



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1 IF AREA ELIGIBILITY WAS DETERMINED BY A SCHOOL THAT CLOSES, MAY CENSUS DATA BE USED INSTEAD?

No. CACFP regulations require that, except for emergency shelters, At-Risk Afterschool Programs must be located in the attendance area of a public school (an elementary, middle, or high school) where at least 50 percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced price meals under the NSLP. However, school data is valid for a period of five years, so, once a center qualifies based on school data, it would be eligible for the remainder of the five-year period even if the school closes during that period.

2 I RUN AN AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM THAT IS NOT IN AN ELIGIBLE AREA, BUT 50 PERCENT OF THE CHILDREN I SERVE RECEIVE FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS. IS MY CENTER ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM?

No. CACFP regulations require that, except for emergency shelters, At-Risk Afterschool Programs must be located in the attendance area of a public school (an elementary, middle, or high school) where at least 50 percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced price meals under the NSLP.

3 HOW IS AREA ELIGIBILITY DETERMINED FOR AT-RISK PROGRAMS LOCATED IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS THAT HAVE ELECTED THE COMMUNITY ELIGIBILITY PROVISION (CEP)? ARE ALL SCHOOL BUILDINGS CONSIDERED OVER 50 PERCENT?

For the purposes of determining area eligibility for CACFP and SFSP, district-wide CEP determinations may not be used. CACFP and SFSP require area eligibility determinations to be made on the basis of individual schools [7 CFR 226.2 Definitions, 7 CFR 225.2 Definitions]. Although an entire school district may elect CEP, there may be schools within the school district that fall below the 50 percent free and reduced price meals threshold required for CACFP and SFSP.

As required by §7 CFR 210.9(b), SFAs must provide the NSLP State agency with a list of schools under its jurisdiction in which 50 percent or more of enrolled children have been determined eligible for free or reduced price meals as of the last operating day the preceding October. If a school district has elected CEP, the NSLP State agency is still required to provide individual school data to the CACFP State agency. Because the 1.6 multiplier is intended to provide an estimate of the total number of students eligible for free and reduced price meals in the eligible schools, the product of the identified student percentage multiplied by 1.6 is the percentage that will be used for area eligibility purposes for CACFP and SFSP (SP 19-2016: [Community Eligibility Provision: Guidance Q&As](#), December 14, 2015.)



4 CAN A SCHOOL SYSTEM PARTICIPATING IN BOTH THE SBP AND NSLP AND THE AT-RISK COMPONENT OF THE CACFP RECEIVE REIMBURSEMENT UNDER CACFP FOR A MEAL AND SNACK SERVED TO CHILDREN WHO ALSO RECEIVED BREAKFAST AND LUNCH UNDER THE SBP AND NSLP?

Yes. Based on the nature of the At-Risk Afterschool Meals component of CACFP, the expectation is that most of the participating children attend school and receive free and reduced price meals. With that in mind, schools that serve children meals through NSLP are eligible for reimbursement for a meal and a snack served to children in an at-risk afterschool program through CACFP. However, schools may not serve children an afterschool snack through NSLP and then serve those same children an additional snack through CACFP.

5 ARE THERE ANY RESTRICTIONS ON AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS SWITCHING FROM CACFP AT-RISK DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR TO THE SFSP DURING THE SUMMER WHEN SCHOOL IS NOT IN SESSION?

Generally, programs that participate in CACFP At-Risk during the school year would be eligible to continue to serve those children who are age 18 or under through SFSP during the summer when school is not in session, subject to approval of their SFSP application by the State agency.

However, a traditional child care center that also serves At-Risk Afterschool Meals (i.e., the center has enrolled pre-school children in care during the day, but also serves At-Risk Afterschool Meals to school-age children) must comply with FNS Instruction 782-4, rev. 3. This instruction states that traditional child care centers may only claim some or all of their meals under SFSP during the summer when there is a substantial change in Program activities or a significant increase in enrollment. Institutions approved to participate in both the CACFP and the SFSP must ensure that the same children are not served meals in both Programs, and separate records must be kept for each Program.

If a traditional child care center did not substantially change its activities or significantly increase its enrollment during the summer months, it could only receive reimbursement through SFSP for meals served to children who participate in the Afterschool Program during the school year. Such a center would receive free, reduced price, and paid reimbursement through CACFP for all other children enrolled for care (through the age of 12).

Per FNS Instruction 782-4, rev. 3, the determination to either approve the institution for participation in both the CACFP and SFSP or solely for the CACFP should be based on the institution's Program objectives.

6 DO AT-RISK CENTERS HAVE TO CHOOSE WHICH MEAL THEY WILL SERVE OR CAN THEY SERVE DIFFERENT MEALS TO DIFFERENT GROUPS OF CHILDREN OR ON DIFFERENT DAYS?

At-Risk centers may serve up to one meal and one snack per child per day. This could be any meal and they may serve different meals on different days or to different groups of children. For example, a site could serve lunch and a snack to children who attend half-day kindergarten and then serve a snack and supper to older children who attend a full day of school.

7 CAN AN AT-RISK AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM CHARGE "TUITION," SIMILAR TO A TRADITIONAL CHILD CARE CENTER?

Similar to non-pricing child care centers, there may be a fee for the care provided or a "tuition" charge, but there can be no separate charge for the food service. Although the regulations do not specifically prohibit or specifically authorize tuition charges, should the State agency encounter a situation where a substantial participation fee is being charged that might adversely affect the ability of needy children to participate, the State agency will consult with their Regional Office prior to approving participation.





PART 2

APPLYING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM

This section provides information on the application process for participation in the At-Risk Afterschool Meals component of CACFP.

- APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR NEW INSTITUTIONS
- ANNUAL INFORMATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR EXPERIENCED INSTITUTIONS
- CHANGES TO PARTICIPATING CENTERS
- APPLICATION PROCESS FOR INSTITUTIONS PARTICIPATING IN OTHER CACFP COMPONENTS
- APPLICATION PROCESS FOR SFSP SPONSORS
- APPLICATION PROCESS FOR SFA'S PARTICIPATING IN NSLP

APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR NEW INSTITUTIONS

Organizations must submit an application (written or electronic) to the State agency to participate in the At-Risk Afterschool Meals component of CACFP. Applicants must describe how they meet the eligibility criteria. The State agency will do a pre-approval visit of private nonprofit and for-profit institutions to confirm the information in the application and to further assess the institution's ability to manage CACFP [7 CFR 226.6(b)(1)]. State agencies may waive the requirement for pre-approval visits for centers that operated as SFSP sites (CACFP 12-2013: [Transitioning from the Summer Food Service Program to the Child and Adult Care Food Program At-Risk Afterschool Meals](#), May 31, 2013).

THE FOLLOWING COMPONENTS MUST BE INCLUDED IN A NEW INSTITUTION'S APPLICATION:



CONFIRMATION OF AREA ELIGIBILITY OF CENTERS

Sponsors must submit a list of all applicant afterschool centers and documentation showing that the centers are located in eligible areas. Independent centers also must provide documentation that they are located in an eligible area [7 CFR 226.17a(e)].

Applicant organizations should contact the State agency that administers CACFP to obtain free and reduced price school enrollment data for proof of area eligibility. NSLP State agencies are required to provide to the CACFP State agency a list of area eligible schools each year.



MANAGEMENT PLAN

Sponsors must submit a management plan that includes:

- Detailed information on the organization's management and administrative structure.
- An administrative budget that includes projected CACFP administrative earnings and expenses and demonstrates the institution's ability to manage Program funds.

- Sponsors' budgets may not have administrative costs higher than 15 percent of the year's estimated meal reimbursements. States may waive this limit, but waivers should only be granted if the sponsor provides justification that it needs Program funds in excess of 15 percent, and the State agency is convinced that the institution will have adequate funding to provide high quality, nutritious meals and snacks.
- A list or description of the staff assigned to Program monitoring.
- The procedures that the organization will use to administer the Program and that sponsors will use to disburse payments to sponsored child care facilities [7 CFR226.6(b)].

NOTE:

SFAs that are already successfully participating in the NSLP are not required to submit a separate management plan or budget (CACFP 04-2013: *Streamlining At-Risk Afterschool Meal Participation for the School Food Authorities*, November 28, 2012). Additionally, management plans are not required as part of the application if the institution intends to sponsor only one facility (CACFP 11-2007: *Accommodations for Non-Traditional Program Operators*, July 3, 2007).

