



State of Arizona
Department of Education

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Child and Adult Care Food Program Organizations and Family Day Care Home
Sponsoring Organizations

FROM: Mary Szafranski, Deputy Associate Superintendent
Arizona Department of Education, Health and Nutrition Services

Original Signed

Melissa Conner, Director
Arizona Department of Education, Child and Adult Care Food Program

DATE: May 1, 2012

SUBJECT: Disaster Response

This memorandum provides an overview of ways the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) and institutions participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) can respond to situations resulting from damage or disruptions due to natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods.

ELIGIBILITY FOR FREE MEALS AND DISASTER BENEFITS

Children Experiencing Homelessness

Children residing in or evacuated from disaster areas may be determined homeless under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. These children are categorically (automatically) eligible for free meals in the Child Nutrition Programs.

In cases where a household from a designated disaster area moves in with another household, the homeless liaison may determine the displaced individuals homeless under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Displaced children and adult participants in CACFP are automatically eligible for free meals in centers and tier I meals in family day care homes, even if they are temporarily residing with another family. The host family may include the displaced family members and any income provided to them when applying for free or reduced price meals.



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Institutions and sponsors that require eligibility information can receive certification of the participant's homeless status from the agency that assisted with the evacuation or that is providing shelter. If the child is not residing in an emergency shelter, the institution should have an adult living with the child complete an income eligibility form indicating that the child is homeless. No further information is required to certify the child's eligibility.

Disaster Benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Children in households receiving Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) benefits are categorically eligible for free meals in the Child Nutrition Programs. Certification of these children may be accomplished through direct contact with the SNAP agency or by an application submitted by a household with a case number.

Emergency Shelters in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Emergency shelters that provide temporary housing to displaced families are eligible to participate in CACFP. Where significant numbers of persons are being temporarily housed, State agencies may designate any appropriate facility as an emergency shelter, and may waive institution application requirements in these situations. When State agencies have designated a facility as an emergency shelter, all children through age 18 may receive up to three free meals (breakfast, lunch, and supper) each day.

An "appropriate facility" may include a school or an institution which, although it is not providing actual shelter, is nevertheless providing meals to displaced families who are being temporarily housed elsewhere, in locations that may not have the means to provide meal services to these temporary residents.

Duration of Eligibility

Children certified for free or reduced price meal benefits because of a disaster situation are no longer *temporarily* approved because households are no longer required to report changes in income or household size. Their eligibility, including eligibility based on homeless status or receipt of D-SNAP benefits, remains in effect for the entire school year and up to 30 days in the next school year. CACFP participants remain eligible for free meal benefits for 12 months.

USING USDA FOODS IN DISASTERS

Please refer to the Food Distribution Program's website for information about using and accounting for USDA Foods in disaster situations: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/fd-disasters/default.htm>

FLEXIBILITIES THAT REQUIRE STATE AGENCY OR FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE (FNS) APPROVAL

Child Nutrition Program policies are designed to allow flexibility and support continuation of meal benefits to participants in disaster areas. There are existing flexibilities in meal service requirements and administrative procedures that make it easier for States, institutions, and sponsors to operate and respond to disaster situations.



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Meal Component and Meal Service

Flexibility is allowed with regard to time of meal service and use of offer versus serve. These modifications may be made with State agency approval.

If emergency conditions exist that prevent institutions, or sponsors from obtaining fluid milk, the State agency may allow service of meals without milk or with an alternate form of milk, such as canned or dry milk (7 CFR 226.20(e)).

If changes to other meal component requirements are needed, institutions, and sponsors should consult with their State agencies. In CACFP, 7 CFR 226.20 (i) allows special variations in the food components of meals, with FNS approval.

Accountability and Verification Procedures

In disaster situations, the FNS Regional Offices are authorized to allow ADE, institutions, and sponsors to submit claims beyond the 60/90-day requirement. Claims submitted outside of the 60/90-day requirement, as a result of a disaster, are not subject to the one-time exception for late submissions.

If institutions or sponsors need to reconstruct un-submitted claims due to loss of current records, they must consult with ADE. ADE may approve such requests in consultation with their FNS Regional Offices.

When records required for review purposes, such as paid claims, approved applications and production records, are destroyed, institutions, or sponsors should inform ADE of the circumstances and dates of the losses, and the types and approximate age of the records that were lost. ADE staff should note the losses in their records for the purpose of any future administrative reviews and audits.

Institutions and sponsors that are operational, but unable to maintain normal accountability systems, including counting, claiming, and monitoring, must contact ADE regarding how to proceed. In these situations, waiver requests must be submitted to FNS for approval.

CACFP Site Eligibility

Based on the significant needs of each community, FNS Regional Offices may waive the requirements under CACFP that sponsors document that each site is serving an area in which poor economic conditions exist (7 CFR 226.2 (tier I day care home)). These requirements may be waived for existing eligible sites located in the area damaged by a natural disaster that must relocate to areas that are not eligible based on school or census data.

Please contact your CACFP specialist if you have additional questions.



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