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Title 7 —Agriculture

Subtitle B —Regulations of the Department of Agriculture

Chapter II —Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture

Subchapter A —Child Nutrition Programs

Part 226 Child and Adult Care Food Program

Subpart A General

§ 226.1 General purpose and scope.

§ 226.2 Definitions.

§ 226.3 Administration.

Subpart B Assistance to States

§ 226.4 Payments to States and use of funds.

§ 226.5 Donation of commodities.

Subpart C State Agency Provisions

§ 226.6 State agency administrative responsibilities.

§ 226.7 State agency responsibilities for financial management.

§ 226.8 Audits.

Subpart D Payment Provisions

§ 226.9 Assignment of rates of reimbursement for centers.

§ 226.10 Program payment procedures.

§ 226.11 Program payments for centers.

§ 226.12 Administrative payments to sponsoring organizations for day care homes.

§ 226.13 Food service payments to sponsoring organizations for day care homes.

§ 226.14 Claims against institutions.

Subpart E Operational Provisions

§ 226.15 Institution provisions.

§ 226.16 Sponsoring organization provisions.

§ 226.17 Child care center provisions.

§ 226.17a At-risk afterschool care center provisions.

§ 226.18 Day care home provisions.

§ 226.19 Outside-school-hours care center provisions.

§ 226.19a Adult day care center provisions.

§ 226.20 Requirements for meals.

§ 226.21 Food service management companies.

§ 226.22 Procurement standards.

§ 226.23 Free and reduced-price meals.

Subpart F Food Service Equipment Provisions

§ 226.24 Property management requirements.

Subpart G Other Provisions

§ 226.25 Other provisions.

§ 226.26 Program information.

§ 226.27 Information collection/recordkeeping—OMB assigned control numbers.

Appendix A to Part 226

Alternate Foods for Meals

Appendix B to Part 226 [Reserved]

Appendix C to Part 226

Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program

PART 226—CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

Authority: Secs. 9, 11, 14, 16, and 17, Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1758, 1759a, 1762a, 1765 and 1766).

Source: 47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982, unless otherwise noted.

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Subpart A—General

§ 226.1 General purpose and scope.

This part announces the regulations under which the Secretary of Agriculture will carry out the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Section 17 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, as amended, authorizes assistance to States through grants-in-aid and other means to initiate, maintain, and expand nonprofit food service programs for children and adult participants in non-residential institutions which provide care. The Program is intended to provide aid to child and adult participants and family or group day care homes for provision of nutritious foods that contribute to the wellness, healthy growth, and development of young children, and the health and wellness of older adults and chronically impaired persons.

[81 FR 24377, Apr. 25, 2016]

§ 226.2 Definitions.

2 CFR part 200, means the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards published by OMB. The part reference covers applicable: Acronyms and Definitions (subpart A), General Provisions (subpart B), Post Federal Award Requirements (subpart D), Cost Principles (subpart E), and Audit Requirements (subpart F). (NOTE: Pre-Federal Award Requirements and Contents of Federal Awards (subpart C) does not apply to the National School Lunch Program).

Act means the National School Lunch Act, as amended.

Administrative costs means costs incurred by an institution related to planning, organizing, and managing a food service under the Program, and allowed by the State agency financial management instruction. These administrative costs may include administrative expenses associated with outreach and recruitment of unlicensed family or group day care homes and the allowable licensing-related expenses of such homes.

Administrative review means the fair hearing provided upon request to:

- (a) An institution that has been given notice by the State agency of any action or proposed action that will affect their participation or reimbursement under the Program, in accordance with § 226.6(k);

- (b) A principal or individual responsible for an institution's serious deficiency after the responsible principal or responsible individual has been given a notice of intent to disqualify them from the Program; and
- (c) A day care home that has been given a notice of proposed termination for cause.

Administrative review official means the independent and impartial official who conducts the administrative review held in accordance with § 226.6(k).

Adult means, for the purposes of the collection of the last four digits of social security numbers as a condition of eligibility for free or reduced-price meals, any individual 21 years of age or older.

Adult day care center means any public or private nonprofit organization or any for-profit center (as defined in this section) which

- (a) is licensed or approved by Federal, State or local authorities to provide nonresidential adult day care services to functionally impaired adults (as defined in this section) or persons 60 years of age or older in a group setting outside their homes or a group living arrangement on a less than 24-hour basis and
- (b) provides for such care and services directly or under arrangements made by the agency or organization whereby the agency or organization maintains professional management responsibility for all such services. Such centers shall provide a structured, comprehensive program that provides a variety of health, social and related support services to enrolled adult participants through an individual plan of care.

Adult day care facility means a licensed or approved adult day care center under the auspices of a sponsoring organization.

Adult participant means a person enrolled in an adult day care center who is functionally impaired (as defined in this section) or 60 years of age or older.

Advanced payments means financial assistance made available to an institution for its Program costs prior to the month in which such costs will be incurred.

At-risk afterschool care center means a public or private nonprofit organization that is participating or is eligible to participate in the CACFP as an institution or as a sponsored facility and that provides nonresidential child care to children after school through an approved afterschool care program located in an eligible area. However, an *Emergency shelter*, as defined in this section, may participate as an at-risk afterschool care center without regard to location.

