

OSPI Child Nutrition Services Reference Sheet

Implementing Share Tables

Using “share tables” is an innovative strategy that encourages nutritious food consumption and reduces food waste in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

Requirements

[Policy Memo SP 41-2016, CACFP 13-2016, SFSP 15-2016; Use of Share Tables in Child Nutrition Programs](#) provides information about share tables and gives an overview of the food safety requirements child nutrition program operators must follow when choosing to include share tables in their meal service.

Share tables allow food or beverage items to be reused in several ways, depending on the program’s preference:

- ✓ Children may place whole food or beverage items they choose not to eat on a share table, if it is in compliance with local and State health and food safety codes.
- ✓ Children may take an additional helping of a food or beverage item from the share table at no cost.
- ✓ Food or beverage items left on the share table may be served and claimed for reimbursement during another meal service (i.e., during an afterschool program when leftover from a school lunch).
- ✓ Food or beverage items may be donated to a non-profit organization, such as a community food bank, homeless shelter or other non-profit charitable organization (see [Memo Policy SP 11-2012, CACFP 05-2012, SFSP 07-2012: Guidance on the Food Donation Program in Child Nutrition Programs](#)).
- ✓ Share tables must be operated in compliance with the [Washington State Food Code](#) (page 40).
 - Sponsors should consult with their local health department to ensure that all food safety precautions are met.

Reminders

- ✓ Share tables are not for adult consumption nor to be used for programs outside of child nutrition, except for food donation outlined in the above policy memo.
- ✓ The food cannot be:
 - Used by an outside program
 - Given directly to families



- Left in a classroom for extra snacks throughout the week.
- ✓ Sponsors should use forecasting to determine the correct numbers of meals to plan and serve, limiting the number of leftovers and re-servicing those leftovers when possible.

Resources

- [Policy Memo SP 41-2016, CACFP 13-2016, SFSP 15-2016; Use of Share Tables in Child Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Memo Policy SP 11-2012, CACFP 05-2012, SFSP 07-2012: Guidance on the Food Donation Program in Child Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Washington State Retail Food Code](#)

Acronym Reference

- CACFP – Child and Adult Care Food Program
- CNS – Child Nutrition Services
- NSLP – National School Lunch Program
- OSPI – Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- SBP – School Breakfast Program
- SFSP – Summer Food Service Program