TANS
Texas Automated Nutrition System

Frequently Asked Questions

On December 31, 2025, we will say goodbye to TX-UNPS. After more than 10 years of supporting our nutrition programs, the system will be retired and replaced by the Texas Automated Nutrition System or TANS.
We know you have many questions about this transition, so we have tried to answer some of the most common ones here.

Have a question that isn't answered? **Let us know!**

BACKGROUND
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- Why are we moving to TANS?
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- Will I be using TANS and TX-UNPS at the same time?

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SYSTEM BASICS

- What does TANS look like?
- What does TANS usage look like for an organization with more than 50 sites?
- Will I be able to use TANS in multiple browsers and windows?
- Will TANS be used for TEFAP and CSFP?
- I'm a new director. What will I be doing in TANS?

SECURITY

- Will TANS allow single-sign on?
- Will program sponsor directors be able to access their organization in TANS?
- Will user accounts and security permissions, including User Access Manager rights, be migrated to TANS?

CLAIMS

- How will claims be entered into TANS?

DATA & REPORTING

- Will SNP sponsors complete direct certification in TANS?
- How much data from previous program years will be migrated to TANS?
- Will organizations need to manually enter their application data into TANS?
- Will TX-UNPS data be available after TANS launches? If so, how long?
- What TX-UNPS data will be available after December 31, 2025?
- Is there a checklist of items to save for future compliance reviews?

BACKGROUND

What is TANS?

TANS stands for Texas Automated Nutrition System. It is a web-based system designed to support the administration of federal nutrition programs.

TANS will allow program sponsors, ESC users, and state users to manage their role in program applications, claims, compliance reviews, and other administrative functions in a robust, streamlined system built using current technology and simple navigation.

Why are we moving to TANS?

Our current system, TX-UNPS, has served us well for the better part of a decade but it is nearing its end of life. A new system brings the opportunity to upgrade to modern software, simplify the user experience, and provide enhanced features.

Additionally, TANS will be directly managed by TDA, allowing us to more flexibly adapt to regulatory changes and more easily incorporate user feedback.

How was TANS selected?

After a discovery period of two years, TDA staff determined the custom-built web-based system developed by the District of Columbia's Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) provided the best opportunity to start fresh. This system, known as Orchard, was determined to provide a user-friendly experience, a solid technological foundation, and high coverage of necessary program processes.

Orchard, as Texas received it, accounts for about 60% of our programs' operational needs. To bridge the gap, our project team is working hard to build upon the system to meet our state's needs. Once complete, the upgraded system will be maintained by TDA in-house and will be known as TANS.

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BACKGROUND

What is changing?

Beginning with program year 2026, program sponsors, ESC users, and state users will administer Texas' federal nutrition programs through TANS. TANS will have a fresh look, new navigation, and slight process changes, but it will serve the same role in program administration as TX-UNPS has in the recent years.

TANS will be used to manage applications, claims, compliance, reporting, and other administrative functions for the following nutrition programs:

- School Nutrition Program (NSLP and SBP)
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP and DCH)
- Summer Meal Programs (SFSP and SSO)
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (FFVP)
- Special Milk Program (SMP)
- Food Distribution Program (TEFAP, CSFP, and S/FMNP)

One of the first changes users may notice is navigation through the system. Instead of clicking in and out of programs and program years, users will manage all programs through summary dashboards and make selections to dynamically show just what is needed. This means less clicking around and more checking things off your to-do list.

Each of TANS' modules will follow a similar layout – a summary dashboard with individual pages containing more detail. For example, all claims will be consolidated into a single summary dashboard, whether they are CACFP, TEFAP, current program year or a previous one. From the dashboard, users can select a claim to view it in more detail.

