



After more than 10 years of supporting our nutrition programs, TX-UNPS will soon 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

- What is TANS?
- Why are we moving to TANS?
- How was TANS selected?
- What is changing?

TIMELINE

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

TRAINING

- When will I receive training on TANS?
- What type of training will be provided?
- Is TANS training mandatory?
- Will TANS have a help button?



Last updated 03/07/2025

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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?
- 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?
- How long will TX-UNPS data be available after TANS launches?
- What TX-UNPS data will be available after the system retires?



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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 roughly 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?

As organizations, ESCs, and state users move away from TX-UNPS, they will begin administering 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 be able to manage all programs through summary dashboards by dynamically selecting 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 links to 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. TDA is adopting the language used in the original Orchard system to support better alignment with USDA regulation and to make use of the existing system functionality. One key example is the term Contracting Entity (CE). CE is specific to TX-UNPS and Texas. In TANS, these same entities are referred to as Organizations.



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TIMELINE



When will I start using TANS?

All users will transition to TANS beginning with their program application. After the program application is available and approved in TANS, claiming, compliance, and reporting will all follow.

To ensure a smooth implementation process full of training resources, users can expect to continue using TX-UNPS until we launch TANS. Updates on rollout and training will be posted to the [TANS SquareMeals page](#) as they are made available.

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

Users will very likely be using both systems at the same time.

Typically, applications for an upcoming program year open before the current program year has ended. This means that when users begin their first program application in TANS, they will likely still be completing administrative duties for the current year in TX-UNPS, including claiming, compliance, and application updates to reflect operational changes in the current year.

Users that operate multiple programs will be even more likely to work in TX-UNPS and TANS simultaneously because each program will likely begin in TANS at different times.



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TRAINING



When will I receive training on TANS?

Training materials relevant to each newly released TANS module will be provided 2-3 months ahead of the planned start date.

Training materials will be posted to the [TANS SquareMeals page](#) as they are made available.

What type of training will be provided?

Training materials will be in a self-service, on-demand style. This style of training supports users with a busy schedule by making them available 24/7. In-person and virtual instructor-led training will also be available for those 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 reference guides

Instructor-led training session dates will be shared as they are scheduled and will include:

- classroom trainings and demonstrations
- virtual trainings and demonstrations



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TRAINING



Is TANS training mandatory?

Completion of training will not be tracked, but certificates of completion will be provided on select materials. 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 to allow time to troubleshoot, ask questions, and understand the system.

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.



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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. Here are a couple of new 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.

The screenshot shows the TANS dashboard interface. At the top, there are three filter dropdowns: 'Year: Current', 'Agreements: All', and 'Assignments: All Programs'. Below these is a table with columns for 'Program', 'All', 'Draft', and 'Returned for'. The table lists several programs: CACFP (2023-2024), FFVP (2021-2022), NSLP (2021-2022), SFSP, and SMP. A 'Year' dropdown menu is open, showing options from 'Current' to '2021'. Below the table is an 'Applications' section with a table listing 'Organization' (Danville CE) and 'Program' (CACFP (ARC, SOC), FFVP, NSLP (SSO)). At the bottom of the applications table, there is a pagination control showing '1' of 5 items per page.



