Mississippi Approval Supporting Info

Modernizing CACFP Administration

MDE seeks to partner with **KidKare by Minute Menu** to implement the *KidKare Standard Operation Procedure System (KKSOP)*, a state-wide paperless solution for the managing the CACFP.

Providers
Within this system, providers input meal counts and attendance at point of service, in keeping with USDA regulations.

Sponsors
Sponsors are then able to aggregate the data, have visibility into food program operations in real-time and submit claims to the state agency.

Agencies
The agency can receive these claims through an integration with Mississippi's MARS system, as well as view the program records for any participant, at any time.

The full system is completed by a **State Module**, in which, *the state agency can generate reports, such as meal production records and milk audit compliance, for any Sponsor or program participant.*

Proven Results: Time Savings & Error Elimination

In implementing the KKSOP system, states such as **Louisiana** and **Oklahoma** have entirely streamlined reviews of family childcare homes and centers, significantly reducing time of personnel in the field, in some cases reducing time on site by as much as 92%.

Notably, when experiencing reviews from USDA, to date states using the KKSOP have received zero findings. Further, all indications support increased program participation by mitigating paperwork as a barrier, an overall reduction in serious deficiencies and the utilization of the 250+ audit checks. **KidKare directly contributes to mitigation and drastic reduction of programmatic errors.**

States using KidKare

STATE OF LOUISIANA
UNION · JUSTICE
ALCOHOL & TOBACCO CONTROL
CONFIDENCE

OKLAHOMA
Agriculture, Food and Forestry

Error Prevention: Catching Mistakes Before They Happen

Real-World Error Prevention Data

The KidKare operating system has proven to be measurably effective in managing compliance. **The system is designed to alert program participants of errors prior to submitting a claim**, a program efficacy mechanism that is not possible with paper records. By running claims through Claim Error Reports and Office Error Reports (OERs), the system identifies small mistakes before they rise to the scale and frequency of serious deficiency.

KidKare's system checks each claim for over 250 errors. For errors within the Southeast Region, inclusive of Mississippi, KidKare identified the following most common errors in 2024 (following page).

Error Prevention: Catching Mistakes Before They Happen

| Error Number	Error Description	Occurrences
49	A child was served after the child's enrollment expiration date was reached.	603,909
44	A pending child was claimed – no signed enrollment is on file.	409,852
87	Milk Audit resulted in milk shortage	342,291
81	No infant form on file.	46,499
41	The child was not yet enrolled as of meal date.	38,105

Overall, the major findings in **KidKare preempted 1,440,656 errors in the Southeast Region**, which would have resulted in an estimated cost of *$4,177,902* to the collective programs within the region had these errors gone undetected.

CACFP State Agency: Meeting Regulatory Requirements

## Aligning with USDA Monitoring Guidelines

In evaluating the USDA's guidance to state agencies regarding on-site monitoring and, particularly, *"when it is required by regulations, when states have discretion to conduct monitoring off-site, and what monitoring procedures are recommended when states have discretion to conduct monitoring on or offsite"*, **KidKare provides the opportunity to leverage technology to optimize operational efficiency under present guidance.**
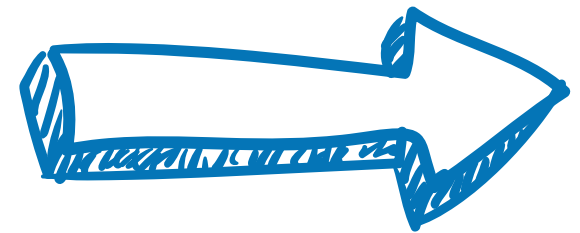
In the next page is derived from the USDA's memo appendix entitled, "**On-site/Off-site Monitoring Guidance**", included as a supplementary material via PDF for reference. For each opportunity to conduct procedures off-site, see a description of the software capability.