You may also notice that some TANS terminology will differ from what is currently used in TX-UNPS. This is to support better alignment with USDA regulation and make use of the existing system development. For example, the term Contracting Entity (CE) is specific to TX-UNPS and Texas. In TANS, these same entities are referred to as Organizations. We believe this will help connect the dots between policy and your daily work.
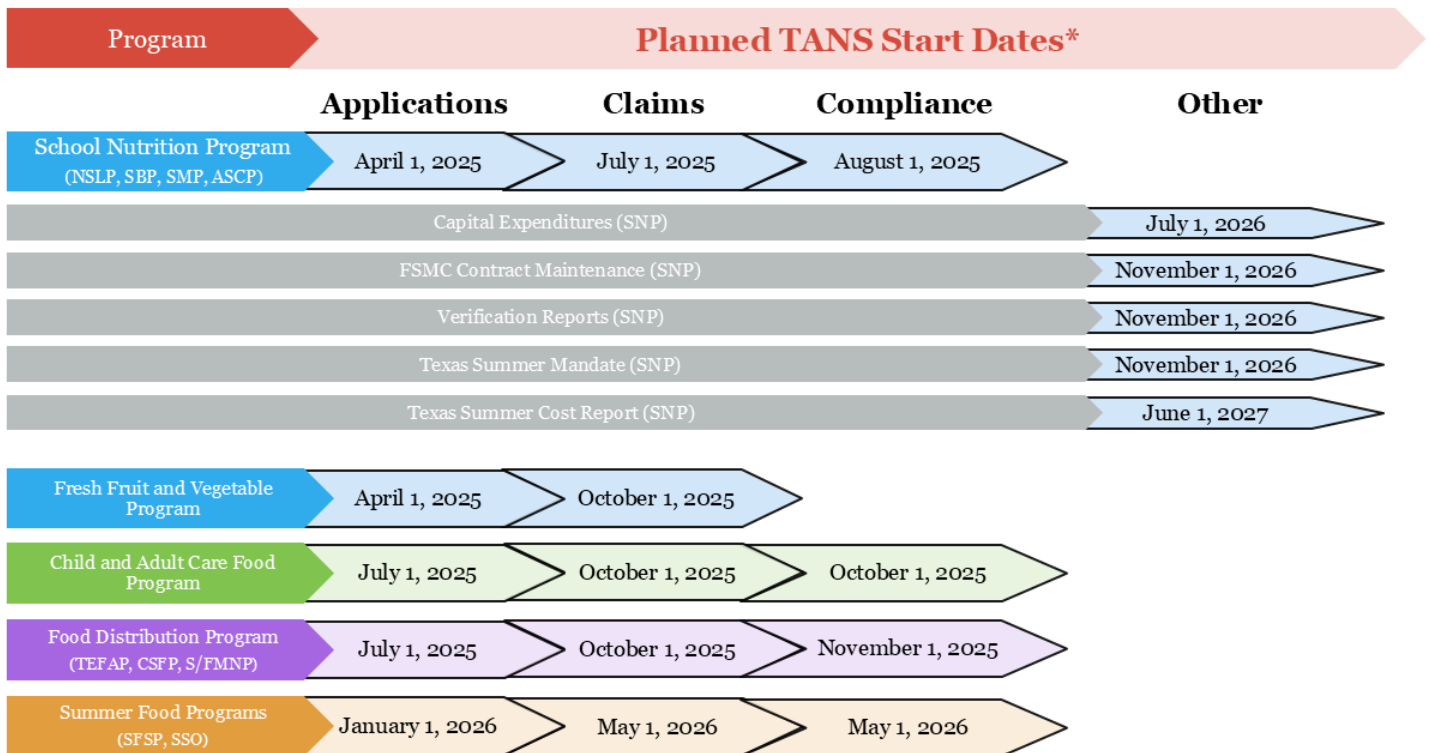
When will I start using TANS?

All users will transition to TANS beginning with program year 2026 based on the existing program calendar dates. For example, on April 1, 2025, when SNP applications open for program year 2026, instead of completing the application in TX-UNPS, SNP sponsors will complete their SNP application in TANS.

A very small number of administrative reports (in grey below) are planned for a later start date in program year 2027.

Program	Planned TANS Start Dates*			
	Applications	**Claims**	**Compliance**	**Other**
School Nutrition Program (NSLP, SBP, SMP, ASCP)	April 1, 2025	July 1, 2025	August 1, 2025	
Capital Expenditures (SNP)				July 1, 2026
FSMC Contract Maintenance (SNP)				November 1, 2026
Verification Reports (SNP)				November 1, 2026
Texas Summer Mandate (SNP)				November 1, 2026
Texas Summer Cost Report (SNP)				June 1, 2027
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program	April 1, 2025	October 1, 2025		
Child and Adult Care Food Program	July 1, 2025	October 1, 2025	October 1, 2025	
Food Distribution Program (TEFAP, CSFP, S/FMNP)	July 1, 2025	October 1, 2025	November 1, 2025	
Summer Food Programs (SFSP, SSO)	January 1, 2026	May 1, 2026	May 1, 2026	

*dates are subject to change

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TIMELINE

Will I be using TX-UNPS and TANS at the same time?

Yes. Users will work in TX-UNPS to finish out program year 2025 and TANS to start program year 2026 simultaneously. Only SSO and SFSP will not overlap. Once program year 2025 is complete, users will work solely in TANS. All users will lose access to TX-UNPS when it is retired on December 31, 2025.

