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Sent: Thursday, January 24, 2019 2:46 PM

To: FNS Regions

Subject: Fwd: Q&As

To be forwarded to all State CN agencies:

Attached please find Questions and Answers related to the 2019 Lapse in Federal Funding. These responses reflect questions and issues raised in the conference call the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) held with Child Nutrition (CN) State Agencies (SAs) on January 18, 2019. (Please note that the USDA Foods questions that were raised on the call will be addressed separately). As other questions arise, we encourage SAs to send inquiries to their respective Regional Offices (ROs) so that we can provide timely guidance and provide continued customer service.

Thank you again for your diligence and commitment to effective and efficient administration of our Child Nutrition Programs. We truly value our shared commitment to serving America's school children and thank you for your flexibility and patience during this uncertain time. If you have further questions regarding the Q&As attached here, please reach out to your Regional Administrator (RA).

Thank you,

Cynthia Long

Questions and Answers from the SAs regarding the 2019 Lapse in Federal Funding

General/Miscellaneous:

Q: During the lapse in Federal funding, what is the best way to maintain communication with FNS?

A: Each Regional Administrator (RA) has continued to work during this time, and is the best point of contact. The Regions and the National Office communicate regularly and can set up National calls to discuss time sensitive matters as the shutdown continues.

Impacts on Deadlines/Reviews:

Q: We have grants applications that are due in March. Are there any changes to that timeframe known at this time?

A: Grants.gov continues to be active; therefore, those deadlines remain and those who are interested in applying for Child Nutrition program grants should follow all requirements by the applicable deadlines in the applicable solicitation.

Q: What is the impact on upcoming Management Evaluations and other scheduled reviews?

A: Please continue to provide materials to your Regional Office for upcoming reviews. Once offices reopen, FNS will reassess schedules and work with SAs to reschedule reviews as necessary.

Summer Nutrition Assistance

Q. SAs are currently planning for summer feeding operations now; what should SAs do to prepare for Summer Feeding during the lapse of Federal funding?

FNS recognizes that this is a critical time for SAs as they prepare for summer operations for 2019. FNS encourages SAs to continue business as usual. Once the government is fully funded, FNS will prioritize providing technical assistance to SAs on Summer Nutrition Assistance Programs.

Q: How will the lapse in Federal funding impact the SEBTC grants?

A: Because Grants.gov remained open during the shutdown, the solicitation closed on schedule. FNS will notify grantees of their status as soon as possible after the partial government shutdown has ended.

Q: What is the status of SFSP waiver requests referenced in the October 11, 2018 Rescission Memo?

A: As noted in the October 11, 2018 memorandum, SA may submit waiver requests to FNS for any of the waivers rescinded by that memo. FNS intends to process these in the order which they were received and will expedite our responses to these waiver requests as soon as the partial government shutdown has ended.

Q: To whom should we send waiver requests and other items?

A: SAs should send their requests to RAs now, then also follow up via email to your regular Regional Office contacts when the partial government shutdown has ended and remind them of your prior submission. In addition, to help the National Office ensure prompt review of waiver requests, please resend any waiver requests previously provided to the Regional Offices from the week of December 17

forward to your RA. This will enable the National Office to determine the number of outstanding requests and to move as quickly as possible once the partial government shutdown has ended.

Q: Should Regional Offices submit their SFSP Management and Administrative Plan (MAP) by 2/15?

A: Yes.

Q: When will the new SFSP rates be out?

A: FNS is not able to publish the SFSP rates notice until the partial government shutdown is ended. However we recognize that the rates information is critical to operational planning and are exploring options to provide information for planning purposes.

Funding through March:

Q: Are meals for Child Nutrition Programs funded through March?

A: As provided in the January 8, 2019 memorandum, FNS has provided SA with additional appropriated funding. This funding, along with those funds previously provided, can support program operations at normal levels well into the month of March.

Q: What is the amount based upon? What if it is not enough for my SA?

A: The amount of funding allocated for each SA is based upon historical spending levels. If a SA has analysis which suggests an adjustment in this level is needed, please contact your Regional Office and we will work with you to make any necessary adjustments in funding levels.

Conserving Funds:

Q: We have heard that some schools are scaling back meal service in order to conserve funds. Is this allowed? Is this something SAs should encourage?

A: At this time, this seems to be a rare occurrence. However, the school meals rules are designed to give local flexibility and if the meals served meet the Federal meal pattern requirements, the meals are reimbursable. While schools have flexibility in the foods they choose to serve, we encourage them to use the resources USDA provides to create meals that will be both nutritionally adequate as well as appealing to students.

Q: For State Administrative Expenses, should SAs curtail some non-staffing Federal expenses to help preserve cash flow?

A: Every SA is unique. This is an individual spending decision which SAs should make based on their own circumstances.

CACFP:

Q: Can SAs choose not to pay advances until the Government reopens?

A: Under the National School Lunch Act, SAs have the discretion to provide advance payments for approved institutions. The regulations require SAs to establish procedures for issuing advance payments (CFR 226.7(i)) and, if they elect to issue advance payments to all or some of their participating institutions, payments must be made no later than the first day of each month (226.10(a)). SAs could choose to not pay advances until the partial government shutdown ends if that is in line with their own procedures for issuing advance payments.