

# Basic Program Information

## Child and Adult Care Food Program Centers

Illinois State Board of Education Nutrition Department

### What is the purpose?

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federal program administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that provides reimbursement for nutritious meals and snacks served to eligible children who are enrolled in participating child care centers (e.g., at-risk after-school centers, emergency shelters, and outside-school-hours care centers). Participating centers must maintain supporting documentation.

### Who is eligible to participate?

Public, nonprofit, and for-profit nonresidential child care centers; Head Start/Early Head Start centers; preschool programs; before- and after-school hours programs; after-school programs in low-income areas; and emergency shelters are eligible to participate.

Read the program [fact sheets](#) that fit your type of program to be sure your program meets eligibility requirements. If you have questions, please call 217-782-2491.

### How many meals or snacks are allowed each day?

A maximum of two meals and one snack or one meal and two snacks per child per day can be reimbursable. Exceptions include the At-Risk After-School Meals Program, which may be reimbursed for one snack and one meal per child per day. Emergency shelters may be reimbursed for up to three meals per child per day. Refer to the program [fact sheets](#) for more details.

### Do I apply as my own institution or may I apply as a sponsored center under an existing institution?

A sponsoring institution can help administer your program or it can provide the meals.

1. If you wish to operate your own program, you may apply as a new institution. Follow the application process outlined on the [ISBE Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage](#). If you operate as a sponsor, you will administer your own program, complete all required paperwork and recordkeeping, and oversee the administrative duties. Reimbursement will come directly to your institution.
2. If you want your facility to be managed by a sponsoring organization to reduce administrative paperwork, you may contact one of the unaffiliated sponsoring organizations listed below and request to be added as a facility under their sponsorship. These organizations are permitted by ISBE to charge your facility an administrative fee (a percentage of your reimbursement) for CACFP services. You would still receive reimbursement directly, but at a reduced amount.

- [Association for Child Development](#): 800-284-5273
- [Day Care Resources](#): 309-925-2274
- [Healthy Start Chicago](#): 773-684-6110
- [YWCA of Metro Chicago](#): 312-372-6600

3. If you have an after-school program that operates in northern Illinois and you wish to offer meals and/or snacks to the children, you may contact one of the unaffiliated sponsoring organizations listed below and request to be added as a facility. Your after-school program must provide regularly scheduled educational and/or enrichment activities in an organized, structured, and supervised environment to be eligible. The sponsoring organizations prepare and deliver meals and/or snacks to your facility at no charge; therefore, your facility does not receive reimbursement. The reimbursement goes directly to the sponsoring organization. To contact an unaffiliated sponsoring organization in northern Illinois call:

- [Greater Chicago Food Depository](#): 773-247-3663
- [Northern Illinois Food Bank](#): 630-443-6910

### **How do I receive reimbursement for the meals/snacks I serve?**

Reimbursement is calculated by multiplying the number of meals/snacks served by the applicable reimbursement rate. The reimbursement rates are updated annually each July and can be found on the [ISBE Eligibility, Income and Reimbursement Information webpage](#). Depending on which method of participation you choose (as explained in the previous section), reimbursement will be provided as follows. If your institution is approved to participate as its own institution, you will receive a reimbursement check monthly, based on your monthly claim submission. If you choose to be sponsored by a sponsoring organization that charges a fee to complete administrative paperwork, you will receive a reimbursement check for a reduced amount each month based on your monthly claim submission. If you choose to be sponsored by a sponsoring organization that provides meals/snacks, you will receive meals/snacks instead of money.

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible agency or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by (1) mail -- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax -- 202-690-7442; or (3) email -- [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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