Year	Month	TX-UNPS				TANS			
2024	APR								
	MAY								
	JUN								
	JUL								
	AUG								
	SEP								
	OCT		CACFP PY 25	FDP PY25					
	NOV								
	DEC	SNP PY25							
2025	JAN								
	FEB								
	MAR				SFSP SSO PY25				
	APR					SNP PY26			
	MAY								
	JUN								
	JUL								
	AUG						CACFP PY26	FDP PY26	
	SEPT								
	OCT								SFSP SSO PY26
	NOV								
	DEC								
2026	JAN	TX-UNPS ACCESS ENDS 12/31/2025							
	FEB								
	MAR								
	APR								
	MAY								
	JUN								
	JUL								
	AUG								

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TRAINING

When will I receive training on TANS?

Training relevant to each launch will be provided 2-3 months ahead of the planned start date. State and ESC users will be trained first, followed by program sponsor users.

For example, SNP applications will start in TANS on April 1, so state users and ESC users can expect to receive training in February, while program sponsor users can expect training in February or March. This is the same cadence expected for each planned start date.

What type of training will be provided?

Based on the transition timeline and on feedback we've received from a wide range of users, training for TANS will lean heavily on self-service, on-demand materials. This style of training is best suited for tech-confident users with a busy schedule. In-person and virtual instructor-led training will also be available on a more limited basis. This style of training is best suited for users that benefit from hands-on technical guidance or a focused learning environment.

Self-service training materials will be accessible via the SquareMeals TANS page and will include:
- short video tutorials
- job aids & quick guides
- user manuals

Instructor-led training sessions will be available on the TANS transition page as they are scheduled.
- classroom trainings and demonstrations
- virtual trainings and demonstrations

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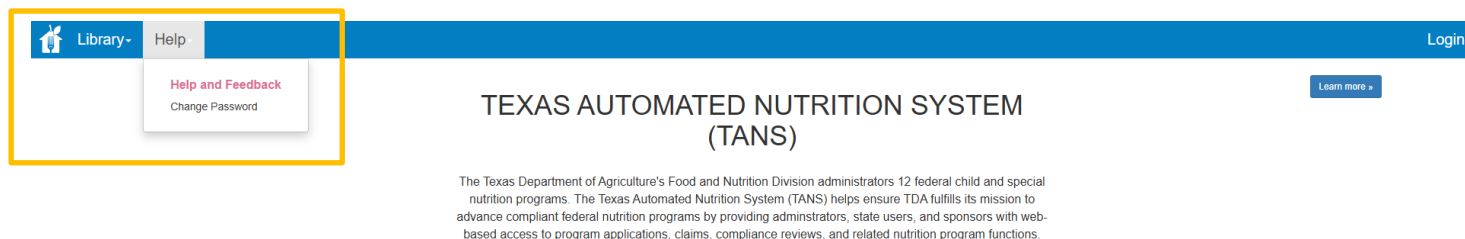Texas Automated Nutrition System

TRAINING

Is TANS training mandatory?
Completion of training will not be tracked, but certificates of completion will be provided for self-service video trainings. It is _HIGHLY_ recommended that all users complete the trainings relevant to their job duties and save certificates of completion for your records.

We encourage all users to complete relevant trainings prior to using TANS for the first time so there is time to troubleshoot, ask questions, and understand the system. Take the opportunity to get comfortable!

Will TANS have a help button?
Yes, TANS will have a Help menu in the top menu options. In this menu users will be able to change their password, report system bugs, and access user manuals.

Library▾	Help		Login
	Help and Feedback		Learn more »
	Change Password		

TEXAS AUTOMATED NUTRITION SYSTEM (TANS)

The Texas Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Division administrators 12 federal child and special nutrition programs. The Texas Automated Nutrition System (TANS) helps ensure TDA fulfills its mission to advance compliant federal nutrition programs by providing administrators, state users, and sponsors with web-based access to program applications, claims, compliance reviews, and related nutrition program functions.

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SYSTEM BASICS

What does TANS look like?

TANS is a modern platform that may be similar to websites and platforms you already use. Though it is new and will take some getting used to, you'll soon see how user-friendly TANS is for your day-to-day work. These are a couple of the key features we're excited about.

Dynamic Summary Navigation

TANS features summary dashboards on each module that allow you to see all your programs and years in one place. Selection options at the top of each dashboard allow you to quickly adjust what is shown based on your needs.

Year:	Current ▼		Agreements:	All ▼	Assignments:	All Programs ▼

	Current						
	All						
	2025						
❤ S	2024						
	2023						
Progr	2022			**All**	**Draft**	**Returned for**
	2021					
CACFl		CH, IC, ADC, ARC, ARC-NSLP		1	1	
FFVP				1	1	
NSLP		NSLP, SSO		1	1	
SFSP				0	0	
SMP				0	0	

❤ Applications ⓘ

Organization	˅	Program
Danville CE		CACFP (ARC, SOC)
Danville CE		FFVP
Danville CE		NSLP (SSO)

|◄ ◄ **1** ► ►| 5 ▼ items per page

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SYSTEM BASICS

What does TANS look like?

