



Guidance for Operating At-Risk in a Child Care Center

What are At-Risk Afterschool Meals?

At-Risk Afterschool Meals are a meal service option in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Participating institutions receive Federal funding for meals and snacks served to participants in low-income areas during afterschool programs. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations define an afterschool program as one that provides an approved nonresidential enrichment program within an eligible area to participants during afterschool hours. Emergency shelter sites may be eligible without regard to their location. Childcare centers who participate in CACFP may also choose to participate in At-Risk Afterschool meals.

How do I know if I am eligible to participate in At-Risk Afterschool Meals?

Sites who are interested in adding At Risk Afterschool Meals must be Area Eligible. This means they must be located within the attendance area of a public school with a free and reduced-price lunch percentage of 50% or more. Begin by reviewing the [‘How to Determine Eligibility for At-Risk Afterschool Meals’](#) self-paced guide. Then, verify the site is located within the attendance area of a public school with a free and reduced-priced lunch percentage of 50% or more.

- Once eligibility is established it remains in effect for five years.
- Eligibility cannot be determined by using Census data.
- Site is eligible to participate during the summer only when located in the attendance area of a school operating on a year-round schedule. Interested institutions must also be participating in traditional CACFP and be in good standing with ADE (not Seriously Deficient), ADHS, and DES (not under investigation).
- All for-profit institutions must qualify at 25% free/reduced without At-Risk children on the site's Free/Reduced/Paid Rosters.
- Have an afterschool program that serves a group of children who are different from your traditional all-day children and provide up to 1 meal and 1 snack.
- Offer educational or enrichment programs during afterschool hours, on weekends, holidays, and/or school vacations during the regular school year, in an organized, structured, and supervised environment. There is no requirement that children/youth receiving meals participate in the scheduled activities, the activities just need to be available. Examples of enrichment
 - Homework
 - Chess
 - Tutoring
 - STEM
 - Arts/Crafts
 - Reading
 - Drama

If you meet all of these requirements, review USDA's [At-Risk Afterschool Meals Guidance Manual](#).

How do I know if adding At-Risk Afterschool Meals is financially beneficial for my center?

Reimbursement is based on the number of meals served, per meal type, multiplied by the free rate of reimbursement.

- Calculate the cost difference between claiming one snack and/or one supper at the free rate of reimbursement for enrolled school age children verses claiming up to two meals and one snack per participant at the Traditional CACFP participant approved reimbursement rate.
- [Projected Reimbursement Calculator](#)

What are the requirements for operating At-Risk Afterschool Meals?

The requirements for operating the At-Risk Afterschool Meals program are very similar to the requirements for operating traditional CACFP. Below is a summary of the requirements.

Meal Types and Times:

- All At-Risk snacks/suppers must be served outside school hours.
 - Use school hours of the school on which site eligibility is based.
- Supper/PM Snack are the only two meals allowed for reimbursement on regular school days.
 - Other meals may be served on school breaks and holidays; refer to the claiming information below for additional details.
- At-Risk snack/supper must meet the CACFP meal pattern.
- Each site must maintain menus and supporting documentation of WGR, yogurt and cereal requirements, and CN labels or product formulation statement(s), if separate from traditional CACFP.

Recordkeeping:

Keep daily attendance records for those school age children receiving an At-Risk snack/meal, just like you would for traditional children in attendance. Meals may only be served to children who are enrolled in the afterschool care program.

Meal counts must be taken, maintained, and accurately consolidated using point of service meal count sheets, just like in traditional CACFP operations.

Costs must be documented and kept separate from traditional CACFP operations.

Sponsoring organizations must meet CACFP monitoring requirements, if applicable.

Claiming:

Submit a written plan to your HNS specialist indicating which claiming option works best for your sites(s) and how staff will ensure program integrity and recordkeeping. Below are three claiming options:

1. Option A: List children on both At-Risk and CACFP rosters and claim up to 2 meals and 1 snack, using a combination of At-Risk and Traditional CACFP, per child per day.
2. Option B: Choose one roster to list the child on during regular school days, claiming either At-Risk or Traditional CACFP, and switch to claiming only Traditional CACFP during school breaks.
3. Option C: Choose one roster to list the child on claiming either At-Risk or Traditional CACFP for the entire fiscal year. This option does not allow for child to switch to traditional CACFP during school breaks.

How do I apply to add At-Risk Afterschool Meals?

To apply for At-Risk Afterschool Meals, you will need to update the Site Application(s). Please connect with your HNS Specialist for assistance.

When can I begin claiming my At-Risk Afterschool Meals?

Sites may begin counting At-Risk Afterschool Meals upon approval.

**** Half-Day Kindergarten - Site must claim children through traditional CACFP.**