

# Child and Adult Care Food Program

Every child who participates in the area-eligible at-risk program would qualify for free reimbursable meals, regardless of which school s/he attends or his/her household income status.

## *Claiming Reimbursement for Meals Served*

Sponsors must submit accurate monthly claims for reimbursement to their administering agencies. Reimbursement is not allowed for meals or snacks that are: served to a child who is not enrolled for care; served in excess of licensed or authorized capacity; not approved in the agreement; served in excess of the maximum number of approved meal services; or out of compliance with meal pattern requirements.

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## Benefits to At-Risk Programs



# At-Risk Programs and the Child and Adult Care Food Program

## *Why is CACFP Important?*

CACFP is the Child and Adult Care Food Program, an important nutrition assistance program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for young children and adults receiving day care. In addition, CACFP snacks give a nutritional boost to children and teenagers in at-risk care programs in every state. Today, CACFP also may provide suppers in at-risk afterschool care programs in **Delaware**, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, New York, Oregon, and Pennsylvania.

## *Program Administration*

CACFP is authorized at section 17 of the National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1766). Program regulations are issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) under 7 CFR part 226.

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) administers CACFP through grants to States. The program is administered within most States by the State educational agency. In a few States it is administered by an alternate agency, such as the State health or social services department; and in Virginia, it is directly administered by the FNS Mid-Atlantic Regional Office. The child care component of CACFP may be administered by different agencies within a State, at the discretion of the Governor.

Independent centers and sponsoring organizations enter into agreements with their administering State agencies to assume administrative and financial responsibility for CACFP operations. CACFP requires nutritious meals and snacks be served to eligible children who are enrolled for care at participating licensed child care centers, emergency shelters or approved at-risk sites.

## *At-Risk Care Programs*

Child care centers and community-based programs that offer enrichment activities for at-risk children and teenagers, after the regular school day ends, can provide free snacks through CACFP. These programs must be offered in areas where at least 50% of the children are eligible for free and reduced price meals based upon school data.

Reimbursable suppers are also available to children in eligible afterschool care programs in seven states—**Delaware**, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, New York, Oregon, and Pennsylvania.

## *Meal Reimbursement*

Independent centers and sponsoring organizations receive cash reimbursement for serving meals to enrolled children that meet Federal nutritional guidelines. The CACFP meal pattern varies according to age and types of meal served. Afterschool care programs in Delaware may claim reimbursement for serving each child one supper and one snack each day, when separated by a three-hour interval.

Reimbursement for centers is computed by actual meal count by type (supper or snack) and the free eligibility category.

## *Commodities or Cash-in-lieu of Commodities*

In addition to cash reimbursement, USDA makes donated agricultural commodities or cash-in-lieu of commodities available to institutions participating in CACFP.

## *Funding Program Benefits*

FNS provides cash assistance to each State agency for meals served to eligible children in day care centers based upon the child's eligibility under the Income Eligibility Guidelines for free, reduced price, or paid meals. National average payments for meals served in centers are adjusted annually on July 1, to reflect changes in the *Food Away From Home* series of the Consumer Price Index. Meals served in emergency shelters and afterschool care snacks are reimbursed at the rates for free meals and snacks.

The level of commodity assistance or cash in lieu of commodities is based on the numbers of lunches and suppers served in centers in the preceding year, multiplied by the national average payment for donated foods. Commodity assistance rates are also adjusted annually on July 1, to reflect changes in the *Food Used in Schools and Institutions* series of the Consumer Price Index.

## *Eligible Population*

Section 226.2 of the regulations describes who may receive CACFP meal benefits.

In terms of the at-risk program, *children* means "persons age 18 and under who are ... in eligible afterschool care programs."

Public Law 105-336 made CACFP snacks available to children and youth through age 18 in eligible afterschool care programs.

## *Determining Eligibility*

Any at-risk program site qualifies as area-eligible if it is located in the attendance area of a school (elementary, middle, or high school) which has at least 50% of its enrollment eligible for free or reduced price meals, based upon school data.