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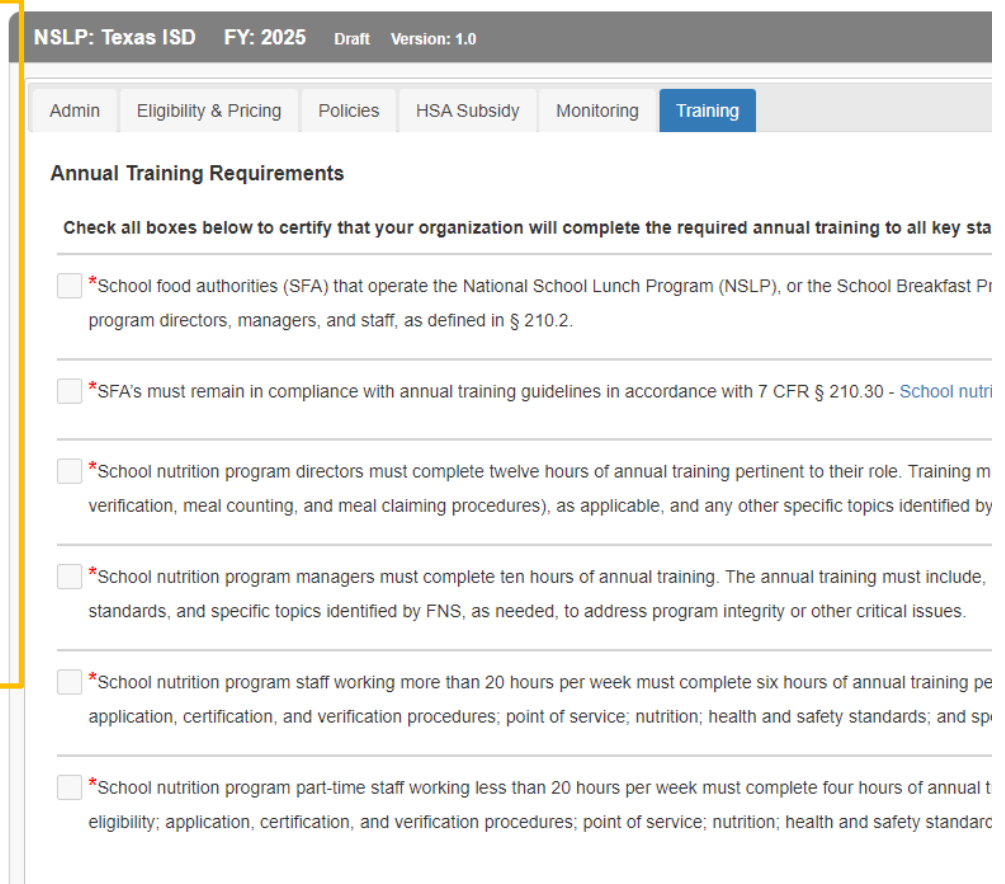
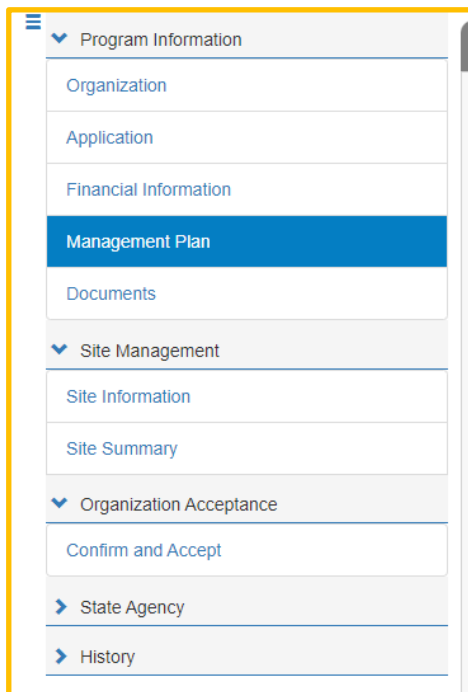
SYSTEM BASICS



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 and out of each required section. It's all right there in front of you!



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SYSTEM BASICS



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)

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

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



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SYSTEM BASICS



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 associated 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. Organizations will be limited to two UAMs 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 use the same 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. Apart from adjusting the source of security access credentials to TANS, there are no plans to modify Texas ELMS.

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 credentials & security roles
- organization profile data – organization name, id, region(s)
- site name
- data needed to complete calculations or track compliance in the first program year
Examples include severe need breakfast eligibility, two-cent differential lunch eligibility (severe need lunch), CEP and provision 2 eligibility, area eligibility, Tier 1 eligibility, serious deficiency tracking, pre-approval site visit dates, etc.

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 all other data for their first program applications.
- Most data will rollover on future renewals.



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DATA & REPORTING



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

In the first year, organizations should be prepared to enter all 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.

How long will TX-UNPS data be available after TANS launches?

TX-UNPS will remain accessible to all users prior to its final retirement. Users will be able to refer to any past data in TX-UNPS during this time.

What TX-UNPS data will be available after the system retires?

After TX-UNPS retires, TDA will retain a complete copy of the final database in accordance to records retention. Select TDA teams will continue to be able to create reports from this database, but

All other users will not be able access the data directly after TX-UNPS retires. However, select reports, including the Open Data Portal, will be available for historical reference.

[Access ODP Here](#)



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