



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Potential 2019 Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Sponsors

FROM: John D. Frassinelli, Bureau Chief
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education

DATE: April 22, 2019

SUBJECT: Application Package for the SFSP

This memorandum provides detailed information on the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) electronic application for the 2019 Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). The necessary application resources and instructions are also attached. Application resources and instructions will be available for download on the CSDE's *SFSP Apply* webpage by April 26, 2019.

As required in Section 225.6(b)(1) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) SFSP regulations, the CSDE has established a deadline for submission of the electronic application for participation in the SFSP. Connecticut's deadline for submitting the SFSP application is **May 15, 2019**. Submitted applications that are complete, in good order, and received by this date will be approved by the CSDE within 30 calendar days or by June 14, 2019.

If your application requires board approval, please act immediately in order to meet the May 15, 2019, submission deadline. Sponsors requesting advance payments for June operating and administrative costs must submit a complete application by **4:30 p.m. on May 1, 2019**. To be eligible for a June advance, a sponsoring organization must serve a minimum of ten operating days in June.

The documents included in the application packet assist sponsors with the electronic application process. Do not submit the previous year's forms. This will delay the approval process, as the CSDE will return outdated forms to sponsors for correction. The CSDE strongly encourages previous year sponsors to review their 2018 correction letter in order to avoid repeating the same errors.

School food authority sponsors that are interested in applying to participate in the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) must contact Caroline Cooke immediately at Caroline.Cooke@ct.gov.

Application Procedures for 2019

Each sponsor must complete one electronic *Sponsor Application*. In addition, sponsors must complete an electronic *Site Application* for each site location that will be operated. The attached document, *Application Components for Experienced Sponsors*, provides instructions that sponsors must follow to complete all required application components. For information on using the Connecticut Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System), refer to the *User Manual for the SFSP*. These additional resources are available on the CSDE's CNP Online System webpage.

Sponsors must inform the CSDE of any operational changes that take place after the application process has been completed.

Site Eligibility Documentation

To establish an area eligible site, the site must be located where school data or census data show that at least 50 percent of the children in the area are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. A list of all schools meeting SFSP eligibility criteria is attached.

Sponsors that will use school data to establish “Open” or “Restricted Open” sites must reference the appropriate school from which the site draws its attendance on the Site Application and the year in which it was determined area eligible. For “Open” and “Restricted Open” sites, eligibility documentation of area eligibility using school data need only be established every five years. If eligibility for a site was established between 2015 and 2018, the site is eligible in 2019. However, if school data is being used to establish eligibility and the school is on the list that is effective February 1, 2019, sponsors should reference the 2019 area eligible list to reset the five-year period beginning with 2019.

Sponsors may also document the area eligibility of their proposed “Open” or “Restricted Open” sites on the basis of census data. SFSP sites that choose to establish eligibility using census data are required to use the most recent data available. The duration of determination for site eligibility based on census data is also five years. Therefore, eligibility must be reassessed every five years for SFSP sites relying on census data to establish eligibility. For more information, review the USDA’s policy memo SFSP 03-2017: *Area Eligibility in Child Nutrition Programs*, dated December 21, 2016.

Sponsors may use one of two geographical units to assess SFSP site eligibility: Census Block Groups (CBGs) or Census Tracts. Sites located in a CBG or Census Tract in which 50 percent or more of the children are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals are considered area eligible for five years.

Additionally, a potential SFSP site that is determined not to be area eligible, but is located immediately adjacent to an eligible area, may request CSDE approval to determine site eligibility based on a weighted average of up to three adjacent CBGs. In this case, a SFSP site will be considered area eligible if the percentage of children eligible for free or reduced-price school meals is 50 percent or more when averaged in up to three adjacent CBGs. This applies only if at least 40 percent of children in each of the individual CBGs are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. Census Tracts cannot be combined.

Census Tract and CBG data are available through the USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service *Area Eligibility Map*.

Residential and nonresidential camps cannot use area eligibility to establish site eligibility.

Site Definitions

The electronic SFSP application requires an indication of the type of site being operated. Refer to the definitions listed below for the three most common types of sites. This will assist in determining the type of eligibility documentation that is required. Additional site types are identified in the USDA's 2016 *Administration Guide Summer Food Service Program*.

- 1. Open Site:** Most sponsors establish site eligibility on "need and openness." If a site is located in an at-risk area (where 50 percent or more of the children residing in the area are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals) and meals are made available to all children in the area on a first-come, first-serve basis, this site is considered Open. Sponsors of Open sites must take the necessary steps to allow meal service access to all children requesting a meal at the site. Information regarding the meal service at Open sites must be publicized in the community served.
- 2. Restricted Open Site:** On occasion, sponsors that would normally operate an Open site, meaning initially open to broad community participation, must restrict or limit the feeding site's attendance for reasons of space, security, safety, or control. In recognition of these circumstances, this type of site operates as a Restricted Open site. The sponsors must make known publicly that the site is open on a first-come, first-serve basis to all children of the community at large, but that the meal service will be limited as stated above. Individual children must not be selectively denied meals or discriminated against.

Note: To qualify as a Restricted Open site, the site must initially be open to broad community participation from the eligible area in which it is located. The only limits that may be imposed on participation are daily limits for reasons of security, safety, or control.

- 3. Closed Enrolled Site:** Closed Enrolled sites are usually established where:
 - an identified group of at-risk children live in a "pocket of poverty;"
 - identified low-income children are transported to a congregate meal site located in an area with less than 50 percent eligible children; or
 - a program provides recreational, cultural, religious, or other types of organized activities for a specific group of children.

This type of site is open only to enrolled children or to an identified group of children, as opposed to the community at large. A Closed Enrolled site must establish eligibility through the individual income eligibility of the children attending the site. To establish eligibility based on the income of the individual children, sites must collect household applications or work with the local school district to identify which enrolled children are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. At least 50 percent of the enrolled children at the site must be eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.

Accredited summer schools do not qualify as Closed Enrolled sites and should obtain reimbursement for meals under the NSLP, unless they are also open to the community for the meal service and are located in an area where at least 50 percent or more of the children qualify for free or reduced-price school meals.

Program Guidance

The SFSP guides, handbooks, and instructions below are available on the USDA's *SFSP Program Guidance* webpage.

- 2016 Administration Guide Summer Food Service Program
- 2018 Nutrition Guidance for Sponsors
- 2017 Sponsor Monitor's Guide
- 2017 Site Supervisor's Guide

Questions pertaining to this memorandum may be directed to Caroline Cooke, Summer Meals Coordinator, at 860-807-2144 or Caroline.Cooke@ct.gov.

JDF:ccc

Attachments: (3)