

Area Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in the at-risk afterschool meals component of CACFP, a program must be located in an eligible area. This means that the site is 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. This is referred to as “area eligibility.” The Alabama State Department of Education has current area eligibility data for all public schools to help determine if a site is area eligible [7 CFR 226.17a (i)].

EXAMPLE: If a Boys and Girls Club is located in the attendance area of a high school with less than 50 percent free or reduced price enrollment but is also in the attendance area of a middle school where 50 percent or more of the enrolled children are certified as eligible for free or reduced price meals, then the Boys and Girls Club at-risk afterschool program would be area eligible.

Only data from appropriate neighborhood school(s) may be used to establish a site’s area eligibility; district wide data may not be used.

Area eligibility based on school data as described above is the **ONLY** method for establishing site eligibility. Census data may not be used to determine area eligibility in the at-risk afterschool meals component of CACFP. Sites also may not collect participant income information to establish eligibility.

If an afterschool program is not area eligible, it may qualify to participate in CACFP as an Outside School Hours Care Center (OSHCC). OSHCCs, like at-risk afterschool care centers, provide organized nonresidential child care services to children during hours outside of school.

Because most private schools (and some charter and magnet schools) do not have defined attendance areas, generally private school free and reduced price enrollment data may not be used to determine area eligibility. However, if an at-risk afterschool program site is located in a private school, then that site may use the free and reduced price enrollment data for that private school, or free and reduced price enrollment data for the public school attendance areas in which the private school is located, to qualify as an area eligible site.

In areas that do not have specific assigned schools but allow children to enroll in any of the area schools, at-risk afterschool care programs located in school buildings should use the free and reduced price enrollment data from the school they are located in to determine area eligibility.

Busing

If an at-risk afterschool program is located in an area that has mandated busing of students, site eligibility based on school data may be determined using one of two methods. Eligibility may be based on the enrollment data obtained for the:

- school the children attend and are bused to, or
- school the children would have attended were it not for the school's busing policy (the neighborhood school where the children live)

A site may be determined area eligible in situations as described above only if the SFA can document the percentage of children eligible for free and reduced-price meals at each school before and after students are reassigned. The same method of determining site eligibility must be used for all sites participating under that program sponsor to avoid duplicate counting [CACFP 02-2011, Effects of Busing on Area Eligibility in Child and Adult Care Food Program, December 6, 2010].

Emergency Shelters

Emergency shelters are not required to prove that they are located in a low-income area to participate in the at-risk afterschool meals component of CACFP. Emergency shelters that operate afterschool programs with education or enrichment activities for homeless children and youth during the school year may participate without regard to location [7 CFR 226.2 Definitions].