 **DOCUMENTATION OF LICENSING/ APPROVAL**

All sites must show that they meet State or local licensing requirements, if applicable. If there are no State or local licensing requirements, sites must show that they meet local health and safety standards [7 CFR 226.17a(d)].

 **DOCUMENTATION OF TAX-EXEMPT STATUS**

All private nonprofit institutions must provide documentation of their tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 [7 CFR 226.6(b)].

 **PREFERENCE FOR USDA FOODS/ CASH IN LIEU OF USDA FOODS**

The USDA donates foods to States and States make those foods available to institutions. Institutions must indicate in their application if they prefer USDA Foods or cash in lieu of USDA Foods. Each year, State agencies must provide institutions with information about foods that will be available that year. This information is provided to the State agency by FNS [7 CFR 226.6(h)].

 **PROVIDING BENEFITS TO UNSERVED FACILITIES OR PARTICIPANTS**

Sponsoring organizations must show documentation indicating that they meet their State's criteria for ensuring delivery of benefits to otherwise unserved facilities or participants.

 **INELIGIBILITY FOR OTHER PUBLICLY FUNDED PROGRAMS**

If an institution or any of its principals are included on the CACFP National Disqualified List (NDL) or have been declared ineligible for any other publicly funded program for violating that program's requirements, States must deny their application.

- So that States can make this determination, institutions must submit:
- A statement listing the publicly funded programs in which the institution and its principals have participated during the past 7 years; and
- A certification that during the last 7 years, neither the institution nor its principals have been declared ineligible to participate in any other publicly funded program by reason of violating that program's requirements; or
- Instead of certification, an institution may provide documentation that it was later reinstated or determined eligible for the program, including the payment of any debts owed.



INFORMATION ON CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

If an institution or any of its principals have been convicted of any activity related to lack of business integrity in the past 7 years, a State agency may not approve the application. A lack of business integrity includes fraud, antitrust violations, embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, receiving stolen property, making false claims, obstruction of justice, or any other related activity as defined by the State.



CERTIFICATION OF TRUTH IN APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION OF NAMES AND ADDRESS

Institutions must certify that all information on the application is true and correct, along with the name, mailing address, and date of birth of the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors.



OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT POLICY

Sponsors must submit an outside employment policy restricting other employment by employees that interferes with an employee's performance of Program duties and responsibilities.



BOND

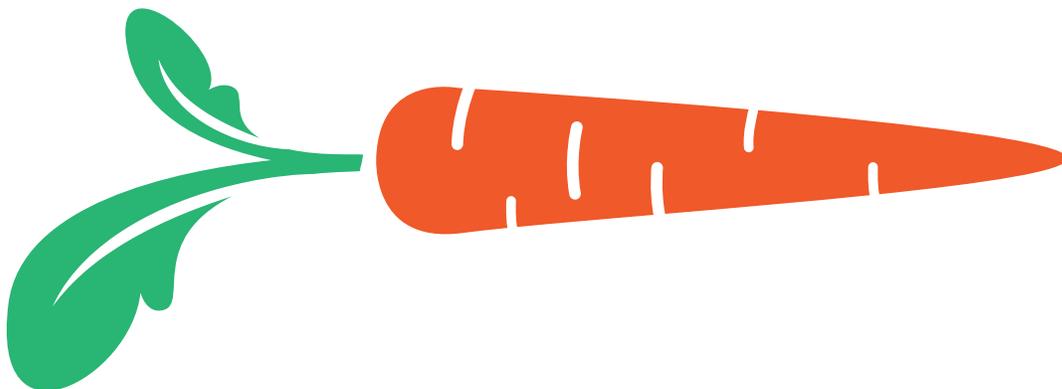
Sponsors must submit a bond, if required by State law, regulation, or policy.



COMPLIANCE WITH PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

An applying institution must demonstrate that it can comply with the following performance standards:

- **Financial viability and financial management:**
 - Institutions must document that participation will help ensure the delivery of benefits to otherwise unserved facilities or participants.
 - Institutions must demonstrate that they have the financial resources to operate the Program on a daily basis and adequate funds to withstand temporary interruptions in Program payments and/or fiscal claims.
 - Costs in the institution's budget must be necessary, reasonable, allowable, and appropriately documented.
- **Administrative capability:**
 - Institutions must have an adequate number and type of qualified staff.
 - Sponsors must employ enough staff to meet the monitoring requirements (one full-time staff person for each 25-150 centers it sponsors) [7 CFR 226.16(b)(1)].
 - Sponsors must have written policies and procedures that assign responsibilities and duties, and ensure compliance with civil rights requirements.



- **Program accountability:**

- Nonprofit institutions must have adequate oversight by the governing board of directors.
- The institution must have a financial system with management controls in writing. For new sponsors these written policies must ensure:
 - Fiscal integrity and accountability for all funds and property received, held, and disbursed.
 - Integrity and accountability of all expenses incurred.
 - That all claims will be processed accurately, and in a timely manner.
 - That funds and property are safeguarded and used, and expenses incurred, for authorized Program purposes.
 - That a system of safeguards and controls is in place to prevent and detect improper financial activities by employees.
- Institutions must maintain records to document compliance with Program requirements, including budgets, accounting records, approved budget amendments, and for sponsors, management plans.
- New sponsors must document in their management plan that they will:
 - Provide adequate and regular training of staff and sponsored centers.
 - Perform monitoring to ensure centers are appropriately operating the Program.
 - Have a system in place to ensure that administrative costs funded from the Program do not exceed 15 percent of estimated or actual meal reimbursements.

- Independent centers and sponsored facilities must have practices in place to ensure that the meal service, recordkeeping, and other Program requirements are performed properly. These practices must be documented in the application of independent centers or the sponsor management plans and must document that centers will:
 - Provide meals that meet meal pattern requirements.
 - Comply with any licensing and health and safety requirements.
 - Have a food service that complies with applicable State and local health and sanitation requirements.
 - Comply with civil rights requirements.
 - Maintain complete and appropriate records on file.
 - Claim reimbursement only for eligible meals.



NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT AND MEDIA RELEASE

Sponsors and independent centers must submit a non-discrimination policy statement (see Page 2 for language) and a media release announcing the availability of meals and snacks at no charge unless the State agency has issued a statewide media release on behalf of all institutions [7 CFR 226.6(b)].



State Agency Review of Applications

The State agency must determine the eligibility of each At-Risk Afterschool Program based on the information included in the application. The State agency also must determine the area eligibility of independent At-Risk Afterschool Care centers [7 CFR 226.17a (f)].

State agencies must notify institutions in writing if they have been approved to participate in the Program within 30 days of receipt of a complete application [7 CFR 226.6(b)].

Agreement

Once the State agency has approved an organization’s application, the State agency and the sponsor or independent center will enter into a permanent agreement. The agreement must describe the approved At-Risk Afterschool Care Program(s) and list the approved facilities. The agreement also must require the institution to comply with applicable requirements.

Although the agreement is permanent, it may be terminated for cause by the State agency if the institution does not comply with Program requirements (CACFP 07-2011: [Child Nutrition Reauthorization 2010: Permanent Agreements in the Summer Food Service Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), January 14, 2011).

State agencies that administer more than one Child Nutrition Program are required to enter into a single agreement with SFAs that operate more than one Child Nutrition Program [7 CFR 225.6(e)].

EXAMPLE

If an SFA is already participating in NSLP and wishes to offer the At-Risk Afterschool meals component of CACFP, the State agency could simply add an addendum to the existing agreement (CACFP 04-2013: [Streamlining At-Risk Afterschool Meal Participation for School Food Authorities](#), November 28, 2012).

State agencies are also strongly encouraged to enter into a single agreement with other sponsors operating more than one Child Nutrition Program, including SFSP. Therefore, if the same State agency administers both CACFP and SFSP, SFSP sponsors interested in offering Afterschool Meals through CACFP during the school year are required only to sign an addendum to the existing SFSP agreement. In States where CACFP and SFSP are administered by different State agencies, sponsors must enter into an agreement with both State agencies. However, the State agencies are encouraged to work together to share information and streamline the agreement process.