At-risk afterschool meal means a meal that meets the requirements described in § 226.20(b)(6) and/or (c)(1), (c)(2), or (c)(3), that is reimbursed at the appropriate free rate and is served by an *At-risk afterschool care center* as defined in this section, which is located in a State designated by law or selected by the Secretary as directed by law.

At-risk afterschool snack means a snack that meets the requirements described in § 226.20(b)(6) and/or (c)(4) that is reimbursed at the free rate for snacks and is served by an *At-risk afterschool care center* as defined in this section.

CACFP child care standards means the Child and Adult Care Food Program child care standards developed by the Department for alternate approval of child care centers, and day care homes by the State agency under the provisions of § 226.6(d)(3) and (4).

Center means a child care center, at-risk afterschool care center, an adult day care center, an emergency shelter, or an outside-school-hours care center.

Child care center means any public or private nonprofit institution or facility (except day care homes), or any for-profit center, as defined in this section, that is licensed or approved to provide nonresidential child care services to enrolled children, primarily of preschool age, including but not limited to day care centers, settlement houses, neighborhood centers, Head Start centers and organizations providing day care services for children with disabilities. Child care centers may participate in the Program as independent centers or under the auspices of a sponsoring organization.

Child care facility means a licensed or approved child care center, at-risk afterschool care center, day care home, emergency shelter, or outside-school-hours care center under the auspices of a sponsoring organization.

Children means:

- (a) Persons age 12 and under;
- (b) Persons age 15 and under who are children of migrant workers;
- (c) **Persons with disabilities** as defined in this section;
- (d) For emergency shelters, persons age 18 and under; and
- (e) For at-risk afterschool care centers, persons age 18 and under at the start of the school year.

Claiming percentage means the ratio of the number of enrolled participants in an institution in each reimbursement category (free, reduced-price or paid) to the total of enrolled participants in the institution. In the case of an outside-school-hours care center that is not required to collect enrollment forms from each participating child, a claiming percentage is the ratio of the number of children in each reimbursement category (free, reduced-price or paid) to the total number of children participating in the program in that center.

Current income means income received during the month prior to application for free or reduced-price meals. If such income does not accurately reflect the household's annual income, income shall be based on the projected annual household income. If the prior year's income provides an accurate reflection of the household's current annual income, the prior year may be used as a base for the projected annual income.

Day care home means an organized nonresidential child care program for children enrolled in a private home, licensed or approved as a family or group day care home and under the auspices of a sponsoring organization.

Days means calendar days unless otherwise specified.

Department means the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Disclosure means reveal or use individual children's program eligibility information obtained through the free and reduced price meal eligibility process for a purpose other than for the purpose for which the information was obtained. The term refers to access, release, or transfer of personal data about children by means of print, tape, microfilm, microfiche, electronic communication or any other means.

Disqualified means the status of an institution, a responsible principal or responsible individual, or a day care home that is ineligible for participation.

Documentation means:

- (a) The completion of the following information on a free and reduced-price application:

- (1) Names of all household members;
 - (2) Income received by each household member, identified by source of income (such as earnings, wages, welfare, pensions, support payments, unemployment compensation, social security and other cash income);
 - (3) The signature of an adult household member; and
 - (4) The last four digits of the social security number of the adult household member who signs the application, or an indication that the adult does not possess a social security number; or
- (b) For a child who is a member of a SNAP or FDPIR household or who is a TANF recipient, "documentation" means the completion of only the following information on a free and reduced price application:
- (1) The name(s) and appropriate SNAP, FDPIR or TANF case number(s) for the child(ren); and
 - (2) The signature of an adult member of the household; or
- (c) For a child in a tier II day care home who is a member of a household participating in a Federally or State supported child care or other benefit program with an income eligibility limit that does not exceed the eligibility standard for free or reduced price meals:
- (1) The name(s), appropriate case number(s) (if the program utilizes case numbers), and name(s) of the qualifying program(s) for the child(ren), and the signature of an adult member of the household; or
 - (2) If the sponsoring organization or day care home possesses it, official evidence of the household's participation in a qualifying program (submission of a free and reduced price application by the household is not required in this case); or
- (d) For an adult participant who is a member of a SNAP or FDPIR household or is an SSI or Medicaid participant, as defined in this section, "documentation" means the completion of only the following information on a free and reduced price application:
- (1) The name(s) and appropriate SNAP or FDPIR case number(s) for the participant(s) or the adult participant's SSI or Medicaid identification number, as defined in this section; and
 - (2) The signature of an adult member of the household; or
- (e) For a child who is a Head Start participant, the Head Start statement of income eligibility issued upon initial enrollment in the Head Start Program or, if such statement is unavailable, other documentation from Head Start officials that the child's family meets the Head Start Program's low-income criteria.

Eligible area means:

- (a) For the purpose of determining the eligibility of at-risk afterschool care centers, the attendance area of a school in which at least 50 percent of the enrolled children are certified eligible for free or reduced-price school meals; or

- (b) For the purpose of determining the tiering status of day care homes, the attendance area of a school in which at least 50 percent of the enrolled children are certified eligible for free or reduced-price meals, or the area based on the most recent census data in which at least 50 percent of the children residing in the area are members of households that meet the income standards for free or reduced-price meals.

