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## **Idaho Department of Education Seeks Federal Waiver to Increase Access to Summer Food Operations Amid Poor Air Quality**

(BOISE) - The Idaho Department of Education is seeking a waiver from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for Summer Food Service Program and Seamless Summer Operation sponsors in urban areas due to the recent air quality issues created by nearby wildfires.

The waiver would affect sponsors in good standing who are operating meal services at sites with no enclosed building options. Specifically, the change would allow participants to consume the meal off-site. Currently, USDA rules require meals to be consumed on-site at urban feeding locations.

Poor air quality and excessive heat can prevent participants from attending these outdoor meal sites and receiving nutritious, well-balanced meals. The intent of the waiver is to boost participation in high need areas where meals cannot currently be consumed off-site.

The department submitted the waiver on Wednesday, July 24. If it is granted, the department will reach out to affected sponsors directly.

Program operators with questions about the waiver submission are encouraged to contact the Idaho Department of Education's Summer Food Service Program team at [sfspteam@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:sfspteam@sde.idaho.gov).

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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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