

Homeless and Emergency Shelters in the CACFP

Purpose

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federally-funded, State-administered program that provides reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks served to eligible children and adults who are enrolled for care at participating child care centers, family care homes, and adult day care centers. In Vermont, CACFP is administered by the Vermont Agency of Education Child Nutrition Programs. The CACFP provides cash reimbursements to homeless and emergency shelters that serve nutritious meals and snacks to children under the age of 18 years.

Why Operate the CACFP in Homeless and Emergency Shelters?

The CACFP has the potential to provide vital nutritional support to children experiencing homelessness or domestic violence. It benefits both shelters and homeless youth by doing the following:

- Helps connect youth to nutritious meals when experiencing housing instability.
- Uses a sustainable federal funding stream to reimburse shelters for meals served every day of the year.
- Features special rules that take into account the difficult circumstances homeless youth face in order to streamline the application and administration of the Program.
 - For instance, all children are eligible for free meals, whereas other areas of the Program require paperwork to determine individual eligibility.

Eligibility Requirements

- Public or private nonprofit residential emergency shelters whose primary purpose is to provide temporary shelter to homeless youth.
 - Includes shelters for battered women, homeless shelters, and day shelters that do not provide overnight accommodations, as long as it is a legitimate provider of services to homeless children.
- Licensing is not required but must meet health and safety codes that are required by State or local law.
 - Shelter premises must have proper permits or certificates to show that health, sanitation, fire, and safety codes have been met.

Reimbursement

Homeless and emergency shelters can be reimbursed for up to three feedings per day per participant. The combination of allowable meals includes three meals (breakfast, lunch, and supper), two meals and one snack, or one meal and two snacks.

Contact Information: If you have questions about this document or are interested in applying to participate in the CACFP, please contact: Rebecca Cochran, Child Nutrition Programs, at rebecca.cochran@vermont.gov or 802-828-1610.

Meals and snacks must be offered to participants at no cost. All meals and snacks served at homeless and emergency shelters are reimbursed at the free rate.

Meal Pattern Requirements

- Meals must be offered to all children, from birth through 18 years of age. This requires the shelter to have iron-fortified infant formula on hand to offer to households with infants.
- Meals and snacks served to infants, ages birth through 11 months, must meet the requirements set forth in the CACFP Infant Meal Pattern, including specific meal components and portion sizes.
- Meals and snacks served to children, ages 1 through 18, must meet the requirements set forth in the CACFP Child Meal Pattern, including specific meal components and portion sizes.

Child Lunch Example

- Fluid milk: Fat-free milk (not pictured)
- Grain: Brown rice
- Vegetable: Roasted broccoli
- Fruit: Fresh watermelon
- Meat/Meat Alternate: Red lentil soup



Recordkeeping Requirements

- Maintain a list of children by name, with birth dates and dates of residency.
- Dated Menus
- Point of Service Meal Counts
- Production Records
- Monthly Operating Expenses
- Training Documentation
- Monitoring Reviews (Sponsors only)
 - Three times per year
- All documents must be maintained for 3 years, plus the current year (4 years)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.