

WELCOME TO THE SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM (SFSP)!



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1. Introduction

While learning does not end when school lets out, neither does the need for good nutrition. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is good, nutritious food that's "in" when school is "out." Congress created it in 1968 to ensure that children in low-income areas could continue to receive nutritious meals during long school vacations, when they do not have access to school lunch or breakfast.

Nearly 14 million children depend on free and reduced-price school meals for 9 months out of the year. We know that many of them are at nutritional risk during the months when their schools are closed for vacation. Unfortunately, only about 2.3 million children participate in SFSP each day.

Clearly, the nutrition needs of a large number of children who depend on free and reduced-price meals during school are not being met in the summer. Children who miss school breakfast and lunch are more likely to be sick, absent or tardy, disruptive in class, and inattentive. They also score lower on achievement tests. Good nutrition is essential for learning in school. Without your help, these children may not return to school ready to learn.

Learning does not end when school lets out. Neither does the need for good nutrition—which is crucial for children to have safe and productive summers.

SFSP is the single largest Federal resource available for local sponsors who want to combine a food service program with a summer activity program. Why not take advantage of this valuable resource to provide nutritious meals to the children in your community?

2. How Does the SFSP Work?

SFSP is administered at the Federal level by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). FNS decides overall program policy and publishes regulations and payment rates.

In New Mexico, the Children, Youth and Families/Family Nutrition Bureau administers the Summer Food Service Program. This Agency approves sponsor applications for participation, conducts training of sponsors, and monitors program operations and processes of program payments.

NM sponsors sign agreements with the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) to administer the program. The State Agency reimburses approved sponsors for serving meals that meet Federal nutritional guidelines. Sponsors receive payments from USDA, through CYFD, based on the number of meals they serve and their documented costs of funding the program. All meals are served free to eligible children.

3. Who Can Sponsor the SFSP?

Sponsors must be organizations that are fully capable of managing a food service program.

To be a sponsor, you must follow regulations and be responsible, financially and administratively, for running your program. Also, the sponsor must complete an application for participation and attend State Agency training.

Which types of organizations are eligible to sponsor SFSP?

- Public or private nonprofit schools
- Units of local, municipal, county, tribal, or State government
- Private nonprofit organizations
- Public or private nonprofit camps
- Public or private nonprofit universities or colleges

4. What is a Meal Site?

A meal site is the physical location, approved by the State Agency, where you serve SFSP meals during a supervised time period. There are six types of sites:

Your site is	If	Based on
Open	At least half the children in the area are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals	Area eligibility data from the local school or census block group
Enrolled	At least half the children enrolled in the program are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals	Income eligibility statements describing the family's size and income
Camp	It offers a regularly scheduled food service as part of a residential or day camp program	An individual child's eligibility for free and reduced-price meals
Migrant	It primarily serves children of migrant workers	Appropriate certification from a migrant organization
NYSP	It is a college or university participating in the National Youth Sports Program	A child's enrollment in NYSP

Meal service sites may be located in a variety of settings, including schools, recreation centers, playgrounds, parks, churches, community centers, day camps, residential summer camps, housing projects, and migrant centers, or on Indian reservations.

5. Who is Eligible to Receive Free Meals?

All children 18 years of age or younger who come to an approved open site or to an eligible enrolled site may receive meals.

At camps, only the children who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals may receive SFSP meals.

People over age 18 who are enrolled in school programs for persons with disabilities may also receive meals.

6. How Are SFSP Meals Prepared?

A sponsor may prepare its own meals, purchase meals through an agreement with an area school, or contract for meals with a food service management company (vendor).

If your site has its own kitchen, you may want to prepare meals yourself. If your kitchen is not on the premises, you may still want to prepare your own meals, and then transport them to the site.

Meals that you prepare yourself receive a slightly higher rate of reimbursement. You would receive "self-prep" rates, whether you prepare the meals from scratch or purchase the components and assemble the meals yourself.

Many government and private nonprofit sponsors lack the kitchen facilities to prepare meals themselves. In that case, you may arrange to purchase meals from a school or another public or private food supplier with approved meal preparation facilities.

7. How Many Reimbursable Meals can be Served?

Most sponsors may be approved to receive reimbursement for serving lunch and one other meal service. A small number of sponsors serve breakfast only, or breakfast and snack.

If your site primarily serves migrant children, or you run a residential or day camp, you may be eligible to serve up to three reimbursable meals each day. If you run a camp, you may claim reimbursement only for the meals that are served to a child who qualifies for free and reduced-price meals.

Ask your State Agency which types of meals may be served for reimbursement at your proposed sites and how to determine the estimated number of children to be served each day.

8. How are Sponsors Reimbursed for the Meals Served?

Forms documenting how many meals were served for the month must be submitted to the State Agency. There is an administering and operating rate for each type of meal served and whether the meals are served in a rural or urban area. The sponsor will be reimbursed at meals times rate or for actual cost whichever is less.

9. How do Organizations Apply to be a Program Sponsor?

Contact the State Agency for information on how to apply for participation.

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 505-841-4856

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