

## **Area and Non-Area Eligible Sites Operating Under an Existing CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program Sponsor During COVID-19**

### **Background**

USDA issued a nationwide waiver of Area Eligibility in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-Risk Afterschool Care Component on September 18, 2020 and was extended on October 9, 2020 until June 30, 2021. This waiver provides the flexibility to allow afterschool care programs located in non-area eligible locations to apply and participate in the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program. Any public or private school operating in a non-area eligible location and providing enrichment or educational programming after school are now eligible to participate in the At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program through the State eligibility plan and USDA nationwide waiver until June 30, 2021. Enrichment and educational activities are required to be provided on-site or virtually in order to offer meals in the At-risk Afterschool Meals Program. Area eligible afterschool care programs operating on-site, or virtually remain eligible to participate in the Program.

### **Enrichment and Educational Activity Requirement**

In order to be eligible to participate in the CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program, the school must provide educational or enrichment afterschool activities that are open to all students and do not limit access for reasons other than space, security or licensing requirements. Athletic sports that are not open to all students cannot qualify the site to participate.

USDA issued a set of [Questions and Answers for the Child Nutrition Programs during School Year 2020-21 – #5](#) that provided guidance around the enrichment activity requirement in the At-Risk Afterschool School Meals Program during COVID-19. Question 18 in the Q&As has clarified that At-Risk Afterschool Program Sponsors providing non-congregate meals under [the Nationwide Waiver to Allow Non-congregate feeding in the Child Nutrition Program – Extension #2](#) must comply with the requirement to provide an educational or enrichment activity (7 CFR 226.17a(b)(1)). However, under the non-congregate and parent pick-up waivers, these activities may be conducted virtually or in other non-congregate ways. Program operators could offer online homework assistance, activity packets, electronic games and books, or other e-learning activities for the children to partake in at home. Although children are not required to participate in or complete the activity in order to receive an afterschool meal or snack, the afterschool care program must offer the activity to all participating children. Please see some examples listed below.

### **Contact Information:**

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information, please contact: Rebecca Cochran, Child Nutrition Programs at [rebecca.cochran@vermont.gov](mailto:rebecca.cochran@vermont.gov)

- [Team Nutrition](#) offers a variety of online games, books, and nutrition education activities for children.
- [Vermont PBS At-Home Learning](#) offers continuity of learning for Vermont students and school communities during COVID-19. Various programming is available to provide supplemental materials for households to utilize.
- [Vermont Public Radio \(VPR\)](#) offers coloring worksheets to accommodate the 'But Why' podcast.

## **Available Methods of Operation for At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program Sponsors During SY20-21**

### **Providing On-site Afterschool Programming**

At-Risk Afterschool Program Sponsors who re-opened with an enrichment or educational activity on-site for SY20-21 may only provide meals off-site if the Sponsor has been approved to serve meals non-congregate style. If the Sponsor would like to send supper meals or snacks home to children, you must apply for the non-congregate meal service waiver. Site application changes in the [Child Nutrition Programs Online Application and Claiming System](#) for Program Year 2020-2021 will be required and must be submitted and approved prior to the state of operations.

### **Not Currently Operating Any Afterschool Programming**

At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program Sponsors with sites that did not re-open for SY20-21 with an enrichment or educational activity on-site may continue offering suppers and/or snacks by applying for the non-congregate meal service waiver with an accompanying plan to offer the enrichment or educational activity in a non-congregate style. Site application changes in the [Child Nutrition Programs Online Application and Claiming System](#) for Program Year 2020-2021 will be required and must be submitted and approved prior to the start of operations.

### **Not Currently Participating in At-Risk**

Area eligible and non-area eligible sites that are not currently participating may apply to participate in the Program provided that the site offer the enrichment or educational activity on-site or in a non-congregate style. All requirements related to onboarding new sites remain in effect and must be followed. This includes conducting a pre-approval visit, adding a new site application that must be submitted and approved prior to operation, and conducting a site visit within the first four weeks of operation. Please review the [CACFP Desk Audit Guidance for Sponsoring Organizations for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 and 2020-2021](#) for information on conducting these visits.

### **Required Application Changes**

## **Organization Budget Worksheet and Budget Detail**

- If Sponsors are adding new sites to the At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program, the Budget Worksheet and Online Organization Budget Detail must be updated to reflect the increased costs of operating the Program. Please revise both sections and submit for approval.

## **CACFP Monitoring Site Reviews**

- Ensure new sites receive a pre-approval visit prior to operation and receive a site visit within the first four weeks of operation.
- Add each new site to the 20-21 Monitoring Schedule and perform the necessary site reviews (3 reviews required each year).

## **Site Applications**

Please complete and/or revise a Site Application for each participating school with afterschool programming. Below outline important reminders when completing the site application.

### **License / Registration Information – Questions: A1 – A6**

- If the afterschool program is licensed, please complete according to the license.
- If the afterschool programs are in a school, please enter the following information.
  - a. A1. – N/A
  - b. A2. – Please list 10/1/2020.
  - c. A3. – Please list 6/30/2021.
  - d. A4. – Please list the total enrollment of the school.

### **Physical Address – Questions: A7. – A10.**

- Please list the location of the site in this section.

### **Mailing Address – Questions: A11. – A13.**

- Please list the mailing address for this site.

### **Center Information – Questions: A15. – A20.**

- A15. – Select ‘Child Care Center’ and then select ‘Area Eligible Afterschool Care Program’. List the total enrollment of the school in the ‘Free Enrollment’ Column.
- A17. – Select ‘Affiliated’ if the school is affiliated with the SFA.
- A20. – Please list the date the pre-approval visit was performed with the site.

### **Schedule – Questions C1. – C6.**

- C3. – Do not complete this section.

- C4. – Select the meal and /or snack that will be provided and the time of meal service. **Please note:** Programs may only serve one meal and one snack per day. If the school is operating SFSP, they may not serve the same meal under SFSP and CACFP (i.e. offer supper under both programs).
- C6. – If the enrichment activity will be provided virtually and meals will be sent off-site, the site must apply for the non-congregate meal service waiver and include applicable information in this section. Please refer to the [Non-Congregate Meal Service Waiver Application Instructions](#).

#### **Food Service – Questions C7. – C.12.**

- If the site has a Food Service Management Company (FSMC) preparing the meals, the SFA must ensure that CACFP supper and/or snack is listed in the FSMC contract. If CACFP is not listed, please reach out to [Michael Carr](#) regarding the options available to amending the contract.

#### **Area Eligible Afterschool Care Program – Questions C15. And C16.**

##### **For AREA ELIGIBLE SITES:**

- Qualifying School Year: 2019-2020
- Qualifying School: Please list the name of the school that qualifies the site.
- Area Eligible Program Begin Date: 10/1/2020 (or the month that qualified the site)
- End Date: 9/30/2025

##### **For NON-AREA ELIGIBLE SITES:**

- Qualifying School Year: 2020-2021
- Qualifying School: Please list the name of the school the application is for.
- Area Eligible Program Begin Date: 10/1/2020
- End Date: 6/30/2021

#### **General Questions – At-Risk – Area Eligible Afterschool Care Program**

- Must describe the virtual or on-site enrichment or educational activities that will be provided.
- Must ensure the school meets health and safety standards. This will include uploading a copy of the school's most recent health and fire inspection report.