

# COVID-19 and Your Business: Essential Tips and KidKare Resources

Last Modified on 08/13/2020 9:30 am CDT

The coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak has demonstrated how incredibly connected the world has become and how “in-it-together” we all are. KidKare by Minute Menu wants to affirm our commitment to continue supporting our valued customers and lead with transparency during this ever-changing situation.

**Note:** Check the [FNS's Program Guidance on Human Pandemic Response](#) (external link) for the most up-to-date food program guidance.

We have prepared this list of tools and processes that can help you navigate this ever-changing situation and will update it as needed.

## Working from Home

Minute Menu HX can be installed on any computer, allowing you to work from home. Follow the instructions below to download and install Minute Menu HX at home. See our [Install](#) article for more detailed instructions. Before installing, ensure that your machine meets our minimum system requirements. You can find those [right here](#).

To download and install Minute Menu HX at home:

1. Log in to [app.kidkare.com](#). Use the same credentials you use to log in to Minute Menu HX.
2. From the menu to the left, click **Get Help**.
3. Click **Downloads**.
4. Download and run **HX Installer – Application Only** and the **HX Manual Update Patch**.
5. Follow the on-screen prompts to complete installation.

## Observer Mode in KidKare

You can use Observer Mode in KidKare to view all reports and functions available to your providers in KidKare.

1. Log in to [app.kidkare.com](#). Use the same credentials you use to log in to Minute Menu HX. The Observer Mode page opens by default.
2. Click a provider name to access their account in Observer Mode.
3. Use the left-hand menu to navigate. While you can view the provider account, you cannot make any changes to it. Click **Reports** to view and print provider reports. Our [Reports](#) category at [help.kidkare.com](#) lists the reports available in KidKare.
4. When finished, click **Exit Observer Mode**.

## Scanning

If your providers use scan forms and you do not have access to a scanner at home, you can do the following:

- Enter claims with the Direct Entry feature. For more information, see [Direct Entry Claims](#) and [Manually](#)

### Enter Errors for Direct Entry Claims.

- Input claims manually. For more information, see our [Manual Claims](#) category. Begin with [Create a Manual Claim](#).
- Encourage providers who are scanning to begin logging meals in KidKare for paperless claiming. You can send a welcome email to providers in the **Provider Information General tab**. We also have hundreds of KidKare help articles available for providers [here](#).

**Important!** You cannot combine scan claims and online claims in the same month. Should your providers switch to online claiming with KidKare, all prior meals for the month must be recorded in KidKare before the provider submits their claim.

## Processing Claims

When working from home, you may not have access to a printer. Minute Menu HX has tools that can help you process and monitor claims without printing reports to paper. See [Process & Track Claims from Home](#) for more information.

## Desk Reviews

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to escalate, some states may begin allowing sponsors to complete desk reviews in lieu of on-site reviews. A desk review is essentially a review done remotely while on-site reviews are temporarily suspended to prevent the spread of COVID-19. It is essential that you check with your state for guidance regarding reviews during the COVID-19 pandemic. Follow all regulations and guidance provided by your state.

See our article [Complete Desk Reviews](#) for more information about how you can complete desk review with KidKare and Minute Menu HX.

**Note:** As of **March 27, 2020**, the FNS has issued waivers for Monitoring requirements in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. This waiver has been extended through September 30, 2021. [Read the full extension memo here](#).

## Update Provider Email Addresses & Payment Methods

As the need for social distancing and work from home measures continues, we recommend that you have email addresses on-file for all of your providers. Email provides a convenient way for sponsors to provide their providers with important documentation and reports, and vice versa. See [Update Provider Email Addresses](#) for information about how you can use the Provider List Export File to generate a list of providers with missing email addresses.

It is also a good idea to move providers who are currently paid via paper check to direct deposit to ensure that they continue receiving payment due to mail delays. See [Locate Providers Receiving Paper Checks](#) for more information.

## Move Check Signatures to Your Home Computer

If you are capable of printing checks at home, move your check signature to your home computer.

1. Save the check signature on each computer you use to print checks.
2. Copy the existing **signature.gif** file and paste it to the **C:\MMHX\Sponsor\CheckSig** folder.
3. Close and re-open HX.
4. Click the Administration menu and select Check Format.
5. Click **Print Test Check**. Review the test check and ensure the spacing is correct. For tips on adjusting your check format, see [Check Signatures](#) and [Format Check](#).