ANNUAL INFORMATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR EXPERIENCED INSTITUTIONS

As a result of the passage of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, renewing institutions are no longer required to submit renewal applications on a periodic basis. Instead, renewing institutions are required to annually provide:

- Updated licensing information for each independent center and facility participating in CACFP (the State may choose to get this information directly from the State licensing agency).
- Certification that any information previously submitted to the State is current (see CACFP 19-2011: [Child Nutrition Reauthorization 2010: Child and Adult Care Food Program Applications](#), April 8, 2011, for a prototype certification).
- For sponsors, a budget for the upcoming year and, if required by the State agency, a budget for independent centers.
- A media release announcing the availability of meals and snacks at no charge to the institution's attendance area (unless the State chooses to issue a statewide media release).
- Area eligibility data for each new center (or centers whose five-year qualification period is expiring), which may include the most recent free and reduced-price school data and attendance area information which it has obtained, or verified with the appropriate school officials to be current, within the last school year [7 CFR 226.17a (g)].

CHANGES TO PARTICIPATING CENTERS

Independent centers or sponsors must notify the State agency of any substantive changes to the At-Risk Afterschool Program, including changes to existing sites, contact information, and key staff. Sponsors that want to add new At-Risk Afterschool centers must provide the State agency with information indicating that the new centers meet Program requirements, including area eligibility [7 CFR 226.17a (h)]. These centers must be approved by the State agency before claims may be submitted.

APPLICATION PROCESS FOR INSTITUTIONS PARTICIPATING IN OTHER CACFP COMPONENTS

If an institution is already participating in CACFP and wants to add At-Risk Afterschool Meals and/or Snacks, the agreement with the State agency must be amended to reflect this additional meal service and its requirements.

APPLICATION PROCESS FOR SFSP SPONSORS

A streamlined process that eliminates duplicative application requirements is in place for SFSP sponsors in good standing that wish to apply to participate in CACFP for the first time. Sponsors considered in good standing are those that are not currently seriously deficient in their operation of the SFSP.

Because SFSP sponsors are already familiar with operating a Child Nutrition Program, they are not required to provide documentation that they have practices in place to ensure that the meal service, recordkeeping, and other Program requirements are performed properly. Successful operation of SFSP provides evidence of this performance standard.

Management plans are not required as part of the CACFP application unless the institution intends to sponsor more than one facility. In addition, At-Risk Afterschool centers are afforded latitude with regard to budgets. The level of budgetary detail requested should be commensurate with the size and scope of the applicant.

CACFP sponsoring organizations are required to provide documentation indicating that they meet their State's criteria for ensuring delivery of benefits to otherwise unserved facilities or participants. Because States already have a priority system in place for selecting SFSP sponsors to eliminate an overlap in service, States generally need not require existing SFSP sponsors applying to participate in CACFP to provide any further documentation of providing benefits to unserved facilities or participants. Additionally, the following are required for participation in SFSP and therefore are not required to be produced as part of the CACFP application process:

- **Confirmation of Area Eligibility of Centers:** SFSP sites that establish area eligibility through the use of school data may use their area eligibility determination for SFSP and CACFP Afterschool Meals for a period of five years. There is no need to re-establish area eligibility for CACFP. However, because area eligibility for CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals must be based on school data, SFSP sites that established eligibility using census data or based on income eligibility forms (IEFs) must provide additional documentation indicating that they are area eligible based on school data.
- **Non-discrimination Statement:** SFSP sponsors are not required to resubmit a non-discrimination policy statement to participate in the CACFP.
- **Media Release:** If the media release submitted for SFSP indicated that the sponsor offers year-round meal services, an additional media release for CACFP is not required.
- **Health and Safety Inspections:** Where the State or local health and safety inspection standards for At-Risk Afterschool centers and SFSP feeding sites are the same, CACFP State agencies may accept documentation of a current inspection obtained by a sponsor for SFSP.
- **Documentation of Tax-exempt Status:** Private nonprofit organizations are not required to resubmit documentation of tax exempt status for CACFP when such documentation was submitted for purposes of participation in SFSP.

These simplifications are easiest to implement when the same State agency administers both the CACFP and SFSP. However, in States where the CACFP and SFSP are administered by separate agencies, FNS has encouraged the CACFP and SFSP State agencies to collaborate and share information where applicable to continue to streamline participation (CACFP 12-2013: [Transitioning from the Summer Food Service Program to Child and Adult Care Food Program At-risk Afterschool Meals](#), May 31, 2013).



APPLICATION PROCESS FOR SFAs PARTICIPATING IN NSLP

The requirements for SFAs that provide Afterschool Meals are more flexible because they are already operating another Child Nutrition Program. When applying to participate in CACFP, SFAs that have successfully operated the NSLP are not required to provide additional evidence of administrative capability and financial viability. Additionally, State agencies may waive the requirement for SFAs to submit a separate management plan and budget for CACFP. SFAs have additional flexibility relating to the meal patterns (see Part 3, Section D).

State agencies may accept a copy of the NSLP application from SFAs that wish to participate in the At-Risk Afterschool Meals component of CACFP. However, the State agency must ensure that additional information required by 7 CFR 226.6(b) that is not captured by the NSLP application or otherwise available to the State agency is obtained. This might be accomplished by creating an addendum to the NSLP application that includes the additional information required for participation in CACFP:

- **The names, mailing addresses, and dates of birth of the responsible principals and individuals.** For SFAs, responsible principals and individuals include, at a minimum, the school food service director and accountant, and the responsible administrator (principal or superintendent).
- **Documentation of eligibility.** CACFP State agencies must obtain documentation indicating that each school that will be offering At-Risk Afterschool Meals through CACFP offers educational or enrichment activities and is a school where at least 50 percent of the children are eligible for free or reduced price school meals or is located in the attendance area of an eligible school as required by 7 CFR 226.17a(a).
- **Preference for USDA Foods/cash in lieu of USDA Foods.** The CACFP State agency must determine whether the SFA prefers USDA Foods or cash in lieu of USDA Foods unless the State agency has received approval to provide cash-in-lieu of USDA Foods for all institutions.
- **Ineligibility for other publicly funded programs.** SFAs must provide a list of all Federal programs in which they participate. Additionally, the SFA must certify that during the last seven years, the SFA and the individual responsible for the food service have not been:
 - Declared ineligible to participate in any other publicly funded program by reason of violating that program's requirements or provide documentation that it was later reinstated or determined eligible for the program; or
 - Convicted of any activity that indicated a lack of business integrity.
- **Certification.** The SFA must submit a certification that all information on the application is true and correct, along with the name, mailing address, and date of birth of the individual authorized to sign for the SFA [7 CFR 226.6(b)(1)].

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1 BECAUSE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN STATES AND SPONSORS ARE PERMANENT, IS IT NECESSARY TO PROVIDE FREE AND REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL DATA IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS OF OPERATING THE PROGRAM?

Yes. Area eligibility determinations remain valid for five years and must be reestablished or re-verified after that point. "Permanent" is intended solely to convey that the agreement has no predetermined expiration date and does not need to be renewed.

2 HOW DO I DEMONSTRATE THAT I AM SERVING AN UNSERVED POPULATION?

Institutions must demonstrate in the management plan that their participation will help ensure benefits to otherwise unserved facilities or participants. States establish their own criteria for determining if an applicant's participation will benefit unserved facilities or participants.

3 FOR A SCHOOL OR ORGANIZATION THAT IS ALREADY PARTICIPATING IN CACFP AND NOW WANTS TO PROVIDE AT-RISK AFTERSCHOOL MEALS AND/OR SNACKS, DOES ITS AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE AGENCY NEED TO BE AMENDED?

Yes. Once the State agency approves an institution's application to provide At-Risk Afterschool Meals and/or Snacks, the agreement with the State agency needs to be amended to reflect this additional meal service and its requirements. This can be accomplished by signing a simple addendum to the CACFP or NSLP agreement.







PART 3

MEAL PATTERNS AND FOOD SERVICE

The CACFP meal patterns are to meet the nutritional needs of children, to be consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs), and to be appetizing. The meal pattern requirements assist the menu planner in providing well-balanced meals and snacks that provide the appropriate amount of energy and nutrients a child needs during critical stages of growth.

- MEAL PATTERNS FOR CHILDREN
- REQUIRED MEAL COMPONENTS
- SUBSTITUTIONS AND REASONABLE MODIFICATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES
- OFFER VERSUS SERVE (OVS)
- WATER
- FOOD PREPARATION
- ADDITIONAL FOOD SERVICE FLEXIBILITIES

UPDATES TO MEAL PATTERNS

When school is in session, the meal or snack served in at-risk afterschool programs must be served after the child's school day and during the hours the afterschool program is operating. Otherwise, there are no Federal requirements regarding the timing of meal service. For example, there is no federal requirement of how much time must pass between the end of school and the meal service. Additionally, there is no requirement for the order of meal and snack service. However, States may establish meal time requirements [7 CFR 226.20(k)].