Emergency shelter means a public or private nonprofit organization or its site that provides temporary shelter and food services to homeless children, including a residential child care institution (RCCI) that serves a distinct group of homeless children who are not enrolled in the RCCI's regular program.

Enrolled child means a child whose parent or guardian has submitted to an institution a signed document which indicates that the child is enrolled for child care. In addition, for the purposes of calculations made by sponsoring organizations of family day care homes in accordance with §§ 226.13(d)(3)(ii) and 226.13(d)(3)(iii), “enrolled child” (or “child in attendance”) means a child whose parent or guardian has submitted a signed document which indicates that the child is enrolled for child care; who is present in the day care home for the purpose of child care; and who has eaten at least one meal during the claiming period. For at-risk afterschool care centers, outside-school-hours care centers, or emergency shelters, the term “enrolled child” or “enrolled participant” does not apply.

Enrolled participant means an “Enrolled child” (as defined in this section) or “Adult participant” (as defined in this section).

Expansion payments means financial assistance made available to a sponsoring organization for its administrative expenses associated with expanding a food service program to day care homes located in low-income or rural areas. These expansion payments may include administrative expenses associated with outreach and recruitment of unlicensed family or group day care homes and the allowable licensing-related expenses of such homes.

Facility means a sponsored center or a day care home.

Family means, in the case of children, a group of related or nonrelated individuals, who are not residents of an institution or boarding house, but who are living as one economic unit or, in the case of adult participants, the adult participant, and if residing with the adult participant, the spouse and dependent(s) of the adult participant.

FDPIR household means any individual or group of individuals which is currently certified to receive assistance as a household under the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations.

Fiscal Year means a period of 12 calendar months beginning October 1 of any year and ending with September 30 of the following year.

FNS means the Food and Nutrition Service of the Department.

FNSRO means the appropriate Regional Office of the Food and Nutrition Service.

Food service equipment assistance means Federal financial assistance formerly made available to State agencies to assist institutions in the purchase or rental of equipment to enable institutions to establish, maintain or expand food service under the Program.

Food service management company means an organization other than a public or private nonprofit school, with which an institution may contract for preparing and, unless otherwise provided for, delivering meals, with or without milk for use in the Program.

For-profit center means a child care center, outside-school-hours care center, or adult day care center providing nonresidential care to adults or children that does not qualify for tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. For-profit centers serving adults must meet the criteria described in paragraph (a) of this definition. For-profit centers serving children must meet the criteria described in paragraphs (b)(1) or (b)(2) of this definition, except that children who only participate in the at-risk afterschool snack and/or meal component of the Program must not be considered in determining the percentages under paragraphs (b)(1) or (b)(2) of this definition.

- (a) A for-profit center serving adults must meet the definition of *Adult day care center* as defined in this section and, during the calendar month preceding initial application or reapplication, the center receives compensation from amounts granted to the States under title XIX or title XX and twenty-five percent of the adults enrolled in care are beneficiaries of title XIX, title XX, or a combination of titles XIX and XX of the Social Security Act.
- (b) A for-profit center serving children must meet the definition of *Child care center* or *Outside-school-hours care center* as defined in this section and one of the following conditions during the calendar month preceding initial application or reapplication:
 - (1) Twenty-five percent of the children in care (enrolled or licensed capacity, whichever is less) are eligible for free or reduced-price meals; or
 - (2) Twenty-five percent of the children in care (enrolled or licensed capacity, whichever is less) receive benefits from title XX of the Social Security Act and the center receives compensation from amounts granted to the States under title XX.

Foster child means a child who is formally placed by a court or a State child welfare agency, as defined in § 245.2 of this chapter.

Free meal means a meal served under the Program to:

- (a) A participant from a family which meets the income standards for free school meals, or
- (b) A foster child, or
- (c) A child who is automatically eligible for free meals by virtue of SNAP, FDPIR, or TANF benefits, or
- (d) A child who is a Head Start participant, or
- (e) A child who is receiving temporary housing and meal services from an approved emergency shelter, or
- (f) A child participating in an approved at-risk afterschool care program, or
- (g) An adult participant who is automatically eligible for free meals by virtue of SNAP or FDPIR benefits, or
- (h) An adult who is an SSI or Medicaid participant.

Functionally impaired adult means chronically impaired disabled persons 18 years of age or older, including persons with neurological and organic brain dysfunction, with physical or mental impairments to the extent that their capacity for independence and their ability to carry out activities of daily living is markedly limited. Activities of daily living include, but are not limited to, adaptive activities such as cleaning, shopping, cooking, taking public transportation, maintaining a residence, caring appropriately for

one's grooming or hygiene, using a telephone, or using a post office. Marked limitations refer to the severity of impairment, and not the number of limited activities, and occur when the degree of limitation is such as to seriously interfere with the ability to function independently.

Group living arrangement means residential communities which may or may not be subsidized by federal, State or local funds but which are private residences housing an individual or a group of individuals who are primarily responsible for their own care and who maintain a presence in the community but who may receive on-site monitoring.