## Handling Capacity Changes

Some states may temporarily adjust the capacity allowed for home care during the pandemic. Contact your State agency for more information as the situation arises. See our article [Provider Capacity](#) for more information about managing provider capacity in Minute Menu HX.

Please note that due to the wide range of licenses available, not all sponsors may be able to update license capacity using the standard method. If your provider(s) operate with such a license, use the instructions below to update their capacity:

1. Click the **Administration** menu and select **Sponsor Preferences**.
2. Set **preference F.010** to **Y**. This allows you to set maximum capacities per-meal, which overrides the normal capacity rules.
3. Click **Save**.
4. Select a provider and navigate to the **Provider Information Other** tab.
5. Check the **Allow Scan-Form Meal Overlaps** box.
6. Enter specific meal maximum capacities.

The screenshot shows the 'Other' tab of the 'Sponsor Preferences' window. The 'Time Opens' is set to 06:00 am and 'Time Closes' is set to 06:00 pm. The 'Language' is set to English. The 'Provider In Serious Deficiency' checkbox is unchecked. The 'Allow Scan-Form Meal Overlaps' checkbox is checked. Below this, the 'Specific meal maximum capacities' section shows input fields for Breakfast (10), Lunch (10), Dinner ( ), Am Snack ( ), PM Snack (10), and Evening Snack ( ).

7. Click **Save**.

## Mid-Month Capacity Changes

Minute Menu HX cannot track two different capacities in the same month. Instead, we recommend taking the following steps:

1. Leave capacities as-is for the current month.
2. Process claims as usual.
3. Generate the **Paid Meal Totals** report for all providers, and review it for meal counts greater than the provider's recorded capacity for dates after the capacity changed. For more information about generating this report, see [Print the Meal Totals Report](#).

**Note:** Consult with your state agency regarding any provider licensing and capacity changes and how to handle them.

## Handling School Closures

With public schools across the nation closing to prevent the spread of COVID-19, you can update the Sponsor Calendar to show school out for all providers. Your providers can update the Child Calendar in KidKare if some children are physically attending school and others are not.

### Update the Sponsor Calendar

1. Use the **Sponsor Calendar** to mark school out.
  - a. Click the **Tools** menu and select **Sponsor Calendar**. The Holidays and School Vacations window opens.
  - b. Click **Add School Vacations**. The School Vacations dialog box opens.
  - c. Click the **Starting Date** box and enter the start of school vacation.
  - d. Click the **Ending Date** box and enter the end of school vacation.
  - e. Click **Update**. School vacation for the date range you entered is added to the calendar.
2. Update school out edit checks.
  - a. Click the **Administration** menu and select **Sponsor Preferences**. The Sponsor Preferences window opens.
  - b. Click the **Select a Category to Move To** drop-down menu and select **I. Child Info - Schedule tab**.
  - c. Update preferences **i.004b** and **i.004c**.
    - Set both to **Warn** if you need to see a list of school age children being claimed on the Office Error Report.
    - Set both to **Ignore** if you do not need to see any errors.

For more information about using the Sponsor Calendar, see [Sponsor Calendar](#).

### Update the Child Calendar

If some children are physically attending school and some are not, encourage your providers to update the Child Calendar in KidKare for those children who are not physically attending school. Direct them to the [Mark School Out](#) article on the KidKare Knowledge Base if they need instructions.

### Update the School District Calendar

If some school districts are having in-person school and others are not, use the School District Calendar to mark school out for specific school districts. For more information, see [Manage School District Out Days](#).

**Note:** To use this method, you must have correct school district information entered in the **Provider Information Contact** tab or in the **Child Information Schedule** tab. See [Update Provider Information](#) and

[Update Child Information](#) for more information about updating provider and child information.

## Update Children Attending School Virtually

If a child is attending school virtually for an extended period of time, you can set that child's school type to Home School. Setting a child to Home School bypasses the School Aged Child Served AM/Lunch edit check, and the provider does not need to enter school out days for this child. This can be especially useful for the provider's own children if they are attending school virtually. Remember, you must change the child's school type back to School Age when the child begins to physically attend school again.