Along with serving meals after school, at-risk afterschool centers can serve one meal (breakfast, lunch or supper) per day on weekends or during vacations with State agency approval. Afterschool meals cannot be claimed during summer vacation unless the at-risk afterschool center is in an area where schools operate year-round [7 CFR 226.17 a(m)(2)].

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (the Act), Public Law 111-296, required the USDA to update the meal patterns in the CACFP to make them consistent with (a) the most recent version of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, (b) the most recent relevant nutrition science, and (c) appropriate authoritative scientific agency and organization recommendations. The final rule "Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010," published on April 25, 2016, revised the CACFP meal patterns, CACFP centers and day care homes must comply with the updated meal patterns by October 1, 2017. The updated meal patterns include more whole grains, a greater variety of vegetables and fruits, and less added sugars and solid fats. If an at-risk afterschool

center is interested in implementing the updated meal patterns prior to October 1, 2017, please contact your State agency and refer to the memorandum [CACFP 14-2016: Early Implementation of the New Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Pattern Requirements, June 24, 2016](#), for information.

The updated meal patterns include a new age group for older children: ages 13 through 18 years. This age group is specifically for the at-risk afterschool and emergency shelter components of the CACFP. Note that the minimum serving sizes for 13 through 18 year olds remain the same as they were prior to the meal patterns being updated and they are the same as the minimum serving sizes for the 6 through 12 year old group.



MEAL PATTERNS FOR CHILDREN

The charts on the following pages list the current and updated meal pattern requirements for breakfast, lunch, supper, and snack for children 6 through 12 years old, and children ages 13 through 18 years old. The current meal patterns may be followed through September 30, 2017 and the updated meal patterns must be followed no later than October 1, 2017. These charts include the required food components (i.e. milk, vegetable, fruit, grains, and meat/meat alternate.) and, the minimum required serving sizes for each food component. Because older children have greater energy needs, centers may serve portions larger than what is required in order to satisfy a child's appetite. FNS will provide additional guidance on how centers can build on the meal pattern requirements for 13 through 18 year old children to ensure their nutritional needs are being met. The CACFP meal patterns for younger children are available online at http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Care/ProgramBasics/Meals/Meal_Patterns.htm.

Please remember that all food components must be served to each child all at the same time. The one exception is when at-risk afterschool centers choose to use offer versus serve (OVS) (see Part 3, Section D for more information on OVS). OVS is only allowed under the updated meal patterns starting October 1, 2017.

SFAs preparing at-risk afterschool meals may choose to use the NSLP and SBP meal pattern requirements or the CACFP meal patterns [7 CFR 226.20(i)]. Guidance on the NSLP and SBP meal pattern requirements is available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/guidance-and-resources>.



CHILD MEAL AND SNACK REQUIREMENTS

CURRENT Meal Patterns (may be followed through September 30, 2017)

FOOD COMPONENTS AGES 6-12	BREAKFAST	LUNCH OR SUPPER	SNACK ¹
Milk			
Milk, fluid low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim)	1 cup	1 cup	1 cup
Vegetables and/or Fruits² -			
Vegetable(s) and/or fruit; or	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup
Vegetable or fruit juice (full strength) ³	½ cup	¾ cup (6 fluid ounces)	¾ cup (6 fluid ounces)
Grains and Breads⁴ -			
Bread; or	1 slice	1 slice	1 slice
Cornbread, biscuits, rolls, or muffins, etc.; or	1 serving	1 serving	1 serving
Cold dry cereal; or	¾ cup or 1 ounce	¾ cup or 1 ounce	¾ cup or 1 ounce
Cooked pasta or noodle product; or	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Cooked cereal or cereal grains or an equivalent quantity of any combination of grains/breads	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Meat and Meat Alternates⁵ -			
Lean meat or poultry or fish; or	A meat/ meat alternate is not required at breakfast	2 ounces	1 ounce
Alternate protein products; or		2 ounces	1 ounce
Cheese; or		2 ounces	1 ounce
Egg (large); or		1 large egg	½ large egg
Cooked dry beans or peas; or		½ cup	¼ cup
Peanut, soynut, or other nut seed butters; or		4 tablespoons	2 tablespoons
Peanuts or soynuts or tree nuts or seeds ⁶ ; or		1 ounce=50%	1 ounce
Yogurt ⁷ (An equivalent quantity of any combination of the above meat alternates)		8 ounces or 1 cup	4 ounce or ½ cup

¹ For snacks, 2 of the 4 components must be provided for a meal to qualify as reimbursable.

² At breakfast, lunch or supper serve two or more kinds of vegetable(s) and/or fruit(s) or combination of both.

³ Full-strength fruit/vegetable juice may be counted to meet no more than ½ of this requirement.

⁴ Breads and grains must be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour. Cereal must be whole-grain or enriched flour.

⁵ A serving size consists of the edible portion of the cooked lean meat or poultry or fish.

⁶ Nuts and seeds may meet only one -half of the total meat/meat alternate serving and must be combined with another meat/meat alternate to fulfill the lunch/supper requirement.

⁷ Yogurt may be plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened.

UPDATED Meal Patterns (must follow no later than October 1, 2017)

FOOD COMPONENTS AGES 6-12 AND AGES 13-18 ¹	BREAKFAST	LUNCH OR SUPPER	SNACK ²
Milk			
Milk, unflavored fluid low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim), or flavored fat-free (skim)	1 cup	1 cup	1 cup
Vegetable(s)³			
Vegetable	½ cup ⁴	½ cup	¾ cup
Fruits^{3,5}			
Fruit	½ cup ⁴	¼ cup	¾ cup
Grains^{6,7}			
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread; or	1 slice	1 slice	1 slice
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread product, such as biscuit, roll, muffin; or	1 serving	1 serving	1 serving
Whole grain-rich, enriched, or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ⁸ , cereal grain, and/or pasta; or	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified ready-to-eat breakfast cereal (dry, cold) ⁹ :			
Flakes or rounds	1 cup		1 cup
Puffed cereal	1 ¼ cup		1 ¼ cup
Granola	¼ cup		¼ cup
Meat and Meat Alternates¹⁰ - Not Required¹¹			
Lean meat or poultry or fish; or		2 ounces	1 ounce
Cheese; or		2 ounces	1 ounce
Eggs; or		1 large egg	½ large egg
Tofu, soy product, or alternate protein product; or		2 ounces	1 ounce
Cooked dry beans or peas; or		½ cup	¼ cup
Peanut, soynut, or other nut or seed butters; or		4 tablespoons	2 tablespoons
Peanuts or soynuts or tree nuts or seeds ¹²		1 ounce=50%	1/2 oz = 50%
Yogurt ¹³ (An equivalent quantity of any combination of the above meat alternates)		8 ounces or 1 cup	4 ounce or ½ cup

¹ Larger portion sizes than specified may need to be served to children 13 through 18 years old to meet their nutritional needs.

² Select 2 of the 5 components for a reimbursable snack. Only one of the two components may be a beverage.

³ Pasteurized full-strength juice may only be used to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal, including snack, per day.

⁴ A total combined serving of a 1/2 cup of fruits and vegetables is recommended at breakfast.

⁵ A vegetable may be used to meet the entire fruit requirement. When two vegetables are served at lunch or supper, two different kinds of vegetables must be served. Fruit cannot be used to meet the vegetable requirement.

⁶ All grains must be made with enriched or whole grain meal or flour. At least one serving per day, across all eating occasions, must be whole-grain rich. Grain-based desserts do not count towards the grains requirement.

⁷ Beginning October 1, 2019, ounce equivalents are used to determine the quantity of creditable grains.

⁸ Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal).

⁹ Beginning October 1, 2019, the minimum serving size specified in this section for ready-to-eat breakfast cereals must be served. Until October 1, 2019, the minimum serving size for any type of ready-to-eat breakfast cereals is ¾ cup for children ages 6-12 years and ages 13-18 years. 9. A serving size consists of the edible portion of the cooked lean meat or poultry or fish.

¹⁰ Alternate protein products must meet the requirements in Appendix A to Part 226.

¹¹ A meat/ meat alternate is not required at breakfast but may be used to substitute the entire grains component a maximum of 3 times per week.

¹² Nuts and seeds may meet only one -half of the total meat/meat alternate serving and must be combined with another meat/meat alternate to fulfill the lunch/supper requirement.

¹³ Yogurt may be plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened, but must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces.

