

# Introduction to the Special Milk Program



Health and Nutrition Services  
Arizona Department of Education





# Disclaimer

This training was developed by the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) Health and Nutrition Services Division (HNS). The content in this training is intended for professionals operating one or more USDA Child Nutrition Programs in Arizona under the direction of ADE. The information in this training is subject to change. Attendees are encouraged to access professional development materials directly from the training library to prevent use of outdated content.

# Intended Audience

This training is intended for **School Food Authorities (SFAs)** operating the **Special Milk Program (SMP)**. All regulations are specific to operating the SMP under the direction of ADE.

# Objectives

**At the end of this training, attendees should be able to:**

- understand a general overview of the Special Milk Program;
- define the Special Milk Program; and,
- identify the School Milk Program (SMP) Eligibility Requirements.

## **TRAINING HOURS**

Information to include when documenting this training for Professional Standards:

**Training Title:** Introduction to the Special Milk Program

**Length:** 15 minutes

# Quiz Time



Throughout this guide, there will be comprehension quiz questions to test your knowledge and help you apply what you're learning. Be sure to review these quiz questions and answers available within the guide.

The question mark icon below will indicate a comprehension quiz question.



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SECTION 1  
**Overview of the  
Special Milk  
Program**



# Special Milk Program Overview

## WHAT IS THE SPECIAL MILK PROGRAM?

The Special Milk Program (SMP) assists schools and other agencies in providing low or no-cost milk to children in schools, child care institutions, and eligible camps that do not participate in other Federal child nutrition programs. The program reimburses schools and institutions for the milk they serve and is designed to encourage the consumption of milk by children.

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service administers the program at the Federal level. At the State level, the Special Milk Program is usually administered by State education agencies, which operate the program through agreements with school food authorities.

- In Arizona, the SMP is administered by the Arizona Department of Education Health and Nutrition Services.



# Special Milk Program Overview

## HISTORY OF THE SMP

The Special Milk Program (SMP) originated in the early 1940s with a federally subsidized milk distribution program for children in low-income areas of Chicago, and was officially established nationwide in 1955 as a way to address dairy surpluses by providing milk to schools and other child care institutions at a reduced price. Permanently authorized under the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, it allows schools to serve milk to children not participating in other federal meal programs.

### SPECIAL MILK PROGRAM

#### 1. What is the Special Milk Program?

The Special Milk Program provides milk to children in schools, child care institutions and eligible camps that do not participate in other Federal child nutrition meal service programs. The program reimburses schools and institutions for the milk they serve. In 2011, 3,848 schools and residential child care institutions participated, along with 782 summer camps and 527 non-residential child care institutions. Schools in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs may also participate in the Special Milk Program to provide milk to children in half-day pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs where children do not have access to the school meal programs.

The Food and Nutrition Service administers the program at the Federal level. At the State level, the Special Milk Program is usually administered by State education agencies, which operate the program through agreements with school food authorities.

#### 2. How does the Special Milk Program work?

Generally, public or nonprofit private schools of high school grade or under and public or nonprofit private residential child care institutions and eligible camps may participate in the Special Milk Program provided they do not participate in other Federal child nutrition meal service programs, except as noted above. Participating schools and institutions receive reimbursement from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for each half pint of milk served. They must operate their milk programs on a non-profit basis. They agree to use the Federal reimbursement to reduce the selling price of milk to all children.

Any child at a participating school or half-day pre-kindergarten program can get milk through the Special Milk Program. Children may buy milk or receive it free, depending on the school's choice of program options.

#### 3. What types of milk can be offered and what are the nutritional requirements for the milk program?

Schools or institutions must offer only pasteurized fluid types of fat free or low-fat (1%) milk. These milks must meet all State and local standards. All milk should contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the Food and Drug Administration.

program to low-income children, any fee meals is eligible. Each child's

sold to children in School Year their milk free, the USDA reimburses the highest reimbursement rates visit FNS

APs.htm

#### Milk Program?

were served through the Special Milk School Breakfast Programs, which the Special Milk Program since its peak in half pints of milk in 1969; 1.8 billion in

3 million. By comparison, the program in 1980; \$19.1 million in 1990; and

program and all the Child Nutrition Programs are responsible for the administration of the program. Also be found on our web site at "Child Nutrition Programs."

