in SMO will satisfy their statutory reporting requirements for the nationwide waivers.

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## CN DIRECTOR Survey FAQs

**Survey URL:** [WEBSITE]

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Having updated information about school-based Child Nutrition program operations will help the Food and Nutrition Service manage these programs effectively and inform current and future policy and budget decisions. Further, the School Meal Operations Study aims to gather information that will help States, school food authorities, and schools better serve children.

### **Will States need to submit additional information to the Food and Nutrition Service on the COVID-19 Child Nutrition waivers?**

FNS intends for the third SMO data collection to collect all of the information needed to meet States' statutory reporting requirements for the COVID-19 Child Nutrition nationwide waivers that were used during school year 2021-2022. Completion of the survey and administrative data request will satisfy States' reporting requirements for the COVID-19 Child Nutrition nationwide waivers authorized under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.

### **When is the State CN Director/SFA Director survey due?**

The survey closes in [DATE], so we need your completed survey as soon as possible.

### **Can I have a hard copy of the State CN Director/SFA Director survey?**

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