



McKenzie Snow, Director

Kim Reynolds, Governor  
Chris Cournoyer, Lt. Governor

July 29, 2025  
Maged Hanafi  
Food & Nutrition Service Midwest Regional Office  
United States Department of Agriculture  
77 W. Jackson Blvd., 20<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Chicago, Illinois 60604

RE: Home Sponsor Pre-Approval Visit Waiver Request

**1. State agency submitting waiver request and responsible State agency staff contact information:**

Iowa Department of Education (Department), Bureau of Nutrition & Health Services

Kala Shipley, Bureau Chief, [kala.shipley@iowa.gov](mailto:kala.shipley@iowa.gov), 515-681-2307

Cheryl Tolley, Administrative Consultant, [cheryl.tolley@iowa.gov](mailto:cheryl.tolley@iowa.gov), 515-681-2304

**2. Region: Midwest**

**3. Eligible service providers participating in waiver and affirmation that they are in good standing:**

The Iowa Department of Education is requesting this waiver as the USDA Child Nutrition Program State agency and on behalf of home sponsor organizations participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program that agree to take on home providers located in counties impacted by a home sponsor ending their agreement.

**4. Description of the challenge the State agency is seeking to solve, the goal of the waiver to improve services under the program, and the expected outcomes if the waiver is granted. [Section 12(I)(2)(A)(iii) and 12(I)(2)(A)(iv) of the NSLA]:**

The State agency is requesting a waiver to allow home sponsors the opportunity to conduct virtual group pre-approval visits for transferring home providers who will be impacted from their current home sponsor ending their agreement with the State agency. This waiver request would be available to only the current home sponsors that agree to take any additional county or counties. This waiver request would impact approximately 34 home providers in the State of Iowa. Home sponsor organizations are facing staffing shortages and increased operating costs. Taking on additional home providers would increase reimbursements for the organizations. It will also help to ensure that home providers can continue on the CACFP with little disruption.

The goal of requesting this waiver is to alleviate staff time spent on travel and allow for them to meet with potential home providers during a quick turn-around period before their current home sponsor ends their CACFP home sponsor agreement. Since the home providers that will transfer have had consistent oversight from the home sponsor ending their agreement, there is record of meeting requirements to continue participation in the CACFP under a new home sponsor. Any new home providers who wish to join the CACFP in the affected counties would still take place in person to ensure regulations are met.

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The expected outcome of this waiver would allow organizations to reduce costs while still meeting the requirement for a pre-approval visit. It will also allow home sponsors the ability to conduct pre-approval visits in a timely manner. Home sponsors have utilized the approved 2024-2025 monitoring waiver in Iowa and have shared that the waiver has had a positive impact. Alleviating staff travel time further for pre-approval visits will allow the home sponsors to focus on transferring the providers.

**5. Specific Program requirements to be waived (include statutory and regulatory citations). [Section 12(l)(2)(A)(i) of the NSLA]:**

The Department is requesting a waiver to the following regulations and requirements to be performed offsite for one monitoring review per provider:

7 CFR 226.16(d)(1) Pre-approval visits to each facility for which application is made to discuss Program benefits and verify that the proposed food service does not exceed the capability of the child care facility.

**6. Detailed description of alternative procedures and anticipated impact on Program operations, including technology, State systems, and monitoring:**

Interested sponsors must notify the Department of their intent to participate in the waiver by completing a request form.

There will be no impact on program operations for the State agency or sponsor levels. There are some providers who may not have computers or the ability to utilize virtual platforms. In these cases, the sponsor would still need to complete an on-site pre-approval visit.

**7. Description of any steps the State has taken to address regulatory barriers at the State level. [Section 12(l)(2)(A)(ii) of the NSLA]:**

There are currently no state level regulatory barriers related to this specific issue.

**8. Anticipated challenges State or eligible service providers may face with the waiver implementation:**

There are no anticipated challenges with waiver implementation. Rather, it is anticipated that this waiver will allow sponsors to carry out their pre-approval visits while saving the organization funding on mileage, gas, vehicle usage and staff time. This will allow organizations to implement cost saving measures while continuing to serve the home providers in additional counties.

**9. Description of how the waiver will not increase the overall cost of the Program to the Federal Government. If there are anticipated increases, confirm that the costs will be paid from non-Federal funds. [Section 12(l)(1)(A)(iii) of the NSLA]:**

The requested waiver does not impact the overall cost of the program to the State or Federal government.

**10. Anticipated waiver implementation date and time period:**

This waiver will be implemented upon approval from USDA and will be effective through September 30, 2025.

**11. Proposed monitoring and review procedures:**

The State agency will continue to carry out normal monitoring via administrative reviews. Sponsoring organizations found to have noncompliance issues as related to this waiver will receive technical assistance or corrective action from the State agency. If implemented, the

State agency will collect feedback on how the use of the waiver benefitted the home sponsor organization.

**12. Proposed reporting requirements (include type of data and due date(s) to FNS):**

The Department will report to FNS all requested data for the waiver in the timelines required by USDA.

**13. Link to or a copy of the public notice informing the public about the proposed waiver [Section 12(I)(1)(A)(ii) of the NSLA]:**

Public notice posted at: <https://educate.iowa.gov/pk-12/operation-support/nutrition-programs/child-adult-care-food-program>

**14. Signature and title of requesting official:**

*Kala Shipley*

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Title: Kala Shipley, Bureau Chief

Requesting official's email address for transmission of response:

[kala.shipley@iowa.gov](mailto:kala.shipley@iowa.gov)

[cheryl.tolley@iowa.gov](mailto:cheryl.tolley@iowa.gov)