Head Start participant means a child currently receiving assistance under a Federally-funded Head Start Program who is categorically eligible for free meals in the CACFP by virtue of meeting Head Start's low-income criteria.

Household means "family", as defined in § 226.2 ("Family").

Household contact means a contact made by a sponsoring organization or a State agency to an adult member of a household with a child in a family day care home or a child care center in order to verify the attendance and enrollment of the child and the specific meal service(s) which the child routinely receives while in care.

Income standards means the family-size and income standards prescribed annually by the Secretary for determining eligibility for free and reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program.

Income to the program means any funds used in an institution's food service program, including, but not limited to all monies, other than Program payments, received from other Federal, State, intermediate, or local government sources; participant's payments for meals and food service fees; income from any food sales to adults; and other income, including cash donations or grants from organizations or individuals.

Independent center means a child care center, at-risk afterschool care center, emergency shelter, outside-school-hours care center or adult day care center which enters into an agreement with the State agency to assume final administrative and financial responsibility for Program operations.

Independent governing board of directors means, in the case of a nonprofit organization, or in the case of a for-profit institution required to have a board of directors, a governing board which meets regularly and has the authority to hire and fire the institution's executive director.

Infant cereal means any iron-fortified dry cereal specially formulated for and generally recognized as cereal for infants that is routinely mixed with breast milk or iron-fortified infant formula prior to consumption.

Infant formula means any iron-fortified formula intended for dietary use solely as a food for normal, healthy infants; excluding those formulas specifically formulated for infants with inborn errors of metabolism or digestive or absorptive problems. Infant formula, as served, must be in liquid state at recommended dilution.

Institution means a sponsoring organization, child care center, at-risk afterschool care center, outside-school-hours care center, emergency shelter or adult day care center which enters into an agreement with the State agency to assume final administrative and financial responsibility for Program operations.

Internal controls means the policies, procedures, and organizational structure of an institution designed to reasonably assure that:

- (a) The Program achieves its intended result;

- (b) Program resources are used in a manner that protects against fraud, abuse, and mismanagement and in accordance with law, regulations, and guidance; and
- (c) Timely and reliable Program information is obtained, maintained, reported, and used for decision-making.

Key Element Reporting System (KERS) means a comprehensive national system for reporting critical key element performance data on the operation of the program in institutions.

Low-income area means a geographical area in which at least 50 percent of the children are eligible for free or reduced price school meals under the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program, as determined in accordance with paragraphs (b) and (c), definition of tier I day care home.

Meal component meals means one of the food groups which comprise reimbursable meals. The meal components are: fruits, vegetables, grains, meats/meat alternates, and fluid milk.

Meals means food which is served to enrolled participants at an institution, child care facility or adult day care facility and which meets the nutritional requirements set forth in this part. However, children participating in at-risk afterschool care centers, emergency shelters, or outside-schools-hours care centers do not have to be enrolled.

Medicaid means Title XIX of the Social Security Act.

Medicaid participant means an adult participant who receives assistance under title XIX of the Social Security Act, the Grant to States for Medical Assistance Programs—Medicaid.

Milk means pasteurized fluid types of unflavored or flavored whole milk, lowfat milk, skim milk, or cultured buttermilk which meet State and local standards for such milk, except that, in the meal pattern for infants (0 to 1 year of age), milk means breast milk or iron-fortified infant formula. In Alaska, Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Virgin Islands if a sufficient supply of such types of fluid milk cannot be obtained, “milk” shall include reconstituted or recombined milk. All milk should contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the Food and Drug Administration and be consistent with State and local standards for such milk.

National disqualified list means the list, maintained by the Department, of institutions, responsible principals and responsible individuals, and day care homes disqualified from participation in the Program.

New institution means a sponsoring organization or an independent center making an application to participate in the Program or applying to participate in the Program after a lapse in participation.

Nonpricing program means an institution, child care facility, or adult day care facility in which there is no separate identifiable charge made for meals served to participants.

Nonprofit food service means all food service operations conducted by the institution principally for the benefit of enrolled participants, from which all of the Program reimbursement funds are used solely for the operations or improvement of such food service.

Nonresidential means that the same participants are not maintained in care for more than 24 hours on a regular basis.

Notice means a letter sent by certified mail, return receipt (or the equivalent private delivery service), by facsimile, or by email, that describes an action proposed or taken by a State agency or FNS with regard to an institution's Program reimbursement or participation. Notice also means a letter sent by certified mail, return receipt (or the equivalent private delivery service), by facsimile, or by email, that describes an action

proposed or taken by a sponsoring organization with regard to a day care home's participation. The notice must specify the action being proposed or taken and the basis for the action, and is considered to be received by the institution or day care home when it is delivered, sent by facsimile, or sent by email. If the notice is undeliverable, it is considered to be received by the institution, responsible principal or responsible individual, or day care home five days after being sent to the addressee's last known mailing address, facsimile number, or email address.

OIG means the Office of the Inspector General of the Department.

Operating costs means expenses incurred by an institution in serving meals to participants under the Program, and allowed by the State agency financial management instruction.

