

**ACTION BY:** Regional Directors  
 Special Nutrition Programs

SOURCE CITATION: Section 245.8

Handling Lost, Stolen and  
 Misused Meal Tickets

This Instruction sets forth policy with respect to needy students who report lost or stolen meal tickets in schools and institutions that participate in the National School Lunch, School Breakfast, Commodity School or Special Milk Programs. In this Instruction the term "ticket" refers to any and all forms of exchange used in the schools' or institutions' food service collection systems, including daily, weekly or monthly paper tickets, cards, coins or tokens. It should be noted that, handling instances of missing tickets, schools need not. Actually issue a replant ticket if appropriate meal arrangements, such as accompanying the student through the cafeteria line, are made.

The State agency may establish a Statewide system for ticket replacements for needy students or may allow school food authorities to establish own procedures; except that any system which limits the number of tickets reissued must conform to the following standards:

1. Parents and students must be advised in writing of the school's policy regarding missing meal tickets and of the students' responsibility for their tickets. Such notice shall be provided at the time applications are distributed to households or upon approval for free or reduced price benefits.
2. A minimum of three ticket replacements, or special meal arrangements resulting from three lost or stolen tickets, must be allowed each student within each school year.
3. The school must maintain a list of students who have reported missing original ticket(s) in the current school year and the number of occurrences for each student. Prior to denying a meal to any student without a ticket, the list should always be reviewed to determine if the student has already had at least three ticket replacements or special meal arrangements for lost or stolen tickets within that school year.

DISTRIBUTION: 5,6,12	MANUAL MAINTENANCE INSTRUCTIONS: Changes starred. Remove FNS Instruction 765-7, Rev. 1, from Manual. Insert this Instruction.	RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPARATION AND MAINTENANCE: CND-100	Page 1 8-4-88
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4. At least one advance written warning must be given to the student and the parent(s) prior to refusal to allow additional meals or ticket replacements. The written warning must include an explanation that the student has repeatedly requested replacement tickets and that each subsequent time the student fails to have a ticket, he/she will be expected to either bring lunch or pay full price for lunch.

5. Meals must always be provided to preprimary and young primary students or for any handicapped students who may be unable to take full responsibility for a meal ticket.

Using the above criteria, State agencies or school food authorities may develop the most administratively feasible system to handle missing tickets as determined by individual school circumstances and frequency of ticket issuance. In cases of repeated ticket loss or misuse, school administrators may wish to contact an adult household member to arrange a meeting to discuss the problem.

\* It is recommended that the meal or ticket replacement policy for missing  
\* free and reduced price tickets be extended to the loss of full price  
\* tickets. If such a uniform policy covering both needy and non-needy  
\* students is not implemented, schools must exercise care to preclude the  
\* overt identification of needy students when reissuing free or reduced price  
\* meal tickets or making arrangements to provide meals to students whose  
\* tickets are missing.



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