Sponsors interviewed for the [At-Risk Meals Best Practice Study](#), indicated that some potential sites perceive meal planning, preparation, and service to be burdensome. To address this issue, some sponsors suggested streamlining menus to reduce the burden on sites. One sponsor developed two months' worth of menus that are cycled through the sites throughout the year. Another sponsor serves cold meals that require little preparation, such as wraps and salads. Below are sample menus for a snack and a lunch or supper that are compliant with the updated meal pattern requirements:

SAMPLE SNACK*

¾ cup carrot and celery sticks

4 oz low-fat yogurt

2 tbsp. peanut butter

¼ cup whole grain granola

Water

Water

SAMPLE LUNCH/SUPPER

2 oz lean hamburger made from 100% ground beef

2 oz grilled jerk-spiced chicken

1 whole wheat bun

½ cup rice

½ cup roasted broccoli

½ cup black bean and red pepper salad

¼ cup baked sweet potato fries*

¼ cup pineapple*

1 cup fat free milk

1 cup fat free milk

*A vegetable may be used to meet the entire fruit requirement.



REQUIRED MEAL COMPONENTS

The following sections provide details on each of the meal pattern components as required by the updated meal patterns.

Meat and Meat Alternates

At-risk afterschool centers are required to serve a meat and/or meat alternate at lunch or supper and may choose to serve a meat/ meat alternate at snack. In order to count towards the meat/meat alternate component, a dish must contain at least ¼ ounce of meat/meat alternate per serving.

The updated meal patterns established several new allowances and requirements for the meat/meat alternate component. The following allowances and requirements go into effect October 1, 2017:

- Centers may use meat/meat alternates to meet the entire grains component at breakfast a maximum of three times per week.
- Tofu and soy yogurt may count as a meat alternate.
- Yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces.

Be sure to work with your state agency before starting to implement the updated meal patterns.



EXAMPLES OF MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES	EXAMPLES	NOTES
Meat, fish, poultry, and eggs	Beef, chicken, fish, ham, pork, turkey, and eggs	
Cheese	Swiss, ricotta, part-skim mozzarella, cottage cheese, American, cheddar, and other cheeses	
Dry beans and peas	Lentils, navy beans, black beans, kidney beans, pinto beans, black-eyed peas, refried beans, chickpeas, and soy nuts	May also count as a vegetable, but not in the same meal.
Peanut butter and other nut butters	Peanut butter, almond, and other nut butters	
Nuts and seeds	Walnuts, peanuts, almonds, soy nuts, other nuts, and seeds	May fulfill no more than ½ of the meat/meat alternate component at lunch and supper. Nuts and seeds should not be served to 2- to 3-year-olds and some elderly participants with caution as they may cause choking. Always supervise participants during meals and snacks. Acorns, chestnuts, and coconut are not allowed.
Yogurt	Commercially produced yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened	Beginning October 1, 2017, yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces.
Tofu, Soy Product, Alternate Protein Product (APP)	Tofu, soy yogurt APP is an ingredient mixed/made into such foods as ground beef patties, meat loaf, tuna salad, chicken nuggets, pizza toppings, etc.	Beginning October 1, 2017, tofu and soy yogurt counts as a meat alternate.

BETTER CHOICES FOR BETTER MEALS

- Offer a variety of different lean meat/meat alternates throughout the week, including lean meats, nuts, and legumes.
- Choose low-fat or reduced fat natural cheeses.
- Get kids excited about yogurt by letting them build their own yogurt parfait. Set up a “toppings bar” for children to add their favorite fruits to their yogurt.



GUIDELINES FOR JUICE

THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2017

no more than ½ of the fruit/vegetable component requirement can be met with full strength 100% juice during lunch/supper.

STARTING OCTOBER 1, 2017

juice can only meet the fruit or vegetable requirement at one meal per day, including snack.

JUICE MAY NOT

be served as a snack if fluid milk is the only other component being served.

JUICE MUST

be pasteurized to reduce the chance of getting sick.

Vegetables and Fruits

At-risk afterschool centers are currently required to serve a vegetable and/or fruit at breakfast, lunch, and supper and may choose to serve a vegetable and/or a fruit at snack. Under the current meal patterns, reimbursable lunches and suppers must contain two or more servings of different kinds of vegetables and/or fruits.

Beginning October 1, 2017, there will be a separate vegetable component and a separate fruit component at lunch, supper and snack. Centers will have the flexibility to replace the fruit component at lunch and supper meals with another serving of vegetable(s). The substituted vegetable must be at least the same serving size as the fruit component it replaced. When a center chooses to serve two vegetables at lunch and supper, two different kinds of vegetables must be served. For example, a supper meal could contain a serving of carrots and tomatoes. Centers cannot serve two fruits at lunch and supper under the updated meal patterns.

Because a vegetable can replace the fruit component at lunch and supper meals, vegetable mixtures may count towards the vegetable component and fruit component at lunch and supper if it contains at least 1/8 cup of two different kinds of vegetables. For example, a center serves 6 year old children and prepares and serves 1/2 cup roasted broccoli and 1/4 cup roasted cauliflower mixed together. The cauliflower is replacing the fruit component and meets the minimum serving size required for the fruits component for children 6-12 years old. However, if the quantities of the different vegetables are not known, such as frozen carrots and peas, the vegetable mixture counts as one serving of vegetables and cannot count towards the fruit component. Another vegetable or fruit would need to be served to fulfill the fruit component.

Mixtures of vegetables and fruits must be credited separately for the vegetable and fruit component. The mixture must contain at least 1/8 cup of vegetable to count toward the vegetable component and 1/8 cup fruit to count towards the fruit component. For example, a carrot-raisin salad served to 6 year old children contains 1/2 cup carrots and 1/8 cup raisins (credits as 1/4 cup fruit). This carrot-raisin salad meets the full vegetable component and full fruit component requirements for children 6-12 years old.

To align with the Dietary Guidelines, centers are encouraged to serve a wide variety of vegetables and fruits. This is because each type of vegetable and fruit provides different nutrients. Centers should try to provide at least one serving of vegetables from the dark green group, orange and red group, and dry beans and peas (legumes) group, starchy vegetables group, and other vegetables groups once per week. In addition, to help promote the consumption of whole fruits as recommended by the Dietary Guidelines, centers are encouraged to serve whole fruits (fresh, canned, frozen, or dried) more often than juice. These are all best practices and are highly encouraged, but they are not required.

BETTER CHOICES FOR BETTER MEALS

- **Mix a colorful medley of broccoli, cauliflower, and carrots.**
- **Use spinach, romaine, and mixed greens for salad.**
- **Serve seasonal vegetables (artichokes, pumpkin, okra, etc.).**
- **When using canned fruit, choose canned fruit packed in light syrup or natural juices.**
- **Buy frozen mixed fruit or vegetables.**
- **Introduce unfamiliar fruits such as kiwi, papaya, mango, apricots, dates, and figs.**
- **Make 1 of the 2 components at snack a vegetable or fruit.**

EXAMPLES OF VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

VEGETABLES AND FRUITS	EXAMPLES
Vegetables (dark green)	Broccoli, romaine lettuce, collard greens, green pepper, kale
Vegetables (red and orange)	Carrots, pumpkin, sweet potato, winter squash
Vegetables (starchy)	Potatoes, corn, green peas
Vegetables (other)	Cabbage, cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, green beans, iceberg lettuce, okra, onions, summer squash, zucchini, bell peppers
Vegetables (legumes: dry beans and peas)*	Black beans, chickpeas, kidney beans, lentils, navy beans, peas, pinto beans, soy beans
Fruits	Apples, apricots, bananas, cherries, cantaloupe, grapes, grapefruit, peaches, oranges, pears, pineapple, plums, prunes, raisins, strawberries, watermelon

*May also count as a meat/meat alternate, but not in the same meal

Grains

Grain products are required to be served at breakfast, lunch and supper and centers may choose to serve a grain item at snack. Grains must be made with enriched or whole grain meal or flour.

Similar to other food components, the updated meal patterns established several new requirements for the grain component. The following requirements go into effect October 1, 2017:

- At least one grain serving per day, across all eating occasions, must be whole grain rich;
- Grain-based desserts cannot be used to meet the grains requirement; and
- Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per one dry ounce.

Additionally, beginning October 1, 2019, ounce equivalents are used to determine the quantity of creditable grains. FNS will issue guidance on ounce equivalents in the future.