Outside-school-hours care center means a public or private nonprofit institution or facility (except day care homes), or a *For-profit center* as defined in this section, that is licensed or approved in accordance with § 226.6(d)(1) to provide organized nonresidential child care services to children during hours outside of school. Outside-school-hours care centers may participate in the Program as independent centers or under the auspices of a sponsoring organization.

Participants means "Children" or "Adult participants" as defined in this section.

Participating institution means a sponsoring organization or an independent center, including a renewing institution, that holds a current agreement with the State agency to operate the Program.

Personal property means property of any kind except real property. It may be tangible—having physical existence—or intangible—having no physical existence such as patents, inventions, and copyrights.

Persons with disabilities means persons of any age who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, have a record of such an impairment, or have been regarded as having such an impairment, and who are enrolled in an institution or child care facility serving a majority of persons who are age 18 and under.

Pricing program means an institution, child care facility, or adult day care facility in which a separate identifiable charge is made for meals served to participants.

Principal means any individual who holds a management position within, or is an officer of, an institution or a sponsored center, including all members of the institution's board of directors or the sponsored center's board of directors.

Program means the Child and Adult Care Food Program authorized by section 17 of the National School Lunch Act, as amended.

Program payments means financial assistance in the form of start-up payments, expansion payments, advance payments, or reimbursement paid or payable to institutions for operating costs and administrative costs.

Reduced-price meal means a meal served under the Program to a participant from a family that meets the income standards for reduced-price school meals. Any separate charge imposed must be less than the full price of the meal, but in no case more than 40 cents for a lunch or supper, 30 cents for a breakfast, and 15 cents for a snack. Neither the participant nor any member of his family may be required to work in the food service program for a reduced-price meal.

Reimbursement means Federal financial assistance paid or payable to institutions for Program costs within the rates assigned by the State agency.

Renewing institution means a sponsoring organization or an independent center that is participating in the Program at the time it submits annual renewal information.

Responsible principal or responsible individual means:

- (a) A principal, whether compensated or uncompensated, who the State agency or FNS determines to be responsible for an institution's serious deficiency;
- (b) Any other individual employed by, or under contract with, an institution or sponsored center, who the State agency or FNS determines to be responsible for an institution's serious deficiency; or
- (c) An uncompensated individual who the State agency or FNS determines to be responsible for an institution's serious deficiency.

Rural area means any geographical area in a county which is not a part of a Metropolitan Statistical Area or any “pocket” within a Metropolitan Statistical Area which, at the option of the State agency and with FNSRO concurrence, is determined to be geographically isolated from urban areas.

SSI participant means an adult participant who receives assistance under title XVI of the Social Security Act, the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for the Aged, Blind and Disabled Program.

School year means a period of 12 calendar months beginning July 1 of any year and ending June 30 of the following year.

Seriously deficient means the status of an institution or a day care home that has been determined to be non-compliant in one or more aspects of its operation of the Program.

Snack means a meal supplement that meets the meal pattern requirements specified in § 226.20(b)(6) or (c)(4).

SNAP household means any individual or group of individuals which is currently certified to receive assistances as a household from SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, as defined in § 245.2 of this chapter.

Sponsored center means a child care center, an at-risk afterschool care center, an adult day care center, an emergency shelter, or an outside-school-hours care center that operates the Program under the auspices of a sponsoring organization. The two types of sponsored centers are as follows:

- (1) An affiliated center is a part of the same legal entity as the CACFP sponsoring organization; or
- (2) An unaffiliated center is legally distinct from the sponsoring organization.

Sponsoring organization means a public or nonprofit private organization that is entirely responsible for the administration of the food program in:

- (1) One or more day care homes;
- (2) A child care center, emergency shelter, at-risk afterschool care center, outside-school-hours care center, or adult day care center which is a legally distinct entity from the sponsoring organization;
- (3) Two or more child care centers, emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, outside-school-hours care center, or adult day care centers; or
- (4) Any combination of child care centers, emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, outside-school-hours care centers, adult day care centers, and day care homes.

The term "sponsoring organization" also includes an organization that is entirely responsible for administration of the Program in any combination of two or more child care centers, at-risk afterschool care centers, adult day care centers or outside-school-hours care centers, which meet the definition of *For-profit center* in this section and are part of the same legal entity as the sponsoring organization.

Start-up payments means financial assistance made available to a sponsoring organization for its administrative expenses associated with developing or expanding a food service program in day care homes and initiating successful Program operations. These start-up payments may include administrative expenses associated with outreach and recruitment of unlicensed family or group day care homes and the allowable licensing-related expenses of such homes.

State means any of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

State agency means the State educational agency or any other State agency that has been designated by the Governor or other appropriate executive, or by the legislative authority of the State, and has been approved by the Department to administer the Program within the State or in States in which FNS administers the Program, FNSRO. This also may include a State agency other than the existing CACFP State Agency, when such agency is designated by the Governor of the State to administer only the adult day care component of the CACFP.