Requirement	USDA Guidance: Procedures With Option to Be Conducted Off-Site	KidKare Capabilities
Record-keeping (7 CFR 226.6(m)(3)(i))	Request a sample of records to cover the scope of the last three years plus the current year (dated invoices, training, mileage log, etc.).	**KidKare maintains a secure, digital record of all records for three years plus current.** This scope can be expanded to suite specific State Agency needs.
Administrative costs (7 CFR 226.6(m)(3)(iii))	Request and obtain the approved budget and/or amendments, dated invoices and receipts, additional financial records, as needed.	**KidKare software commonly identifies errors on the Personnel Activity Reports (PARS), costs that require prior written approval, or in Budget allocations.** KidKare's Parachute software supports the maintenance of additional financial records of program participants.
Compliance with the requirements for annual updating of enrollment forms (7 CFR 226.6(m)(3)(vi))	Request and obtain the enrollment forms for each enrolled participant. Be sure to use a secure file sharing platform to protect personally identifiable information.	**The software's secure "eForms" system streamlines the enrollment form process** and allows Sponsors and the State Agency to collect and store paperless version of the enrollment and income verification paperwork.
If a sponsoring organization, training and monitoring of facilities (7 CFR 226.6(m)(3)(viii))	Request and obtain copies of dated training materials and agendas and attendee sign in sheets. If training is conducted virtually, obtain dated confirmation. Request and obtain copies of monitoring forms, schedules, and tracking log.	**KidKare's review tools capture monitoring forms, administrative review data and more.** KidKare has the capacity to offer additional software capabilities to clients seeking additional monitoring, licensing and compliance tools.
If a sponsoring organization of day care homes, implementation of the serious deficiency and termination procedures (7 CFR 226.6(m)(3)(ix))	Request and obtain records related to serious deficiency declarations, terminations, and appeals for daycare home providers.	**The KidKare system's Serious Deficiency (SD) tool tracks any deviation from USDA guidelines and reviews the progression of a provider's Serious Deficiency process.** Each Serious Deficiency begins with notice given to the provider and can end with termination of the provider or documentation that the provider has corrected all mistakes. Users set up milestones specific to their corrective action process.

CACFP Sponsoring Organization Review Content
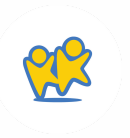
Review Elements Made Easy

Continuing with the _On-site/Off-site Monitoring Guidance,_ the following are the review elements outlined in the USDA memo.

Review Element	USDA Guidance: Procedures with Option to be Conducted Off-site	KidKare Capabilities
The meal pattern (7 CFR 226.16(d)(4)(i)(A)) (7 CFR 226.16(d)(4)(i)(E))	Request and obtain copies of menus. Evaluate menus for compliance with meal pattern requirements.	**Participants select food items from the built-in, state-controlled food list to fulfill the meal component requirements for a creditable menu.** The system does not allow a menu to be created that is not in compliance with meal pattern requirements.
Menu and meal records (7 CFR 226.16(d)(4)(i)(E))	Request and obtain copies of dated menus and supporting documentation (dated invoices/receipts, delivery tickets, documentation of whole grain-rich, sugar in cereal/yogurt, etc.). Request and obtain a photo or video of the displayed dated menu.	**KidKare stores all menus for program participants. Further, the receipt tool allows for both itemized and quick entry of expenses.** KidKare generates full Menu Production Records, which break down each meal by component and give the end user the required amount of food that is needed for each meal service.
Annual updating and content of enrollment forms (7 CFR 226.16(d)(4)(i)(F))	Request and obtain the enrollment forms for each enrolled participant. Be sure to use a secure file sharing platform to protect personally identifiable information.	A customizable email invitation using eForms is sent to the parent, inviting them to complete the enrollment and IEF information online through KidKare. **Centers and Family Daycares can review the child enrollment or Free & Reduced-price forms, and the software then supplies options for when and how forms are approved and renewed.** Participants can also send the forms back to the parent for revision with a customized comment. State Personnel and Sponsors are able to access the progress of all eForms by utilizing Observer Mode in order to help provide any technical assistance. Each activity related to eForms is dated and time stamped for audit trail purposes.

USDA Guidance: Procedures with Option to be Conducted Off-site

Five Day Reconciliation

The aforementioned memo directs that Five Day Reconciliation be conducted on-site. However, given that **participants mark meals and attendance at point of service in the software, reviewers can view the daily attendance and meal counts for the five day period prior to the review within KidKare and utilize this information prepare for the review.** Prior to the on-site visit, the field review teams utilizing the KKSOP can generate a Five Day Reconciliation Report and/or Child Attendance Reconciliation, an additional compliance measure to ensure that the information presented on-site aligns with the practices of the organization.

USDA Guidance: Procedures with Option to be Conducted Off-site

Data-Driven Decision Making

Per USDA guidance, *"if the data show unusual patterns or inconsistencies, the monitor must try to determine the reasons for the discrepancies and take additional steps to decide corrective action and whether any meals should be disallowed or an over claim should be established."* **This analysis of inconsistencies and discrepancies can be initiated in advance of the review utilizing the KKSOP**, resulting in a streamlined, efficient and informed review.