For more information, contact the Special Milk Program at 703-305-2281, or by mail at 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 926, Alexandria, Virginia 22302.

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SECTION 2  
**Special Milk  
Program  
Eligibility &  
Program Types**



# Special Milk Program

## ELIGIBILITY FOR THE SPECIAL MILK PROGRAM

To be eligible for the Special Milk Program (SMP), institutions must meet the following criteria:

-  **Non-Profit Status:**  
The institution must operate on a non-profit basis. Non-profit schools, non-profit preschools, childcare centers, settlement houses, and summer camps may be eligible.
-  **Not Participating in Other Federal Meal Program(s)\*:**  
The institution must not participate in other federal child nutrition programs (National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, etc).

### \*Flexibility for Kindergarten and Pre-K



Schools participating in the National School Lunch and/or School Breakfast Programs can participate in the SMP to provide milk to children in half-day pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs if those children are not provided with access to the regular meal service.

# Special Milk Program

## SPECIAL MILK PROGRAM TYPES

There are three pricing options for schools participating in the SMP.

| NON-PRICING   | PRICING<br>WITHOUT FREE MILK  | PRICING<br>WITH FREE MILK  |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>Do not collect applications and do not charge students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No kids pay</li> <li>• No Point of Service Meal Counts</li> <li>• No applications</li> <li>• Reimbursed at the Paid Reimbursement Rate</li> </ul> | <p><b>Do not collect applications and charge students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All kids pay</li> <li>• No Point of Service Meal Counts</li> <li>• No applications</li> <li>• Reimbursed at the Paid Reimbursement Rate</li> </ul> | <p><b>Collect applications and do not charge students, OR collect applications and charge students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children qualifying for Paid meal benefits pay, children qualifying for Free meal benefits do not pay</li> <li>• Must complete Point of Service Meal Counts</li> <li>• Use applications</li> <li>• Reimbursed at the Free and Paid Reimbursement Rate</li> </ul> |

# Quiz Time

True or False: Our Local Education Agency (LEA) offers the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP). I can apply for the Special Milk Program (SMP) to get even more benefits.

**A** True

**B** False



# Quiz Time

True or False: Our Local Education Agency (LEA) offers the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP). I can apply for the Special Milk Program (SMP) to get even more benefits.

**A** True

**B** False

This program makes milk available to children in non-profit schools, non-profit preschools, childcare centers, settlement houses, summer camps, and split-session kindergarten programs conducted in schools which **do not provide access to the regular meal service for these children. Since the LEA is already on the NSLP and SBP, they may NOT participate in SMP.**



SECTION 3  
**Special Milk  
Program  
Requirements**



# SMP Requirements

## WHAT TYPE OF MILK MUST BE OFFERED?

Pasteurized, fluid types of milk that meet state and local standards and contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the Food and Drug Administration must be offered.

The type of milk offered depends on the age group of the children:

- Age 1: Must be served unflavored whole milk.
- Ages 2-5: Must be served unflavored low-fat (one percent) milk
- Ages 6 and older: Must be served low-fat or fat-free milk. Milk maybe flavored or unflavored.