State agency list means an actual paper or electronic list, or the retrievable paper records, maintained by the State agency, that includes a synopsis of information concerning seriously deficient institutions and providers terminated for cause in that State. The list must be made available to FNS upon request, and must include the following information:

- (a) Institutions determined to be seriously deficient by the State agency, including the names and mailing addresses of the institutions, the basis for each serious deficiency determination, and the status of the institutions as they move through the possible subsequent stages of corrective action, proposed termination, suspension, agreement termination, and/or disqualification, as applicable;
- (b) Responsible principals and responsible individuals who have been disqualified from participation by the State agency, including their names, mailing addresses, and dates of birth; and
- (c) Day care home providers whose agreements have been terminated for cause by a sponsoring organization in the State, including their names, mailing addresses, and dates of birth.

State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) means the State medical assistance program under title XXI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397aa et seq.).

State licensed healthcare professional means an individual who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under State law. This may include, but is not limited to, a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant, depending on State law.

Suspended means the status of an institution or day care home that is temporarily ineligible for participation (including Program payments).

Suspension review means the review provided, upon the institution's request, to an institution that has been given a notice of intent to suspend participation (including Program payments), based on a determination that the institution has knowingly submitted a false or fraudulent claim.

Suspension review official means the independent and impartial official who conducts the suspension review.

Termination for cause means the termination of a day care home's Program agreement by the sponsoring organization due to the day care home's violation of the agreement.

TANF recipient means an individual or household receiving assistance (as defined in 45 CFR 260.31) under a State-administered Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program.

Termination for convenience means termination of a Program agreement due to considerations unrelated to either party's performance of Program responsibilities under the agreement between:

- (1) A State agency and the independent center,
- (2) A State agency and the sponsoring organization,
- (3) A sponsoring organization and the unaffiliated center, or
- (4) A sponsoring organization and the day care home.

Tier I day care home means

- (a) a day care home that is operated by a provider whose household meets the income standards for free or reduced-price meals, as determined by the sponsoring organization based on a completed free and reduced price application, and whose income is verified by the sponsoring organization of the home in accordance with § 226.23(h)(6);
- (b) A day care home that is located in an area served by a school enrolling students in which at least 50 percent of the total number of children enrolled are certified eligible to receive free or reduced price meals; or
- (c) A day care home that is located in a geographic area, as defined by FNS based on census data, in which at least 50 percent of the children residing in the area are members of households which meet the income standards for free or reduced price meals.

Tier II day care home means a day care home that does not meet the criteria for a *Tier I day care home*.

Title XVI means Title XVI of the Social Security Act which authorizes the Supplemental Security Income for the Aged, Blind, and Disabled Program—SSI.

Title XIX means Title XIX of the Social Security Act which authorizes the Grants to States for Medical Assistance Programs—Medicaid.

Title XX means Title XX of the Social Security Act.

Tofu means a commercially prepared soy-bean derived food, made by a process in which soybeans are soaked, ground, mixed with water, heated, filtered, coagulated, and formed into cakes. Basic ingredients are whole soybeans, one or more food-grade coagulates (typically a salt or acid), and water.

Unannounced review means an on-site review for which no prior notification is given to the facility or institution.

USDA implementing regulations include the following: 2 CFR part 400, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards; 2 CFR part 415, General Program Administrative Regulations; 2 CFR part 416, General Program Administrative Regulations for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments; and 2 CFR part 418, New Restrictions on Lobbying.

Verification means a review of the information reported by institutions to the State agency regarding the eligibility of participants for free or reduced-price meals, and, in addition, for a pricing program, confirmation of eligibility for free or reduced-price benefits under the program. Verification for a pricing program shall include confirmation of income eligibility and, at State discretion, any other information required on the application which is defined as documentation in § 226.2. Such verification may be accomplished by examining information (e.g., wage stubs, etc.) provided by the household or other sources of information as specified in § 226.23(h)(2)(iv). However, if a SNAP, FDPIR or TANF case number is provided for a child, verification for such child shall include only confirmation that the child is included in a currently certified SNAP or FDPIR household or is a TANF recipient. If a Head Start statement of income eligibility is provided for a child, verification for such child shall include only confirmation that the child is a Head Start participant. For an adult participant, if a SNAP or FDPIR case number or SSI or Medicaid assistance identification number is provided, verification for such participant shall include only confirmation that the participant is included in a currently certified SNAP or FDPIR household or is a current SSI or Medicaid participant.

Whole grain-rich is the term designated by FNS to indicate that the grain content of a product is between 50 and 100 percent whole grain with any remaining grains being enriched.

Whole grains means foods that consist of intact, ground, cracked, or flaked grain seed whose principal anatomical components—the starchy endosperm, germ, and bran—are present in the same relative proportions as they exist in the intact grain seed.

Yogurt means commercially coagulated milk products obtained by the fermentation of specific bacteria, that meet milk fat or milk solid requirements to which flavoring foods or ingredients may be added. These products are covered by the Food and Drug Administration's Standard of Identity for yogurt, lowfat yogurt, and nonfat yogurt, (21 CFR 131.200), (21 CFR 131.203), (21 CFR 131.206), respectively.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982; 47 FR 46072, Oct. 15, 1982]

Editorial Note: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 226.2, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and at www.govinfo.gov.

§ 226.3 Administration.