Strategic Review Planning: Optimizing **Field Staff** Time

Unpredictable Yet Strategic Reviews

Section 331(b) of the Act requires that sponsors vary the timing of unannounced reviews so they are unpredictable to sponsored facilities. **Current regulations require sponsors to conduct three reviews per year**, two of which must be unannounced. One of the unannounced reviews must include observation of a meal service. No more than six months may elapse between reviews (_7 CFR 226.16(d)(4)(iii)_).
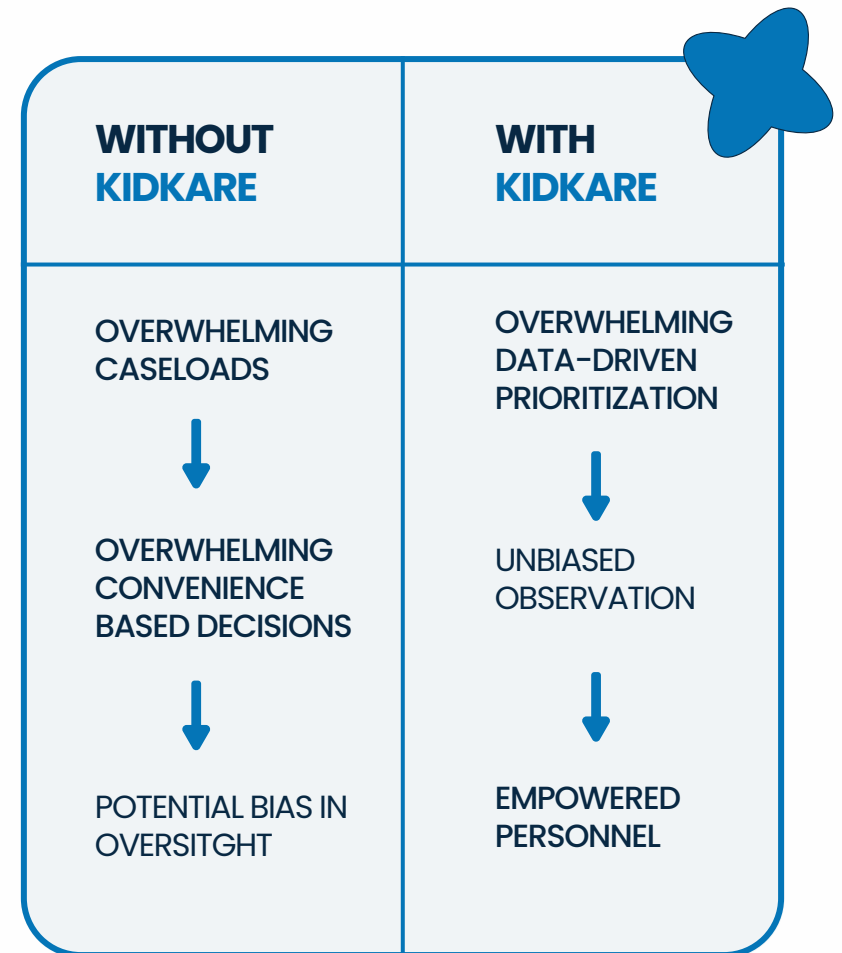
Strategic Review Planning: Optimizing Field Staff Time

Real-Time Visibility for Better Decision Making

With real time visibility into participant record-keeping, the agency can utilize the data to detect patterns of behavior and better evaluate which sites to visit at a given time. In this sense, the software is a state agency's greatest tool in compliance and fraud mitigation.

In larger states, the average caseload per reviewer entails 40-50 contractors. However, due to staffing shortages, some reviewers have 100+ contractors to oversee. **The data provided by KidKare eliminates bias or patterns of convenience and empowers state personnel** to take an informed approach to observation.

WITHOUT KIDKARE	WITH KIDKARE
OVERWHELMING CASELOADS	OVERWHELMING DATA-DRIVEN PRIORITIZATION
↓	↓
OVERWHELMING CONVENIENCE BASED DECISIONS	UNBIASED OBSERVATION
↓	↓
POTENTIAL BIAS IN OVERSITGHT	EMPOWERED PERSONNEL

Maximizing Staff Efficiency: Time Savings in Action

Pre-Audit Capabilities

In most states, reviewers send a list of documents to Centers and Sponsors to prepare in advance of their Administrative Review. **With KidKare, reviewers will have the ability to "pre-audit" records**, pull real-time data on the program and generate reports off-site in advance and on-site in collaboration with the program participant.