COMMON FOOD DEFINITIONS

- **Whole-grain** flour or meal means the product is made from grinding the entire grain of wheat stalk which consist of the bran, germ, and endosperm.
- **Enriched** means additional iron, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and folic acid have been added because these nutrients were removed from the product during the processing stage.
- **Fortified** means additional iron, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and folic acid have been added because they were not included in the original form.

Whole grain-rich

Whole grain-rich foods are foods that contain 100 percent whole grains, or that contain at least 50 percent whole grains and the remaining grains in the food are enriched. If a whole grain is listed as the first ingredient, or second after water, the food is considered whole grain-rich. Some examples of whole grain ingredients are whole wheat, brown rice or wild rice, oatmeal, bulgur, whole-grain corn, and quinoa. Another way to identify whole grain-rich items is to see if the grain product has one of the following Food and Drug Administration approved whole-grain health claims on the packaging:

- "Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods and low in total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers."
OR
- "Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods, and low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may help reduce the risk of heart disease."

For more information on how to identify whole grain-rich foods, please see memorandum CACFP 02-2017, [Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Questions & Answers](#)

EXAMPLES OF GRAINS

GRAINS AND BREADS	EXAMPLES
Enriched grains and breads	Bagels, cornbread, grits, crackers, pasta, corn muffins, noodles, pita bread, ready-to-eat cereal, white bread, rolls, corn tortillas
Whole grains	Brown rice, whole corn tortilla chips, whole-grain rye bread, whole-grain ready-to-eat cereal, whole wheat pasta, whole-grain crackers, whole-wheat bread, whole-wheat rolls, whole-wheat tortillas

Grain-Based Desserts

As mentioned above, grain-based desserts cannot count towards the grains requirement starting October 1, 2017. This is because grain-based desserts are high in added sugar and solid fats and low in nutritional value. Grain-based desserts are defined in Exhibit A in the memorandum [CACFP 02-2017, Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Questions & Answers](#). The Exhibit A in memorandum CACFP 02-2017 was slightly revised from the Exhibit A in the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs to be more consistent with the NSLP and SBP.

Centers should be aware that Exhibit A is not an exhaustive list of creditable grains and grain-based desserts. When a center is thinking about serving a grain food that is not listed on Exhibit A, the center should consider the common perception of the food and whether it is thought of as a dessert. Using this common sense is particularly important when a grain food may not be labeled as a dessert. For example, a cookie may be called a "breakfast round." Centers should also consider that the food may contain higher levels of added sugar and saturated fat and, therefore, should use their discretion when deciding when and how often to serve these types of foods. If a center is unsure of whether or not a food is considered a grain-based dessert, the center should work with their sponsor or State agency, as appropriate, to make the decision. FNS is developing additional resources for CACFP centers and day care homes to help them understand what is considered a grain-based dessert and empower them with the knowledge needed to make the decision about grain foods that are not included on Exhibit A.

GRAIN-BASED DESSERTS



Cookies

Cereal Bars

Sweet crackers (e.g. graham and animal crackers)

Breakfast bars

Sweet pie crusts

Granola bars

Doughnuts

Sweet rolls

Brownies

Toaster pasteries

Cake

Breakfast Cereals

To help reduce children's consumption of added sugars as recommended by the Dietary Guidelines, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams of sugar per 100 grams of dry cereal) starting October 1, 2017. Breakfast cereals include ready-to-eat cereals and instant and hot cereals. There are several ways to identify breakfast cereals within the sugar limit. First, centers may use any State agency's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) approved breakfast cereal list. All WIC approved breakfast cereals contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams of sugar per 100 grams of dry cereal). Second, centers may use the Nutrition Facts Label on the breakfast cereal packaging to determine how much sugar it contains:

- Find the serving size in grams at the top of the label and the amount of sugar in grams listed towards the middle;
- Divide the total sugars by the serving size in grams;
- If the answer is equal to or less than 0.212, then the breakfast cereal is within the sugar limit and may be creditable in CACFP.

For more information on the breakfast cereal sugar limit, see the memorandum CACFP 02-2017, Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Questions & Answers

BETTER CHOICES FOR BETTER MEALS

- **Try brown rice or whole wheat pasta.**
- **Use whole grains in mixed dishes, such as barley in vegetable soup or stews and bulgur wheat in casseroles or stir-fry.**
- **Provide two servings of whole-grain rich grains per day.**

Milk

At-risk afterschool centers are required to serve fluid milk at breakfast, lunch, and supper meals and may serve it as one of the components of a snack. Milk that is used as an ingredient in cooked meals, such as casseroles, puddings, and other foods, cannot count towards a serving of fluid milk.

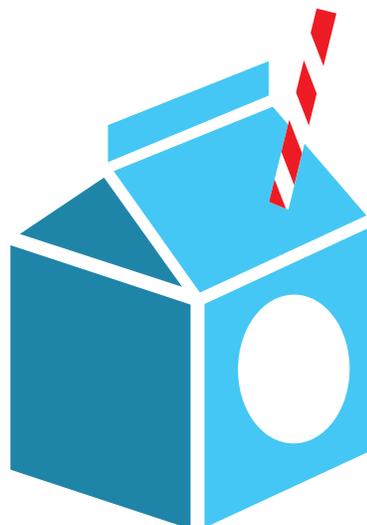
All milk served to children two years old and older and adults in the CACFP must be low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim). Reimbursable milks served to children 2 years old and older include pasteurized low-fat or fat-free milk, low-fat or fat-free lactose reduced milk, low-fat or fat-free lactose free milk, low-fat or fat-free buttermilk, or low-fat or fat-free acidified milk.

Currently, CACFP centers may serve low-fat or fat-free flavored milk. However, CACFP centers should be aware that starting October 1, 2017, flavored milk served to children 6 years old and older must be fat-free. This is consistent with the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. In addition, starting October 1, 2017, centers must document the type of milk served on their menu. This includes listing the fat content (e.g. low-fat or fat-free) and if it is flavored.

For more information on the milk requirements in the CACFP, please see the memorandum CACFP 17-2016: [Nutrition Requirements for Fluid Milk and Fluid Milk Substitutions in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), Q&As, July 14, 2016.

BETTER CHOICES FOR BETTER MEALS

- **For children who require it, serve alternative types of milks (a reduced-lactose milk, acidophilus milk, etc).**
- **Try shelf-stable UHT (ultra-high temperature) milk.**
- **If serving flavored milk, purchase flavored milk with the lowest sugar content.**



Best Practices

Along with updating the meal pattern requirements for the CACFP, FNS established optional best practices that centers may choose to adopt to further improve the nutritional value of the meals they offer. The best practices can be a vital tool to encourage centers to voluntarily go beyond the regulatory requirements to further strengthen the nutritional quality of the meals they serve. All the best practices are outlined in the memorandum CACFP 15-2016: [Optional Best Practices to Further Improve Nutrition in the Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Pattern](#), June 30, 2016.

NOTE

FNS would like to emphasize that these best practices are optional. The best practices are suggestions only and are not required to be followed in order to receive reimbursement for the meal. The best practices will not be monitored and non-compliance with them cannot result in a meal disallowance or a serious deficiency finding.

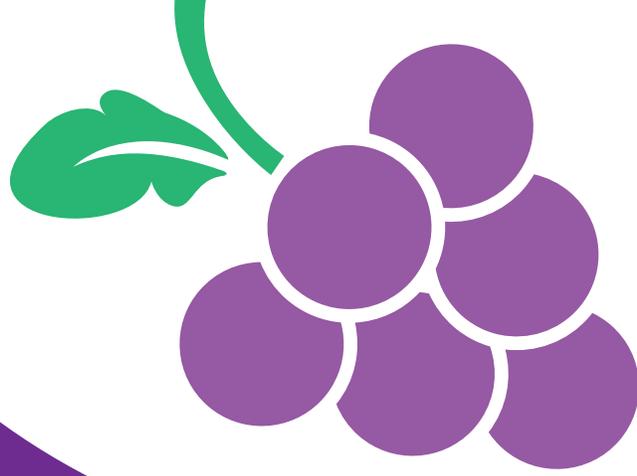
Local Foods



The term “farm to school” encompasses efforts to: serve local or regionally produced foods in all Child Nutrition Programs; provide hands-on learning activities such as gardening, farm visits, and culinary activities; and integrate food-related education into program curriculum. Local foods span the entire meal, including fruits, vegetables, dairy, grains, meat, eggs, and beans. Afterschool programs offer an opportunity to introduce new foods and test recipes that might later be incorporated into other Child Nutrition Programs. There are numerous benefits to incorporating local foods into these programs:

- Programs can increase participation by improving the quality of meals and keeping kids and teens engaged through hands-on activities like gardening;
- Operators can develop seamless farm to school programming across the meal programs and test cooking techniques and recipes using local foods;
- Regional producers benefit from a reliable outlet for their products; and
- Kids and teens receive healthy meals while participating in afterschool activities, staying nourished and engaged after school.