- (a) Within the Department, FNS shall act on behalf of the Department in the administration of the Program.
- (b) Within the States, responsibility for the administration of the Program shall be in the State agency, except that if FNS has continuously administered the Program in any State since October 1, 1980, FNS shall continue to administer the Program in that State. A State in which FNS administers the Program may, upon request to FNS, assume administration of the Program.
- (c) Each State agency desiring to take part in the Program shall enter into a written agreement with the Department for the administration of the Program in the State in accordance with the provisions of this part. This agreement shall cover the operation of the Program during the period specified therein and may be extended by consent of both parties.
- (d) FNSRO shall, in each State in which it administers the Program, have available all funds and assume all responsibilities of a State agency as set forth in this part.
- (e)

- (1) As authorized under section 12(l) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, FNS may waive provisions of such Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, as amended, and the provisions of this part with respect to a State agency or eligible service provider. The provisions of this part required by other statutes may not be waived under this authority. FNS may only approve requests for a waiver that are submitted by a State agency and comply with the requirements at section 12(l)(1) and the limitations at section 12(l)(4), including that FNS may not grant a waiver that increases Federal costs.
- (2)
 - (i) A State agency may submit a request for a waiver under paragraph (e)(1) of this section in accordance with section 12(l)(2) and the provisions of this part.
 - (ii) A State agency may submit a request to waive specific statutory or regulatory requirements on behalf of eligible service providers that operate in the State. Any waiver where the State concurs must be submitted to the appropriate FNSRO.
- (3)
 - (i) An eligible service provider may submit a request for a waiver under paragraph (e)(1) of this section in accordance with section 12(l) and the provisions of this part. Any waiver request submitted by an eligible service provider must be submitted to the State agency for review. A State agency must act promptly on such a waiver request and must deny or concur with a request submitted by an eligible service provider.
 - (ii) If a State agency concurs with a request from an eligible service provider, the State agency must promptly forward to the appropriate FNSRO the request and a rationale, consistent with section 12(l)(2), supporting the request. By forwarding the request to the FNSRO, the State agency affirms:
 - (A) The request meets all requirements for waiver submissions; and,
 - (B) The State agency will conduct all monitoring requirements related to regular Program operations and the implementation of the waiver.
 - (iii) If the State agency denies the request, the State agency must notify the requesting eligible service provider and state the reason for denying the request in writing within 30 calendar days of the State agency's receipt of the request. The State agency response is final and may not be appealed to FNS.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982, as amended at 87 FR 57366, Sept. 19, 2022]

Subpart B—Assistance to States

§ 226.4 Payments to States and use of funds.

- (a) **Availability of funds.** For each fiscal year based on funds provided to the Department, FNS must make funds available to each State agency to reimburse institutions for their costs in connection with food service operations, including administrative expenses, under this part. Funds must be made available in an amount no less than the sum of the totals obtained under paragraphs (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), and (j) of

this section. However, in any fiscal year, the aggregate amount of assistance provided to a State under this part must not exceed the sum of the Federal funds provided by the State to participating institutions within the State for that fiscal year and any funds used by the State under paragraphs (j) and (l) of this section.

- (b) **Center funds.** For meals served to participants in child care centers, adult day care centers and outside-school-hours care centers, funds shall be made available to each State agency in an amount no less than the sum of the products obtained by multiplying:
- (1) The number of breakfasts served in the Program within the State to participants from families that do not satisfy the eligibility standards for free and reduced-price school meals enrolled in institutions by the national average payment rate for breakfasts for such participants under section 4 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966;
 - (2) The number of breakfasts served in the Program within the State to participants from families that satisfy the eligibility standards for free school meals enrolled in institutions by the national average payment rate for free breakfasts under section 4 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966;
 - (3) The number of breakfasts served to participants from families that satisfy the eligibility standard for reduced-price school meals enrolled in institutions by the national average payment rate for reduced-price school breakfasts under section 4 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966;
 - (4) The number of lunches and suppers served in the Program within the State by the national average payment rate for lunches under section 4 of the National School Lunch Act. (All lunches and suppers served in the State are funded under this provision);
 - (5) The number of lunches and suppers served in the Program within the State to participants from families that satisfy the eligibility standard for free school meals enrolled in institutions by the national average payment rate for free lunches under section 11 of the National School Lunch Act;
 - (6) The number of lunches and suppers served in the Program within the State to participants from families that satisfy the eligibility standard for reduced-price school meals enrolled in institutions by the national average payment rate for reduced-price lunches under section 11 of the National School Lunch Act;
 - (7) The number of snacks served in the Program within the State to participants from families that do not satisfy the eligibility standards for free and reduced-price school meals enrolled in institutions by 2.75 cents;
 - (8) The number of snacks served in the Program within the State to participants from families that satisfy the eligibility standard for free school meals enrolled in institutions by 30 cents;
 - (9) The number of snacks served in the Program within the State to participants from families that satisfy the eligibility standard for reduced-price school meals enrolled in institutions by 15 cents.
- (c) **Emergency shelter funds.** For meals and snacks served to children in emergency shelters, funds will be made available to each State agency in an amount equal to the total calculated by multiplying the number of meals and snacks served in the Program within the State to such children by the national average payment rate for free meals and free snacks under section 11 of the National School Lunch Act.
- (d) **At-risk afterschool care center funds.** For snacks served to children in at-risk afterschool care centers, funds will be made available to each State agency in an amount equal to the total calculated by multiplying the number of snacks served in the Program within the State to such children by the national

average payment rate for free snacks under section 11 of the National School Lunch Act. For at-risk afterschool meals and at-risk afterschool snacks served to children, funds will be made available to each eligible State agency in an amount equal to the total calculated by multiplying the number of at-risk afterschool meals and the number of at-risk afterschool snacks served in the Program within the State by the national average payment rate for free meals and free snacks, respectively, under section 11 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act.