As one reviewer detailed, "the reports that Sponsors who use KidKare share are easy for us to track. Using KidKare would help us to speed up the review process, if [with the software] all the records are now accurate"
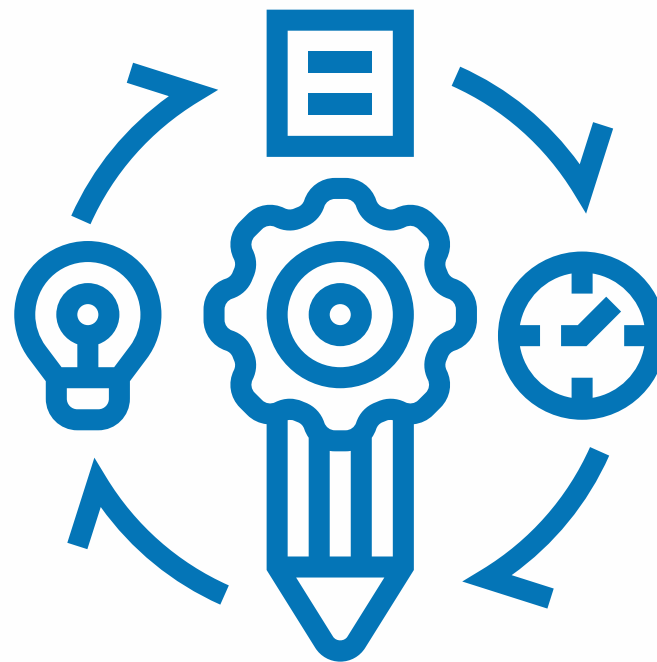
Maximizing Staff Efficiency: Time Savings in Action

Dramatic Time Savings

Efforts to invest in the KKSOP seek to reallocate staff time in the field to optimize efficiency, allowing reviewers to visit multiple sites in a day and streamline their overall review process.

Currently, field staff report that independent Center reviews take 4-6 hours if well organized, 8-10 hours if not. Affiliated Sponsors take 8-12 hours, and large sponsors can cost the agency 2-5 days with multiple review staff.
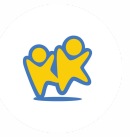
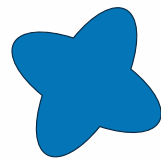**LOUISIANA** STATE EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS

⬇

FIELD PERSONNEL TIME REDUCTION

⬇

AVERAGE: **50%** ⏱ ⏱ ⏱
MAXIMUM: **92%** ⏱ ⏱ ⏱ ⏱ ⏱ ⏱

Powerful Reporting Tools: Data at Your Fingertips

Comprehensive Reporting Suite

KidKare simplifies record-keeping and reporting, providing documentation to meet federal and state compliance standards for all home and center sponsors. **By utilizing the KidKare compliance tools, the agency will be able to generate robust reports for any program participant across the state** at any point in their meal service operations.

Sample reports that **KidKare** produces include but are not limited to:

• Income Eligibility List	• Center Receipts Journal
• Provider/Center Claim Totals	• Claim and Review Comparison
• Claim Change Report	• 5 Day Attendance
• Claimed Attendance by Child	• Child Tier Expiration Analysis
• Claimed Food and Attendance with Tier	• Monthly Milk Audit Summary
• Weekly Quantities Required	• Center Receipts Journal
• Child Attendance Reconciliation	• Duplicate Children Claimed
• Master Menu Lists	• Menu Production Record
• Claim Error Report	• Sponsor Review Summary
• Daily FRP Report	• Serious Deficiency Detail
• Infant Feeding Report	• Monthly Claimed Meal Counts By Age Group, By Child or At-Risk

Aligning with Federal Initiatives: The Paperwork Reduction Act

Federal Mandate for Efficiency

Section 119 (i) of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (PL 108-265, June 30, 2004) instructed the Secretary of Agriculture, in conjunction with states and participating institutions, to examine the feasibility of **reducing paperwork resulting from regulations and record-keeping requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).**

According to their report, the USDA acknowledges the complexity of CACFP requirements creates unique

administrative challenges for the childcare homes, centers, and agencies that are responsible for delivering the Program's essential benefits to children. The agency appointed a Work Group to help the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) meet the requirements outlined in section 336 and deliver recommendations to Congress. The Work Group produced the following recommendations, which align with the implementation of the KidKare Standard Operating Procedure System (KKSOP):

Aligning with Federal Initiatives: The Paperwork Reduction Act

- **The Work Group recommended that USDA fully utilize technology to streamline CACFP reporting and record-keeping systems** and maintain integrity for State agencies, sponsoring organizations, child care homes, and centers; and Reduce unnecessary additional State requirements.