To learn more about how to bring the farm to your program refer to CACFP 11-2015, [Local Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program with Questions and Answers](#), March 13, 2015, and visit USDA’s Office of Community Food Systems website at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmentoschool> for more resources on incorporating local foods.



SUBSTITUTIONS AND REASONABLE MODIFICATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

FNS is currently revising its guidance on making modifications to meals and snacks, or to the meal service, to accommodate children with disabilities. Once the updated guidance is published, FNS will revise this section to reflect the updated guidance. Until updated guidance is released, centers must continue to follow previously issued policy on accommodating children with disabilities in FNS Instruction 783-2, Rev. 2, Meal Substitutions for Medical or other Special Dietary Reasons and memorandum SP 13-2015, CACFP 13-2015, SFSP 15-2015, [Statements Supporting Accommodations for Children with Disabilities in Child Nutrition Programs](#).

Non-Dairy Milk Substitutes

Parents and guardians may request in writing that their child be served a non-dairy milk beverage in place of fluid milk when the child is unable to consume cow's milk due to a non-disabling condition or special dietary need. The non-dairy milk beverage must be nutritionally equivalent to fluid cow's milk in order to be reimbursable. The nutrition requirements for non-dairy beverages are outlined under 7 CFR 226.20(g)(3). Providing a non-dairy beverage to accommodate a non-disabling condition or special dietary need is at the option and cost of the at-risk afterschool center. Please contact your sponsor or State agency about appropriate non-dairy milk substitutions and refer to CACFP 17-2016: [Nutrition Requirements for Fluid Milk and Fluid Milk Substitutions in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Q&As](#), July 14, 2016, for additional guidance.

OFFER VERSUS SERVE (OVS)

OVS is an approach to menu planning and meal service which allows participants to decline some of the food offered in a reimbursable breakfast, lunch, or supper. Children who are offered food choices are more likely to eat the foods they enjoy rather than throw the food away. Currently, institutions that serve meals prepared by SFAs that participate in NSLP and SBP – whether they are located in the school or in another location – have the option of using OVS in their at-risk afterschool centers. SFAs following the NSLP or SBP meal patterns and choosing to use OVS, must follow the NSLP or SBP OVS requirements. For more information about OVS requirements in School meals, please see SP41-2015: [Offer Versus Serve: Guidance for the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program](#), July 21, 2015.

Beginning October 1, 2017, all CACFP at-risk afterschool centers may use OVS. CACFP At-Risk Afterschool centers must follow the CACFP OVS requirements outlined in 7 CFR 226.20(o) and forthcoming guidance.

NOTE

OVS is not allowed at snack under any of the Child Nutrition Programs.

EXAMPLE

Fun and Games Child Care operates an afterschool program at Park Center Middle School. Meals for children participating in the Fun and Games Afterschool Program are prepared and served in the Park Center Middle School cafeteria. Fun and Games Child Care may use OVS when providing Afterschool Meals, but must provide the entire snack to all children.

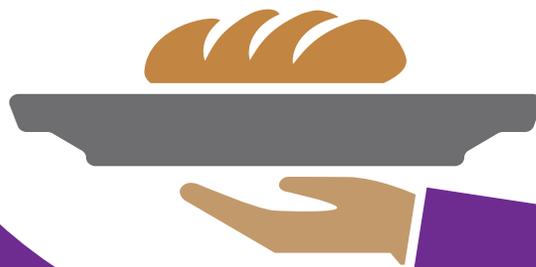
WATER

The Dietary Guidelines recommend that water be consumed daily. Water can help children stay hydrated. CACFP centers must make drinking water available to children throughout the day, including at meal times. While water must be made available to children during meal times, it is not part of the reimbursable meal and cannot be served in place of fluid milk. Water can be made available to children in a variety of ways, including but not limited to: having cups available next to the kitchen sink faucet, having pitchers and cups set out, or simply providing water to a child upon request.

Starting October 1, 2017, CACFP centers must also offer water to children throughout the day. A good time to offer water might be during or after physical activity, on hot days, or during dry winter months. More ideas are available in FNS' tip sheet "[Make Water Available Throughout the Day](#)". Please contact your sponsor or State agency for questions pertaining to this requirement and refer to the memorandum CACFP 20-2016, [Water Availability in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), August 5, 2016.

FOOD PREPARATION

Beginning October 1, 2017, under the updated meal patterns, frying is not allowed as a way of preparing food on site. "Frying" is defined as deep-fat frying (i.e. cooking by submerging food in hot oil or other fat). Centers may continue to sauté, pan-fry, and stir-fry food [7 CFR 226.20(d)]. Purchased foods that are pre-fried, flash-fried, or par-fried by the manufacturer will still be allowed, but must be reheated using a method other than frying. FNS encourages centers to limit serving pre-fried foods to once per week as an optional best practice.



ADDITIONAL FOOD SERVICE FLEXIBILITIES

Using “share tables” is an innovative strategy to encourage the consumption of nutritious foods and reduce food waste in the Child Nutrition Programs. “Share tables” are tables or stations where children may return whole food or beverage items they choose not to eat, if it is in compliance with local and State health and food safety codes. These food and beverage items are then available to other children who may want additional servings to eat at that time, or save for later (see below). Share tables may now be used in at-risk afterschool programs. See CACFP Memorandum 13-2016: [The Use of Share Tables in Child Nutrition Programs](#), June 22, 2016, for additional guidance, including food safety tips.

Taking Food Components Off-Site

CACFP at-risk afterschool centers may now allow children to take one vegetable, fruit, or grain item off-site to eat at a later time. The food item a child takes off-site must be from the child’s own meal or from a share table (see above). At-risk afterschool centers must ensure that allowing food items to be taken off-site is in compliance with local and State health and safety codes. FNS encourages at-risk afterschool centers to use this flexibility to increase children’s consumption of vegetables and fruit, and help reduce potential food waste in the CACFP. See CACFP 22-2016 [Taking Food Components Off-site in the At-Risk Afterschool Component of the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), August 10, 2016, for more information.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1 MAY USDA FOODS BE USED IN SNACKS?

Yes. Afterschool programs may use USDA Foods in their afterschool snack and/or meal service. Please note, however, that the school or organization will not earn entitlement foods as a result of serving afterschool snacks. The amount of entitlement foods earned will continue to be based solely upon the number of lunches or suppers served to children.

2 AN AT-RISK AFTERSCHOOL CARE PROGRAM OPERATES DURING THE WEEK AND ON WEEKENDS. DO THE WEEKDAY AND WEEKEND MEAL SERVICE TIMES NEED TO BE THE SAME?

No. Meals and snacks served through CACFP on weekends or holidays may be served at any time of day approved by the State.

3 ARE AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS PERMITTED TO SERVE TWO SNACKS INSTEAD OF ONE MEAL AND ONE SNACK?

The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act clearly states that institutions participating in the At-Risk Afterschool Meals component of CACFP may be reimbursed for only one meal and one snack. However, because serving an additional snack in place of a meal would not exceed the maximum meal benefit allowed by law and therefore would not increase cost to the Program, State agencies are authorized to waive this requirement on a case-by-case basis and allow institutions to serve two snacks instead of one meal and one snack. This will allow State agencies to provide additional flexibility to centers that may not have the capacity to serve a full meal. We strongly encourage centers to provide a full meal whenever possible in order to meet the nutritional needs of the children served.

4 MUST INSTITUTIONS PARTICIPATING IN MULTIPLE CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS (FOR EXAMPLE, NSLP, CACFP, AND SFSP) KEEP THEIR FOOD INVENTORIES SEPARATE?

There is no Federal requirement that food inventories used for the various Child Nutrition Programs be stored separately. However, accurate records must be maintained for the individual programs, so that the food costs for each program can be verified.

5 IF THE AFTERSCHOOL MEAL IS SERVED BY THE SCHOOL, CAN THE DIFFERENT AFTERSCHOOL CLUBS AT THE SCHOOL EAT SEPARATELY?

Yes, it is permissible for the different clubs and groups that make up the school's Afterschool Program to eat in different locations on the school grounds. For example, the band members may eat the meal in the band room with just the band members while the football team eats outside.



