

What is an Administrative Review?

The **Administrative Review (AR)** is mandated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and is a **comprehensive compliance and evaluation process** designed to ensure that participating school food authorities (SFAs) comply with National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and other school nutrition program requirements. The AR is comprised of **five key compliance areas** broken into sections, each of which is summarized in two bullet points: what the section covers and why the section is part of the AR. Additional details can be found in the **Administrative Review Manual** maintained by the USDA. The manual is located in the Child Nutrition Information and Payment System Web site at <https://www.cnips.ca.gov> in the Applications, Download Forms section.

Meal Access & Reimbursement

- What the section covers
- Why the section is reviewed

Certification and Benefit Issuance

- Covers the SFA's determination of a student's eligibility for free, reduced-price, or paid meals and is the link to the SFA's meal counting and claiming system.
- Review ensures that eligible children receive meals to which they are entitled, and that reimbursement claims are valid.

Verification

- Covers the process used by the SFA to confirm selected students' eligibility by verifying the income listed on the original household applications.
- Review ensures that the SFA properly implements the verification process and in an appropriate timeframe.

Meal Counting and Claiming

- Covers the SFA's meal counting and claiming system that accurately counts, records, consolidates, and reports the number of reimbursable meals claimed.
- Review ensures that reimbursement claims are accurate and adequate systems are in place to avoid overt identification.

Meal Pattern & Nutritional Quality

Meal Components and Quantities

- Covers the preparation, offering, and service of meals that meet the meal pattern requirements for the appropriate student grade groups on all reimbursable meal service lines.
- Review ensures that every reimbursable meal service line meets the daily and weekly meal pattern requirements for the appropriate grade group served.

Offer versus Serve (OVS)

- Covers the SFA's implementation of OVS, a program element that allows students to decline some of the food items offered that they do not intend to eat, helping to reduce waste.
- Review ensures that the SFA provides adequate amounts of all food components, that the student selects sufficient components, and that the meals claimed for reimbursement meet meal pattern requirements.

Dietary Specifications and Nutrient Analysis

- Covers the amount of calories, saturated fat, trans fat, and sodium in meals offered to children through the school meal programs.
- Review ensures that the meals served are in compliance with dietary specification standards.

Resource Management

Resource Management

- Covers the following fiscal-related areas of review:
 - Maintenance of the Nonprofit School Food Service Account
 - Paid Lunch Equity
 - Revenue from Nonprogram Foods
 - Indirect Costs
 - Past Audit Findings
- Review ensures the overall financial health of the SFA's nonprofit school food service account.

Refer to the **Administrative Review Manual** for additional information about how finding(s) in certain compliance areas may result in fiscal action.

General Program Compliance

Civil Rights

- Covers laws, regulations, instructions, policies, and guidance related to nondiscrimination in child nutrition programs.
- Review ensures that the SFA has a written procedure and complies with requirements.

SFA On site Monitoring

- Covers the SFA's completion of at least one on-site review of the lunch counting and claiming system in each school for SFAs with more than one school under its jurisdiction.
- Review ensures that the SFA completes the required monitoring in the appropriate timeframes.

Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP)

- Covers the effectiveness of the SFA's LSWP in promoting children's health, preventing childhood obesity, and preventing diet-related chronic diseases by fostering a healthy school environment.
- Review ensures that the LSWP contains all mandated components, including stakeholder engagement, implementation, public notification, and reporting.

Smart Snacks in Schools

- Covers the requirements for all food and beverages sold to students, on school campus, from midnight through 30 minutes after the school day, outside the federally reimbursable meal program.
- Review ensures that food and beverages sold to students by any entity meet the minimum requirements.

School Meal Environment

USDA has yet to release guidance on what this section will cover and how it will be reviewed.

Water

- Covers the requirements for schools to provide potable water to all students during lunch and to students served breakfast in the cafeteria.
- Review ensures that children have access to water during meal service times.

Food Safety

- Covers the safe handling, storage, preparation, and service of food.
- Review ensures that the SFA is compliant with state and federal food safety requirements and laws.

Reporting and Recordkeeping

- Covers the SFA's submission and maintenance of reports and the possession of records according to record retention requirements.
- Review ensures that the SFA complies with reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

SBP and SFSP Outreach

- Covers the requirement for the SFA to inform eligible households of the availability of breakfasts offered under the SBP and meals offered through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).
- Review ensures that the SFA meets the required outreach activities to increase participation

Other Federal Program Reviews

Afterschool Snacks

- Covers the SFA's option to serve snacks to students in structured afterschool programs that provide educational or enrichment activities.
- Review ensures that participating schools serve nutritionally-balanced snacks that meet meal pattern requirements, provide appropriate activities, and count and claim snacks accurately.

Seamless Summer Option (SSO)

- Covers the SFA's option to serve meals during summer and/or other school vacation periods using the same meal service rules and claiming procedures.
- Review ensures that the SFA complies with meal counting, claiming, menu planning, and food safety requirements.

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Grant

- Covers the SFA's ability to increase elementary school students' exposure to and consumption of a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables through a snack program.
- Review ensures that participating schools are proper stewards of federal funds and operate the program as prescribed by USDA.

Special Milk Program (SMP)

- Covers the SFA's offering of milk to eligible children in schools, residential child care institutions, and eligible camps that do not participate in other Federal child nutrition programs.
- Review ensures that the SFA operates the program in accordance with an approved agreement.