

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

& THE AT-RISK AFTERSCHOOL MEAL PROGRAM

The At-Risk Afterschool Meal Program offers federal funding to reimburse the cost of providing meals at afterschool programs to children and youth in low-income areas. Community organizations working on food security, hunger, and obesity prevention can serve as a sponsor to afterschool programs in your service area.



This program is part of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), which is operated by the US Department of Agriculture and administered in New Jersey by the NJ Department of Agriculture.

Background

The At-Risk Afterschool Meal Program offers federal funding to reimburse afterschool programs serving a snack and/or supper to children and youth in low-income areas. The food served must meet meal patterns established by the USDA. Suppers must include one serving of dairy, grain, and protein and two servings of fruits and/or vegetables. Snacks must include any two components. Afterschool programs have the flexibility to serve any foods that meet those requirements and can self-prepare or contract with a vendor.

Role of Community Organizations

In order for an afterschool program to participate in the At-Risk Meal Program, it must have a sponsor. Afterschool programs can self-sponsor, but the application process is extensive and small programs may lack the resources to be successful.

Community organizations can serve as an “umbrella sponsor”, by serving as the sponsor of one or more afterschool programs. If your community organization works on food security, hunger, or obesity prevention, serving as an umbrella sponsor can fulfill your mission and fill the plates of at-risk youth.

Umbrella sponsors attend the new sponsor training, complete the application process, contract

for food procurement, approve menus, submit paperwork to the state, and oversee on-the-ground implementation of the meals at afterschool programs.

The USDA provides reimbursement for meals served through the At-Risk Meals Program and the rate is adjusted annually. For the 2013-2014 school year, the daily reimbursement is provided at \$0.80 per snack and \$2.93 per supper. Afterschool programs can serve a snack, supper, or both.

Umbrella sponsors can appreciate economies of scale that individual programs may be unable to achieve. By working with multiple afterschool programs, a single contract would cover a larger number of daily meals – which can result in more competitive pricing. An umbrella sponsor can also manage multiple afterschool programs, saving individual programs the time it takes to be trained and approved.

Getting Started

Contact NJSACC by phone 908-789-0259 or by email vista@njsacc.org. NJSACC can assist with:

- Recruiting afterschool programs looking for sponsors
- Finding food vendors that meet your needs
- Connecting with successful umbrella sponsors in NJ and across the US

Contact NJDA by calling 609-984-1250. NJDA can respond to specific questions about the application requirements and put your organization on the notification list for upcoming sponsor trainings.



Eligibility

In order for an afterschool program site to be eligible for the At-Risk Meal Program, it must meet the following conditions:

- Be located within a school attendance boundary where at least 50% of the students receive free or reduced priced lunch.
- Be operated by a school, non-profit, or local government agency. For-profit centers may also be eligible.
- Provide regularly scheduled activities in a structured and supervised environment and include education or enrichment activities.
- Serve children 18 years or younger at the beginning of the school year.
- Accept all children within capacity.
- Provide meals and/or snacks to all children, free of charge.

For a full description of eligibility requirements, please consult the [At-Risk Afterschool Meals Handbook](#).

Meal Service

Meals and snacks served at eligible afterschool programs may receive reimbursement through the At-Risk Meal Program if the following conditions are met:

- Meals and snacks are served during the regular school year. This includes afterschool, holidays, weekends, and vacations. Programs operating during summer months

may benefit from the [Summer Food Service Program](#).

- There is a gap of at least 2 hours if both a snack and a meal are provided.
- State or local health/sanitation, fire/safety standards, certificate of occupancy, and attendance zone verification letters are provided (licensed child care centers may provide a copy of the license and a health/sanitation letter).

Meals may be hot or cold and must include all 5 of the components below.

- 1 serving of milk
- 2 servings of fruits and/or vegetables
- 1 serving of grains
- 1 serving of protein

Snacks must include any 2 of these components.

Record Keeping

The Umbrella Sponsor must train the afterschool programs on food safety and record keeping requirements. Additionally, sponsors must conduct 3 site visits per school year at each site to ensure the program is meeting USDA requirements.

Participating afterschool programs must keep accurate records that the sponsor will submit for reimbursement. This includes daily attendance, records for the number of meals and/or snacks served, and menus.

Successful Models in the Garden State

The Kids Cafe is a program is a project of Feeding America, a network of food banks across the United States. In New Jersey, three of the regional food banks operate the program in 14 counties. Kids Cafe programs bring nutritious meals into afterschool programs located in at-risk communities, under two models.

At the Community FoodBank of New Jersey and the FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties, food is procured and prepared by students of a culinary arts training program, to the meal patterns required by the USDA. Complete meals are dropped off to partner afterschool program sites daily. At the Food Bank of South Jersey, food is procured by the Food Bank to satisfy the meal patterns required by USDA and delivered as groceries to afterschool program sites, which then self-prepare the food. All of the food banks can provide prepared snacks through the program.