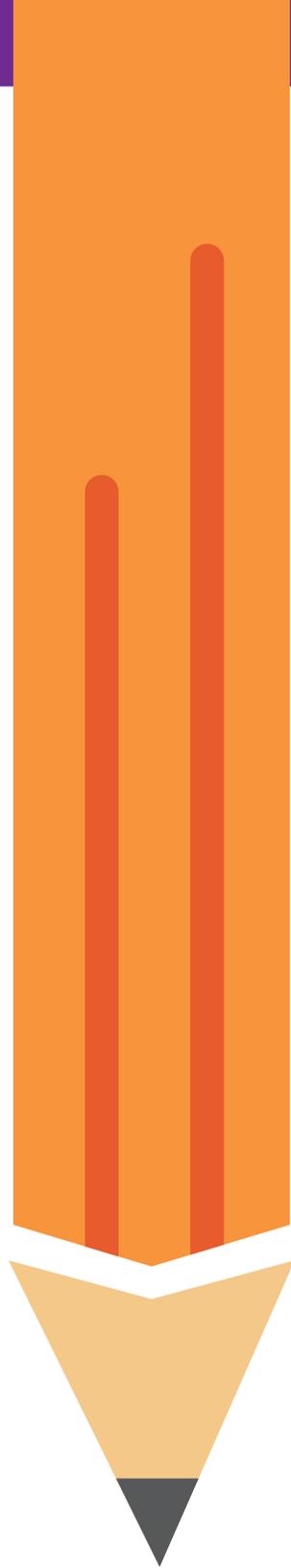
IF AN AT-RISK AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM INCLUDES A SPORTS TEAM THAT TRAVELS TO OTHER SCHOOLS OR LOCATIONS FOR GAMES (“AWAY” GAMES), CAN THE MEALS BE REIMBURSED IF THE STUDENTS ON THE TEAM TAKE THE MEALS WITH THEM TO THE “AWAY” LOCATION?

Yes, as long as the team or program supervisors can assure safe handling of food and appropriate transportation procedures, then they are allowed to take the meals with them and the center may claim reimbursement. All meal component requirements must still be met. Since the location and possibly the time of meal service are changing, the sponsor should advise the State agency of its plans beforehand.



WHY IS THERE AN AGE GROUP FOR CHILDREN 13 THROUGH 18 YEARS OLD WHEN THE MEAL PATTERN FOR THAT AGE GROUP IS THE SAME AS THE 6 THROUGH 12 YEAR OLD AGE GROUP?

The addition of the 13 through 18 year old age group better reflects the populations served in CACFP, in particular, those participating in At-Risk Afterschool Programs and emergency shelters. At this time, the meal pattern for 13 through 18 year olds is the same as the 6 through 12 year old age group because there is no increase in Federal reimbursement, and requiring larger portion sizes would likely increase costs for CACFP centers. USDA recognizes that the nutritional needs of this new age group may vary and understands the importance of serving meals that meet the nutritional needs of all children participating in CACFP. USDA will make recommendations for serving meals to children 13 through 18 years old that build on the meal pattern requirements to ensure that this age group’s nutritional needs are met. In addition, it is important to note that the meal patterns outline minimum quantities of the food components (fluid milk, vegetables, fruits, grains, and meat and meat alternates) that are required to be served. Centers may choose to serve a larger quantity if nutritionally appropriate.





Outside School Hours Care Centers and At-Risk After-school Care Centers

The chart below highlights the differences between two components of the Child and Adult Care Food Program that provide reimbursement for meals served in Outside School Hours Care Centers (OSHCCs) and At-Risk Afterschool Care Centers.

Requirement	OSHCCs	At-Risk Afterschool Centers
Eligible Institutions	Public, private nonprofit, or qualifying for-profit centers [7 CFR 226.19(a)].	Public, private nonprofit, or qualifying for-profit centers [7 CFR 226.17a(a)].
Licensing	Licensing not required unless there is a State or local requirement for licensing. If there is no State or local requirement for licensing, then centers must meet State or local health and safety standards [7 CFR 226.6(d)].	Licensing not required unless there is a State or local requirement for licensing. If there is no State or local requirement for licensing, then centers must meet State or local health and safety standards [7 CFR 226.6(d)].
Determination of Reimbursement	Program may operate in any area. Individual free and reduced-price applications are collected to determine level of reimbursement (free, reduced price, and paid) [7 CFR 226.19(b)(7)(i)].	Program must be located in a geographic area served by a school in which 50 percent or more of the children enrolled are eligible for free or reduced price meals. All meals and snacks are reimbursed at the free rate [7 CFR 226.17a(i)].
Age of Participants	12 years of age and under, children age 15 and under who are children of migrant workers, and persons of any age who meet the definition of "Persons with disabilities" [7 CFR 226.19(b)(3)].	School-age children through age 18 (or 19 if the individual turns 19 during the school year) and persons of any age who meet the definition of "Persons with disabilities" [7 CFR 226.17a(c)].
Type of Meals Eligible for Reimbursement	Breakfast, snack, and supper. Lunch may be served during school vacations during the regular school year [7 CFR 226.19(b)(4)].	Snack and supper. Breakfast or lunch may be served in lieu of supper on weekends, holidays, or during school vacations during the regular school year [7 CFR 226.17a(k)].
Number of Reimbursable Meals	Maximum of two meals and one snack or two snacks and one meal per child per day [7 CFR 226.19(b)(5)].	Maximum of one snack and one meal per child per day [7 CFR 226.17a(k)].
Meal Patterns	CACFP meal patterns [7 CFR 226.20(c)].	CACFP meal patterns [7 CFR 226.20(c)].
Meal Service Periods	School days, weekends, and holidays; no weekend-only programs [7 CFR 226.19(b)(4)].	School days, weekends, and holidays during the regular school year [7 CFR 226.17a(b)].
Time Restrictions for Meal Service	None.	Meals must be served after school, except on weekends and holidays, when meals may be served at any time of day, as approved by the State agency [7 CFR 226.17a(m)].

CACFP - Child and Adult Care Food Program

Children - For the purposes of at-risk afterschool centers, persons 18 years of age and under at the start of the school year and mentally or physically disabled persons, as defined by the State, enrolled in an agency or a child care facility serving a majority of persons 18 years of age and younger.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) – The CFR is the codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

Disability – The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, including ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-325), defines an individual with a disability as a person with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; has a record of such an impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, communicating, etc. A major life activity also includes the operation of a major bodily function, including, but not limited, to functions of the immune system, digestive system, bowel, bladder, neurological system, etc.

Family Style Meal Service – A type of meal service that allows children to serve themselves from common platters or bowls of food.

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) – The agency within the USDA that regulates the CACFP.

Institution – A sponsoring organization, child care center, At-Risk Afterschool Care center, outside-school hours care center, emergency shelter or adult day care center which enters into an agreement with

the State agency to assume final administrative and financial responsibility for Program operations.

Meal Count – A daily count of meals served to participants by meal type.

Menus – A dated list of food, by meal type, served to CACFP participants.

National School Lunch Program (NSLP) – The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. The program was established under the National School Lunch Act, signed by President Harry Truman in 1946.

Offer Versus Serve (OVS) – Offer versus serve means that children are offered all of the components of the meal pattern, but are not required to take them all.

Participants – Children who are participating in the CACFP.

Reimbursable Meals – Meals that are served to enrolled participants at a center and that meet USDA nutritional requirements.

Reimbursement – Money paid to at-risk after school centers or through their sponsors for eligible meals served.

School Food Authority (SFA) - The governing body which is responsible for the administration of one or more schools and which has the legal authority to operate a lunch program in those schools.

Sponsoring Organization (Sponsor) –

Public or private non-profit organizations that are entirely responsible for the administration of the CACFP in sponsored facilities such as family day care homes.

School Breakfast Program (SBP) –

The School Breakfast Program (SBP) provides cash assistance to States to operate nonprofit breakfast programs in schools and residential childcare institutions.

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) –

The Summer Food Service Program provides free, nutritious meals and snacks to help children in low-income areas get the nutrition they need to learn, play, and grow, throughout the summer months when they are out of school.

USDA – United States Department of Agriculture.

USDA Foods – USDA Foods are foods that USDA acquires through subsidy Programs or purchases in large quantities. USDA then provides these foods to State distributing agencies, which in turn distribute them to child care centers, schools, hospitals, prisons, and other institutions and organizations that participate in the Federally assisted meal service Programs.