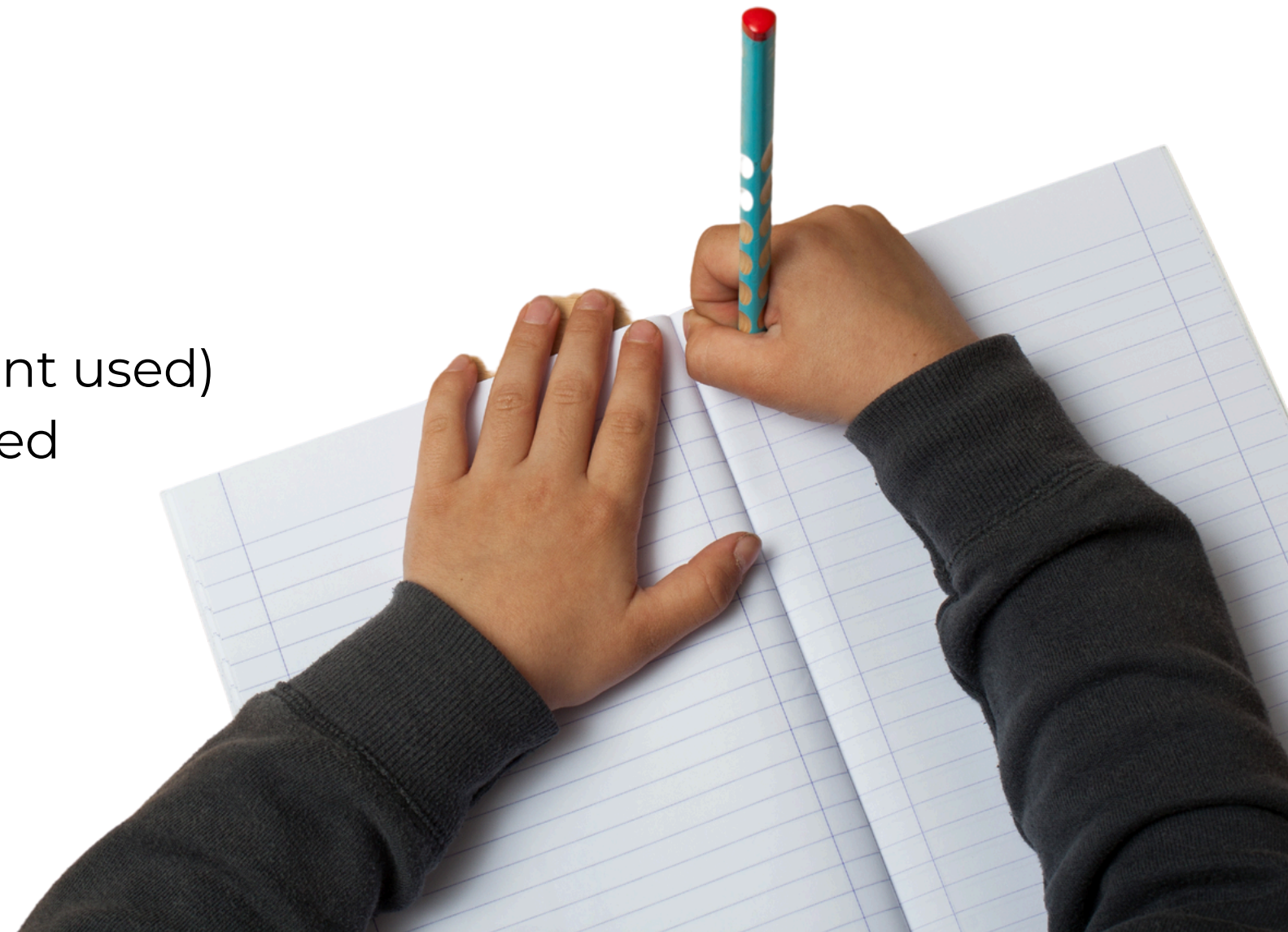
# SMP Requirements

## **OPERATING THE SPECIAL MILK PROGRAM**

The Special Milk Program must be open to all enrolled children.

Operators must keep records documenting that the Program follows all Federal and State rules and regulations.

- Some of the records that must be kept include:
  - The number of half-pints of milk served each day, by site
  - Applications for free milk submitted by families.
  - Inventory records with milk specifications (type and amount used)
  - Records of income, expenditures and contributions received





# SMP Requirements

## RECEIVING FUNDS & CLAIMS SUBMISSION

To receive funds while operating the SMP, operators must submit monthly claims for reimbursement through the state agency to receive money based on the number of half pints of milk served.

