

Afterschool Meals through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

CACFP meals and snacks give a nutritional boost to children, including teenagers through age 18, in eligible afterschool programs in lower income areas in every state.

Why combine meals and activities after school?

When school is out and parents are still at work, children need a safe place to be with their friends, with structured activities, and supportive adults.

Afterschool programs that serve meals and snacks draw children and teenagers into constructive activities that are safe, fun, and filled with opportunities for learning. The food gives them the nutrition they need to learn and grow.

Which afterschool programs can participate?

USDA provides reimbursement for meals and snacks served in afterschool programs that:

- Are located at sites where at least half of the children in the school attendance area are eligible for free and reduced price school meals.
- Offer educational or enrichment activities, after the regular school day ends or on week-ends and holidays, during times of the year when school is in session.
- Meet licensing, health, or safety codes that are required by state or local law.
- Serve nutritionally balanced meals and snacks that meet USDA's nutrition standards, with foods like milk, meat, vegetables, fruit, and bread.
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Who is eligible for afterschool meals?

Reimbursable meals and snacks can be served to children, including teenagers age 18 or under at the start of the school year. There are no application forms for parents or guardians to fill out. All afterschool meals and snacks are served in group settings, at no cost to the child or to the child's parents or guardians.

How are afterschool programs reimbursed?

CACFP provides cash payments and USDA foods. It gives afterschool programs a steady source of funds, and frees up resources that can be used for other activities. Reimbursement rates for meals are published annually in the Federal Register.

Eligible programs may choose cash instead of USDA foods. The value of USDA Foods provided per meal is also published annually in the Federal Register.

Can school-based programs provide CACFP meals?

Yes, afterschool programs located in schools are eligible, as long as they meet CACFP requirements and are approved to participate.

Are meals reimbursable during summer vacation?

CACFP is available to afterschool programs only during the school year when classes are in session. To provide meals in summer, ask your State Agency about USDA's Summer Food Service Program.

Where can you get more information?

To learn more, contact Patty Carignan at patricia.carignan@doe.nh.gov