- The Work Group urges USDA to work with State agencies to **promote modernization and support policies** that encourage replacement of obsolete methods with modern business tools, such as handheld devices that allow onsite recording of data, secure cloud services and storage, digitized historic records, electronic backup systems, and software applications. The Work Group also encourages USDA and State agencies to support the **investments in technology that will pay off over long periods of time**, reduce the incidence of errors in the daily records that childcare homes and centers must maintain, and **help sponsoring organizations overcome barriers to participation** of child care homes and centers in underserved communities.

| FEDERAL RECOMMENDATION	KKSOP SOLUTION
Reduce Paperwork →	Digital Documentation
Streamline Reporting →	Automated Reports
Utilize Technology →	Cloud-Based Platform
Modernize Methods →	Mobile Data Collection

KidKare: The Paperless Solution

The KidKare SOP would enable an entirely paperless execution of the food program. Currently, participants are required to keep hard copy paper records on site.

KidKare's software keeps all digital records for three years plus the current year, eliminating the need for this repository.

KidKare is available on any Internet-enabled device!
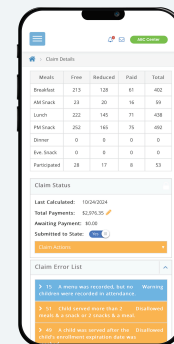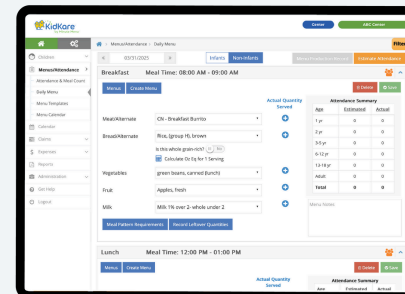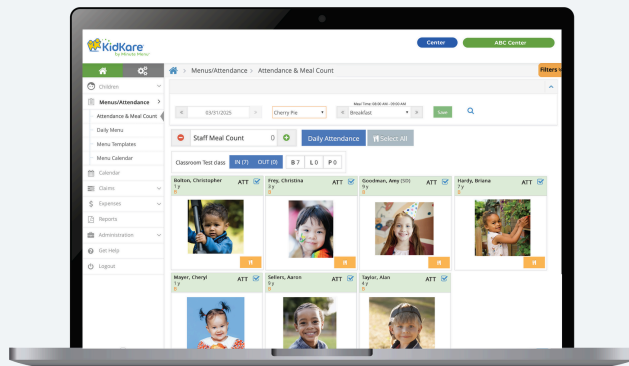
Success Story: Louisiana's KidKare Implementation

A Model for Success

The precedent set by USDA for the approval of KidKare as a state-wide operating system in Louisiana (and Oklahoma) has resulted in **improved program efficacy, operational program fidelity and a systematic reduction of paperwork**, increasing overall program efficiency.

Mandated Excellence

As a best-in-class compliance measure, every meal claimed in the state was required to be counted, tracked and analyzed through KidKare by October 2023. Seeing significant traction among those on-boarded and claiming, in March 2023, **Louisiana mandated the software state-wide, launching an initiative in furtherance of the Paperwork Reduction Act** and in a focused effort to be amenable to the ever-changing needs of the CACFP environment.

Success Story: Louisiana's KidKare Implementation

Measurable Results

Participants have provided strong feedback that this has made the program more accessible than ever before, and the State Team has seen staff efficiency, program friction mitigation and, overall, improved program outcomes across the board. As one Reviewer noted, **"I have had several sites that would have been removed from the program. The software does not allow them to make mistakes. Now, they've gone from serious deficiency to near perfect visits."**

The State has seen significant reduction in the time of personnel in the field, in some cases reducing time on site by as much as 92%. Further, all indications support that increased program participation by mitigating paperwork as a barrier, an overall reduction in serious deficiencies and the utilization of the 250+ audit checks within software the software directly contributes to mitigation and drastic reduction of programmatic errors.