Once the claim has been reviewed and approved by your state agency, proper documentation will be sent for reimbursement.

| Compiled Child Nutrition Programs                           |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| <b>Reimbursement Rates for Program Year 2024-2025</b>       |  |   |  |
| Effective July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025                      |  |   |  |
| National School Lunch Program                               |  |   |  |
| REGULAR   | REGULAR + 9 CENTS  | HIGH RATE   | HIGH RATE + 9 CENTS  |
| Schools which served LESS than 60% Free and Reduced Lunches | Schools which served LESS than 60% Free and Reduced Lunches +9 Cents | Schools which served MORE than 60% Free and Reduced Lunches | Schools which served MORE than 60% Free and Reduced Lunches +9 Cents |
| RATES   | RATES  | RATES   | RATES  |
| Paid \$0.42   | Paid \$0.51  | Paid \$0.44   | Paid \$0.53  |
| Reduced-Price \$4.03  | Reduced-Price \$4.12   | Reduced-Price \$4.05  | Reduced-Price \$4.14   |
| Free \$4.43   | Free \$4.52  | Free \$4.45   | Free \$4.54  |
| School Breakfast Program                                    |  |   |  |
| NON-SEVERE NEED*  |  | SEVERE NEED*  |  |
| RATES   | RATES  | RATES   | RATES  |
| Paid \$0.39   | Paid \$0.39  | Paid \$0.39   | Paid \$0.39  |
| Reduced-Price \$2.07  | Reduced-Price \$2.07   | Reduced-Price \$2.54  | Reduced-Price \$2.54   |
| Free \$2.37   | Free \$2.37  | Free \$2.84   | Free \$2.84  |
| Afterschool Care Snack Program                              | At-Risk Afterschool Meals  | Special Milk Program  |  |
| RATES   | RATES  | RATES   |  |
| Paid \$0.11   | Breakfast \$2.37   | Paid \$0.2700   |  |
| Reduced-Price \$0.60  | Lunch/Supper \$4.43  | Free average cost of a 1/2 pint of milk                     |  |
| Free \$1.21   | Snack \$1.21   |   |  |

Rates of Reimbursement for the Special Milk Program are available on HNS' [Compiled Reimbursement Rates for Child Nutrition Program Operators](#).

# Quiz Time

Which of the following are “allowable” fluid milk served in the Special Milk Program (SMP)?

- A** Age 1 must be served unflavored whole milk.
- B** Ages 2-5 must be served unflavored low-fat milk .
- C** Ages 6 and older must be served low-fat or fat-free milk. Milk maybe flavored or unflavored.
- D** All of the above



# Quiz Time

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- B** Ages 2-5 must be served unflavored low-fat milk .
- C** Ages 6 and older must be served low-fat or fat-free milk. Milk maybe flavored or unflavored.

**D** All of the above

**Pasteurized, fluid types of milk that meet state and local standards and contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the Food and Drug Administration must be offered.**



SECTION 4  
**Applying to  
Operate the  
Special Milk  
Program**



# Applying to Operate the Special Milk Program

To apply to participate in the SMP, follow the National School Lunch Program application process procedures.

Applying entities will indicate Special Milk Program on the Food Program Permanent Food Service Agreement and on each corresponding site application wishing to operate SMP in the CNPWeb.

For more information, please email [ContactHNS@azed.gov](mailto:ContactHNS@azed.gov).



# CONTACT US

If you have a question or require additional assistance, please contact your assigned specialist or contact HNS.



602-542-8700



ContactHNS@azed.gov



[www.azed.gov/hns](http://www.azed.gov/hns)





# Congratulations

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**You have completed the Online Course:  
Introduction to the Special Milk Program**

# Certificate

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**Requesting a training certificate**

Please click the button to complete a brief survey about this online training. Once the survey is complete, you will be able to print your certificate of completion from Survey Monkey.



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1. mail:  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax:  
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email:  
[Program.Intake@usda.gov](mailto:Program.Intake@usda.gov)

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