There are two ways to handle these updates:




- If only a few children need to be switched to Home School, retrieve the child record and update the **Grade Level/School Type** drop-down menu in the **Child Information Schedule** tab. For more information, see [Update Child Information](#).
- If a large number of children need to be updated, use **Bulk Child Update** to update multiple child records at once. For more information, see [Update Multiple Children At Once](#).

## Handling Provider Closures

Some providers may be required to cease operation for an extended amount of time. There are several methods you can employ when dealing with this situation.

### Using the Holiday Feature on the Sponsor Calendar

Should your state require all providers to close for a specific period of time, you can use the Sponsor calendar to set a sponsor holiday that applies to all of your providers. Before using this feature, check **preference P.002** (Click **Administration** and select **Sponsor Preferences**). We recommend you set this to **Disallow Always** or **Warn**.

1. Click the **Tools** menu and select **Sponsor Calendar**. The Holidays and School Vacations window opens.
2. Click  and  to select the month in which to work.
3. Enter a name for this "holiday."
4. Click , drag it, and drop it on the appropriate day on the calendar. The holiday displays on the calendar.
5. Repeat **Steps 4 & 5** for each day of closure.

For more detailed information about the Sponsor Calendar, see [Sponsor Calendar](#).

### Placing Providers on Hold

If your providers must cease operation for an extended amount of time, place them on hold in Minute Menu HX.

1. Retrieve the provider record.
2. Click **Put On Hold**.

3. Enter a hold reason.
4. Click **Save**.

For more information about provider hold, see our article [Provider Hold](#).

## Placing Providers on Hold with Bulk Provider Update

Should you need to place numerous providers on hold at once, you can do so with the **Bulk Provider Update** feature. The basic steps are:

1. From the Administration menu, click Bulk Provider Update. The Provider Filter window opens.
2. Check the **Choose Provider From List** box.
3. Click **Continue**.
4. Check the box next to each provider to change. You can use the Move to Provider drop-down menu to jump to a specific provider.
5. When finished, click **Continue**. The Bulk Provider Update window opens.
6. Check the **Provider Status** box.
7. Select the **Update** option.
8. Click the **Select** drop-down menu and select Hold.
9. Check the box next to each provider to which to apply these changes.
10. Click **Save**.

For more information about the Bulk Provider Update feature, see [Bulk Provider Update](#).

## Handling Unavailable Food Items

On **March 25, 2020**, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service issued a nationwide waiver to allow meal pattern flexibility in child nutrition programs. You can read the full text of the waiver [here](#). Contact your state agency to confirm whether they are applying this waiver before taking further steps.

## Handling Edit Checks on Incomplete Menus

In the event of a food shortage, some States may issues waivers to reimburse CACFP meals without all required meal components, such as milk. Should this become the situation for a state in which you operate, take the following steps for claims processing:

1. Set **preference M.001** to **N**, as described above, so your providers can save incomplete menus. Remember to also set **preference M.011** to **Y**, so providers can enter appropriate comments explaining the missing components.
2. Set **preference Q.008** to **Warn**. This will prevent the whole-grain edit check from disallowing meals.

You may also consider adding a food item to the list called No Milk Available - COVID. Providers can then add this to menus as the milk component. Minute Menu HX would see this as a food and and reimburse you.

1. Click the **Administration** menu and select **Manage Foods**. KidKare opens in a browser.
2. Log in using the same credentials you use to access Minute Menu HX.

3. From the menu to the left, click **Foods**.
4. Click **Food List**. The Food List page opens.
5. Click **New Food**.
6. Click the **Category** drop-down menu and select **Milk**.
7. Click the **Name** box and type **No Milk Available - COVID**.
8. Click the **Food Type** drop-down menu and select **Milk**.
9. Adjust any other options, as needed. See [Add a New Food](#) for details.
10. Click **Save**.

Should your state implement the nationwide waiver for flexibility in meal pattern requirements, follow **Steps 1-10**, above for other affected foods. Remember to select the proper categories and use a naming convention, such as adding COVID to the end, that allows you to easily find and remove these unavailable foods once the waiver is lifted. Communicate these changes to your providers as you implement them. For more information about adding foods, see [Add a New Food](#).

## Reporting

Run the **Foods Served** report to look for foods created for all providers for the claim month for which you are reporting. To access this report, click the **Reports** menu, select **Claim Data**, and click **Foods Served Report**. Once the report is generated:

1. Print the report to PDF and save it to your computer.
2. Open the PDF in your Internet browser or PDF viewer.
3. Press **Ctrl + F** on your keyboard.
4. Type the food name. The number of occurrences displays in the Find window.

