

## Summer Food Service Program Fact Sheet

### Overview

The Ohio Department of Education, Office of Integrated Student Supports, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) administers the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). The SFSP reimburses program operators who serve free healthy meals and snacks to children and teens in low-income areas during the summer months when school is not in session.

Additional information is available on the [USDA website](#).

### Who can apply to participate in the SFSP?

- Any public or private non-profit school food authority (SFA)
- A public or private non-profit college or university
- A public or non-profit residential summer camp
- A unit of local, county, municipal, state or federal government
- Any other type of private non-profit organization

All sponsors must be tax exempt and demonstrate the administrative and financial ability to manage a food service effectively.

### What type of sites can operate the SFSP?

- **Open sites** operate in low-income areas where at least half of the children come from families with incomes at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level, making them eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. Meals are served free to any child at an open site.
- **Enrolled sites** provide free meals to children enrolled in an activity program at the site where at least half of the children are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.
- **Camps** also may participate in the SFSP. They receive payments only for the meals served to children who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

### What are the program requirements?

All sponsors must receive training before starting the program to learn how to plan, operate and monitor a successful food service program. All participating agencies must be nonprofit and complete an application with the Ohio Department of Education before operating the program.

### Who is eligible to receive meals?

Any student under age 18 may receive free meals and snacks through the SFSP. Meals and snacks also are available to individuals with disabilities through age 21 who participate in a recognized school program for individuals with developmental or physical disabilities.

### How many meals do participants receive each day?

At most sites, children receive one or two reimbursable meals each day, usually lunch and/or breakfast. Camps and sites that primarily serve migrant children may be approved to serve up to three meals to each child, each day.

### How much reimbursement does the government provide?

SFSP sponsors are reimbursed on a per-meal basis for the meals they serve to participants meeting program requirements. Funds received may be used for documents costs of running the program. The reimbursement rates are available on the USDA website.

### **What is the Seamless Summer Option?**

The Seamless Summer Option combines features of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). This option reduces paperwork and administrative burden, making it easier for schools to feed children from low-income areas during the traditional summer vacation periods.

### **How does the Seamless Summer Option work?**

School districts participating in the NSLP are eligible to apply for the Seamless Summer Option. Once approved by the ODE, school districts serve free meals to children 18 years and younger from low-income areas. Although the traditional SFSP still is available to schools, the Seamless Summer Option offers a streamlined approach to feeding hungry children in the community by continuing the same meal service rules and claiming procedures used during the regular school year.

The types of sites that schools may operate are similar to those in the SFSP and include:

- **Open sites:** All children eat free in communities where at least 50 percent of the children are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.
- **Restricted open sites:** Sites that meet the open site criteria, but are later restricted for safety, control or security reasons
- **Closed enrolled sites:** May be in any community for an enrolled group of low-income children and meets the 50 percent free and reduced-price criteria. This excludes academic summer schools
- **Migrant sites:** Sites serving children of migrant families
- **Camps:** Residential or nonresidential camps

### **What are the meal service requirements for the SFSP?**

To be eligible for reimbursement, participating sponsors must prepare and serve meals that meet the federal nutrition requirements. The following rules must be followed when serving meals at each site:

- Serve the same meal to all children
- Ensure that children eat all meals on site
- Ensure all children receive a meal
- Adhere to local health and sanitation regulations
- Plan for inclement weather
- Serve meals on-time

### **What recordkeeping is required?**

To receive reimbursement, a sponsor must prepare a claim each month and submit it to ODE via the [Claims Reimbursement and Reporting System \(CRRS\)](#). Sponsors must keep records that support the number of meals claimed for reimbursement for the past three program years plus the current year.

### **What records must be kept?**

The following are required records that must be kept for three school years plus the current year:

- Daily menus
- Daily meal counts
- Training records
- Site visit records
- Site review records
- Site review documents
- Food costs (on-site preparation or vended)
- Administrative costs

- Labor costs

To apply for the Summer Food Service Program or to obtain additional information, please contact the Office of Integrated Student Supports:

**Ohio Department of Education  
Office of Integrated Student Supports  
25 South Front Street, MS 303  
Columbus, OH 43215  
614-466-2945  
1-800-808-6325**

Additional information, including current reimbursement rates and student income eligibility guidelines, is available at <http://education.ohio.gov> or [www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov).

### **Nondiscrimination Statement**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (state or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in other languages than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a 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).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.