

Application Process

Organizations must submit an application (written and 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.

Non-discrimination Statement

Sponsors and independent centers must submit a non-discrimination policy statement and a media release unless the State agency has issued a statewide media release on behalf of all institutions [7 CFR 226.6 (b)].

Management Plan

Sponsors must submit an on-line management plan (part of sponsor application) that includes:

- Detailed information on the organization's management and administrative structure;
- An administrative budget (on-line budget application) 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.
- A list or description of the staff assigned to Program monitoring (on sponsor application); and
- 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 CFR 226.6 (b)].

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 (e)].

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 commodities/cash in lieu of commodities

The USDA donates commodities to States and States make those commodities available to institutions. Institutions must indicate in their application if they prefer commodities or cash in lieu of commodities. (Question 7a on the sponsor application)

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. (Certification statement signed at site visit)

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. (part of on-line application)

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. (Certification statement signed at site visit)

Compliance with Performance Standards

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

- Financial viability and financial management
 1. Institutions must document that participation will help ensure the delivery of benefits to otherwise unserved facilities or participants.
 2. 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.
 3. Costs in the institution's budget must be necessary, reasonable, allowable, and appropriately documented.
- Administrative capability
 1. Institutions must have an adequate number and type of qualified staff.
 2. 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)].
 3. Sponsors must have written policies and procedures that assign responsibilities and duties, and ensure compliance with civil rights requirements.
- Program accountability
 1. Nonprofit institutions must have adequate oversight by the governing board of directors.
 2. The institution must have a financial system with management controls in writing. For new sponsors these written policies must ensure:
 - a) Fiscal integrity and accountability for all funds and property received, held, and disbursed;
 - b) Integrity and accountability of all expenses incurred;
 - c) That all claims will be processed accurately , and in a timely manner;
 - d) That funds and property are safeguarded and used, and expenses incurred, for authorized Program purposes; and
 - e) That a system of safeguards and controls is in place to prevent and detect improper financial activities by employees.

3. Institutions must maintain records to document compliance with Program requirements, including budgets, accounting records, approved budget amendments, and for sponsors, management plans.

4. New sponsors must document in their management plan that they will:

a) Provide adequate and regular training of staff and sponsored centers;

b) Perform monitoring to ensure centers are appropriately operating the Program; and

c) 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.

5. 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:

a) Provide meals that meet meal pattern requirements;

b) Comply with any licensing and health and safety requirements;

c) Have a food service that complies with applicable State and local health and sanitation requirements;

d) Comply with civil rights requirements;

e) Maintain complete and appropriate records on file; and f) Claim reimbursement only for eligible meals.

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, Permanent Agreements in the Summer Food Service Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program, January 14, 2011].

B. Annual Information Submission Requirements for Experienced Institutions (Due October of each fiscal year)

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;
- 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)].

C. 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.

D. 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 sponsor must notify the State agency to amend the on-line application for the additional meal service.

E. Application Process for Summer Food Service Program 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.

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 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.

F. Application Process for School Food Authorities Participating in NSLP

The requirements for school food authorities (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. SFAs have additional flexibility relating to the meal patterns (see Part3, Section E).

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 commodities/cash in lieu of commodities. The CACFP State agency provides cash-in-lieu of commodities 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)].