## Recording Meals Picked Up by Parents

On **March 25, 2020**, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service issued a nationwide waiver to allow parents to pick up meals for their children from childcare sites. You can read the full text of the waiver [here](#). Contact your state agency to confirm whether they are applying this waiver before taking further steps.

Providers should record meals as they normally would. To track the number of meals picked up, ask providers to record menu comments stating the number of meals picked up for a particular meal time. For example, providers could list each child for whom a parent picked up a meal in the menu comments. Determine how you wish your providers to proceed, and communicate your guidelines with them. If you have not already enabled menu comments in KidKare, set **preference M.011** to **Y**.

Run the **Provider Menu Comments** report for all providers for the month on which you are reporting and review the comments to see how many providers took advantage of the waiver or how many meals were delivered by parent pickup due to the waiver (based on recorded comments). To print this report, click the **Reports** menu, select **Claim Data**, and click **Provider Menu Notes Report**.

## Messaging Providers

Minute Menu HX allows you to send Broadcast Messages to all of your providers at once. They can then view these messages in KidKare. To do so:

1. Click the **Tools** menu, select **Messages**, and click **Send Broadcast Messages**. The Send Broadcast Message window open.
2. Set your **Message Date and Time**.
3. Enter a **Subject**.
4. Type your message in the **Body** box.
5. Select a **Category**. If you need to create a new category for messages relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, you can create them. See **Manage Provider Message Categories** for details.
6. Click **Send Now**.

For more detailed instructions on sending Broadcast Messages, see [Send Broadcast Messages](#). For information about messaging individual providers, see [Add Messages](#).

## 60 Day Reporting Requirements Waiver (January & February 2020)

On **April 1, 2020**, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service issued a nationwide waiver for 60 day reporting requirements for the **January 2020** and **February 2020** claim months. You can read the full text of the waiver [here](#). Should your state choose to implement this waiver, we recommend that you process claims in Minute Menu HX as they arrive and only submit claims to the state when you're ready.

**Note:** Remember to make any manual adjustments only once you've processed all claims. If you re-process after making manual adjustments, the adjustments are lost. For more information, see [Change/Adjust Claims](#).

To process claims that are 60 days or older in Minute Menu HX:

1. Change the claim month in Minute Menu HX so you can access claim months that have past 60 days in the Process Claims window. See [Claim Month](#) for details.
2. Process the older claims as you normally would.
3. Once you have finished processing, advance the claim month back to the current month.
4. Submit your claims to the State and mark the claims as submitted in Minute Menu HX. The Submit Claim to State window allows you to select the proper month and mark the claims as submitted. You can also generate a state claim file, if needed. For more information, see [Mark Claims as Submitted](#).

Contact your State Agency for assistance if you are running into constraints with your State's system when submitting claim information for claims older than 60 days.

## Meal Times National Waiver

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has issued a nationwide waiver on meal times in the CACFP, SFSP, and other child nutrition programs. This waiver is meant to support access to nutritious meals while limiting potential exposure to COVID-19. [Click here](#) to read the full text of the waiver.



Advise your providers that they can claim outside of meal times, if necessary. At this time, we do not recommend adjusting your preferences in Minute Menu HX. However, you can set **preference S.03 (Meals served with adequate times between servings)** to Ignore, if needed.

## Additional Resources

The following is a list of additional resources regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and CACFP. We will continue to add to this list, as needed.

- [FNS's Program Guidance on Human Pandemic Response](#)
- [CCFP Roundtable Open Letter to Leadership: CACFP is in Crisis and We Need Your Help!](#)
- [Child Nutrition Program State by State COVID-19 Waivers](#)
- [Assistance for Small Businesses \(US Treasury\)](#)
- [Coronavirus Emergency Loans Small Business Guide & Checklist \(US Chamber of Commerce\)](#)
- [Coronavirus Small Business Guides \(US Chamber of Commerce\)](#)
- [Coronavirus Relief Options \(US Small Business Administration\)](#)
- [Small Business Grant Program \(Facebook\)](#)
- [COVID-19 Resources & Policy Considerations \(The Hunt Institute\)](#)
- [PPP Loan Forgiveness Application Guidance \(Forbes\)](#)