Transparent and Clickable Menus
In each of the main modules – applications, claims, compliance – the full navigation menu is visible by default, so you don't have to click in an out of each required section. It's all right there in front of you!

Want to see more? Check out the [TANS Overview shared at MegaCon 2024](#).

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SYSTEM BASICS

What does TANS usage look like for an organization with more than 50 sites?

TANS usage doesn't look too different for a larger organization as compared to a small organization. The features that may be most helpful is the ability to filter and export summary datasets, easily navigate between site applications, and upload site claims.

Will I be able to use TANS in multiple browsers and windows?

Yes, TANS can be used in all commonly used browsers and can be viewed in multiple windows simultaneously.

Will TANS be used for TEFAP and CSFP?

Yes, TANS will be used for applications (aka contract agreements), claims, and compliance for Food Distribution Programs, including TEFAP, CSFP, and S/FMNP.

I'm a new director. What will I be doing in TANS?

TANS will be used to submit and manage applications, claims, compliance documentation, reports, and complete other administrative functions for the following programs:

- School Nutrition Program (NSLP and SBP)
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP and DCH)
- Summer Meal Programs (SFSP and SSO)
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (FFVP)
- Special Milk Program (SMP)
- Food Distribution Program (TEFAP, CSFP, and S/FMNP)

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SECURITY

Will TANS allow single sign-on?

TANS is a consolidated, standalone system. User credentials will provide access to modules and functionality of TANS based on the security roles assigned to the user.

Will program sponsor directors be able to access their organization in TANS?

Users will be able to access their organization's information once logged into TANS with their username and password. The type and extent of any user's access is determined by their assigned security roles.

Will user accounts and security permissions, including User Access Manager rights, be migrated to TANS?

Yes, TDA plans to migrate all active user accounts to TANS. These accounts will be established in TANS with security roles equivalent to the user's TX-UNPS security roles, including UAM rights. However, UAMs will be limited to two per organization, which is consistent with current security access limits in TX-UNPS.

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CLAIMS

How will claims be entered into TANS?

Organizations will continue to have the option to manually enter or upload claims data in TANS. Uploads will keep the same POS export format as they do today.

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DATA & REPORTING

Will SNP sponsors complete direct certification in TANS?

Direct certification uploads and match exports are completed in the Texas Eligibility List Management System (Texas ELMS), which is a standalone system facilitating data feeds from HHSC and TEA, along with enrollment uploads completed by SNP sponsors. Currently, TX-UNPS facilitates security access to Texas ELMS. There are no plans to modify Texas ELMS in the transition, apart from adjusting these security access rights.

How much data from previous program years will be migrated into TANS?

TDA will migrate a very limited amount of data to support a clean transition and higher quality data in TANS.

TDA will only migrate key foundational data including:
- user login IDs & security roles
- organization name (formerly CE name)
- organization ID (formerly CE ID)
- site name(s)
- data needed to complete program year 2026 calculations
  - *EX: # of lunches served two years prior used for Severe Need Breakfast rate determinations in current program year. Data used for calculations may not be visible to users.*

What won't be transferred?
- TDA does not plan to migrate any other applications, claims, compliance, and other data to TANS.
- Sponsors will need to populate data for program year 2026.
- Most data will rollover on future renewals.

DATA & REPORTING

Will organizations need to manually enter their application data into TANS?

in the first year, organizations should be prepared to enter application data. The system will be populated with organization name, organization id, site names, and site id, but the remaining application data will not be migrated from TX-UNPS to TANS.

Will TX-UNPS data be available after TANS launches? If so, how long?

TX-UNPS will remain accessible to all users through December 31, 2025. Users will be able to refer to past data during this time.

What TX-UNPS data will be available after December 31, 2025?

After December 2025, TDA's IT and Data team will retain a copy of the database in accordance to records retention. This means TDA will continue to be able to pull raw data that is entered onto a screen in TX-UNPS without a user interface. It does not include document uploads or attachments.

Aside from TDA IT and Data team, all other users will not be able access the data directly after December 31, 2025. Select reports, including the Open Data Portal, will be available for historical reference.

Access ODP Here

Is there a checklist of items organizations should save for future compliance reviews?

A checklist is not currently available. TDA is working internally to determine what can be provided to guide organizations' historical documentation and support preparation for future compliance reviews. Prior to the list being made available, documentation that was required to submit for past compliance reviews is a good starting point.

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