



September 16, 2026

Kelly Chanay

Director, Child Nutrition and Wellness

Kansas State Department of Education

900 SW Jackson, Ste. 251

Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Kelly Chanay:

This letter is in response to the July 20, 2026, waiver request from the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) regarding the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) sponsoring organization, Sunshine Connections, which is terminating for convenience its participation in the Program and the transfer of their sponsored day care homes (DCHs) to other sponsoring organizations. Specifically, KSDE requested to waive the CACFP monitoring requirement at 7 CFR 226.16(d)(1) as it relates to conducting pre-approval visits at each facility, transferring from the closing sponsoring organization, for which an application is made to discuss Program benefits and verify that the proposed food service does not exceed the capability of the child care facility. This request is applicable only for any sponsoring organization onboarding 30 or more DCHs during the waiver period. Pursuant to section 12(l) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA) (42 USC 1760 (l)), the Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) approves KSDE's request to waive the regulations at 7 CFR 226.16(d)(1).

In its request, KSDE stated that Sunshine Connections will voluntarily cease CACFP operations effective October 1, 2026. In addition, the current director of Sunshine Connections will assume the role of director at First Choice Support Services, another CACFP sponsoring organization whose director is retiring effective October 2026. To ensure continuity of service, DCHs have been notified of their right to transfer from Sunshine Connections to First Choice Support Services or one of the other 12 CACFP sponsoring organizations operating in the state. In doing so, the 173 affected DCHs

would have their physical records, including monitoring documentation, transferred from Sunshine Connections to the sponsoring organization of their choice.

KSDE has requested to waive the pre-approval visit requirement for any sponsoring organization that onboards thirty (30) or more DCHs affected by the termination of Sunshine Connections during the waiver approval period. In the waiver request, KSDE stated that the affected providers are concentrated in the northwest corner of the state. The transferring DCH providers are familiar with the benefits of the Program and have been monitored with consistent oversight by Sunshine Connections. According to KSDE, the implementation of this waiver would provide the absorbing sponsoring organizations the flexibility needed to transfer and onboard dozens of DCH providers in a short timeframe without a lapse in participation.

Considering the challenges related to the termination of Sunshine Connections' CACFP sponsorship, FNA has determined that waiving the requested requirements will reduce administrative burden and facilitate other sponsoring organizations' abilities to successfully carry out monitoring activities. Furthermore, FNA has determined that waiving the requirements will not compromise the integrity of the Program since the DCHs transferring to the absorbing sponsoring organization are not new and have been receiving regular monitoring reviews. Therefore, FNA approves waiving the monitoring requirement at 7 CFR 226.16(d)(1) as it relates to conducting pre-approval visits to each facility, transferring from the closing sponsoring organization, for which application is made to discuss Program benefits and verify that the proposed food service does not exceed the capability of the provider. It is important to note that this waiver only applies to DCHs already operating the program under the sponsoring organization choosing to cease operation. KSDE must continue to conduct all other required monitoring, including pre-approval visits on all new DCHs, to ensure Program integrity.

This waiver is in effect from September 16, 2026 through December 31, 2026.

The waiver authority at section 12(l) of the NSLA requires FNA to review the performance of any State or eligible service provider that was granted a waiver. Therefore, no later than January 31, 2027, KSDE must provide their assigned FNA

Office with a written report quantifying the impact of the waiver, as described below. The report must include:

1. A description of how the waiver impacted meal service operations and eligible participants' access to nutritious meals and snacks;
2. A description of how this waiver improved services for the Program(s) participants;
3. A description of how this waiver reduced administrative burden necessary to operation the Program(s);
4. A description of how the waiver allowed DCH providers to continue to serve vulnerable populations and decrease the likelihood of discontinued operations due to the unavailability of a Program sponsoring organization;
5. A description of how the waiver has impacted the state agency's oversight abilities and responsibilities;
6. A summary of program integrity measures taken to identify any misuse of Federal funds and identify fraudulent activities, and, if anything was identified, any actions taken; and,
7. A quantitative summary of how many sponsoring organizations and DCH providers utilized this waiver.

FNA appreciates the exceptional effort of KSDE to identify new sponsoring organizations to maintain the present level of meal service and to continue providing nutritious meals to the community. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your FNA Office.

Sincerely,

JESSICA SARACINO Digitally signed by JESSICA SARACINO
Date: 2026.09.16 15:57:43 -04'00'

Jessica Saracino

Acting Associate Administrator

Child Nutrition Programs

Electronic copy: Jennifer Otey