- (e) **Day care home funds.** For meals served to children in day care homes, funds shall be made available to each State agency in an amount no less than the sum of products obtained by multiplying:
- (1) The number of breakfasts served in the Program within the State to children enrolled in tier I day care homes by the current tier I day care home rate for breakfasts;
 - (2) The number of breakfasts served in the Program within the State to children enrolled in tier II day care homes that have been determined eligible for free or reduced price meals by the current tier I day care home rate for breakfasts;
 - (3) The number of breakfasts served in the Program within the State to children enrolled in tier II day care homes that do not satisfy the eligibility standards for free or reduced price meals, or to children from whose households applications were not collected, by the current tier II day care home rate for breakfasts;
 - (4) The number of lunches and suppers served in the Program within the State to children enrolled in tier I day care homes by the current tier I day care home rate for lunches/suppers;
 - (5) The number of lunches and suppers served in the Program within the State to children enrolled in tier II day care homes that have been determined eligible for free or reduced price meals by the current tier I day care home rate for lunches/suppers;
 - (6) The number of lunches and suppers served in the Program within the State to children enrolled in tier II day care homes that do not satisfy the eligibility standards for free or reduced price meals, or to children from whose households applications were not collected, by the current tier II day care home rate for lunches/suppers;
 - (7) The number of snacks served in the Program within the State to children enrolled in tier I day care homes by the current tier I day care home rate for snacks;
 - (8) The number of snacks served in the Program within the State to children enrolled in tier II day care homes that have been determined eligible for free or reduced price meals by the current tier I day care home rate for snacks; and
 - (9) The number of snacks served in the Program within the State to children enrolled in tier II day care homes that do not satisfy the eligibility standards for free or reduced price meals, or to children from whose households applications were not collected, by the current tier II day care home rate for snacks.
- (f) **Administrative funds.** For administrative payments to day care home sponsoring organizations, funds shall be made available to each State agency in an amount not less than the product obtained each month by multiplying the number of day care homes participating under each sponsoring organization within the State by the applicable rates specified in § 226.12(a)(3).

- (g) **Start-up and expansion funds.** For start-up and expansion payments to eligible sponsoring organizations, funds shall be made available to each State agency in an amount equal to the total amount of start-up and expansion payments made in the most recent period for which reports are available for that State or on the basis of estimates by FNS.
- (h) **Funding assurance.** FNS shall ensure that, to the extent funds are appropriated, each State has sufficient Program funds available for providing start-up, expansion and advance payments in accordance with this part.
- (i) **Rate adjustments.** FNS shall publish a notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER to announce each rate adjustment. FNS shall adjust the following rates on the specified dates:
 - (1) The rates for meals, including snacks, served in tier I and tier II day care homes shall be adjusted annually, on July 1 (beginning July 1, 1997), on the basis of changes in the series for food at home of the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the Department of Labor. Such adjustments shall be rounded to the nearest lower cent based on changes measured over the most recent twelve-month period for which data are available. The adjustments shall be computed using the unrounded rate in effect for the preceding school year.
 - (2) The rates for meals, including snacks, served in child care centers, emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, adult day care centers and outside-school-hours care centers will be adjusted annually, on July 1, on the basis of changes in the series for food away from home of the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the Department of Labor. Such adjustment must be rounded to the nearest lower cent, based on changes measured over the most recent twelve-month period for which data are available. The adjustment to the rates must be computed using the unrounded rate in effect for the preceding year.
 - (3) The rate for administrative payments to day care home sponsoring organizations shall be adjusted annually, on July 1, on the basis of changes in the series for all items of the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the Department of Labor. Such adjustments shall be made to the nearest dollar based on changes measured over the most recent twelve-month period for which data are available.
- (j) **Audit funds.**
 - (1) Funds are available to each State agency in an amount equal to 1.5 percent of the Program funds used by the State during the second fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which these funds are to be made available. These funds are for the expense of conducting audits under § 226.8 and Program monitoring under § 226.6(m).
 - (2) State agencies may request an increase in the amount of funds made available under this paragraph.
 - (i) FNS approval for increased funding will be based on the State agency's expressed need for an increase in resources to meet audit requirements, fulfill monitoring requirements, or effectively improve Program management.
 - (ii) The total amount of audit funds made available to any State agency under this paragraph may not exceed 2 percent of Program funds used by the State during the second fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the funds are made available.
 - (iii) The amount of assistance provided to a State agency under this paragraph in any fiscal year may not exceed the State's expenditures under §§ 226.6(m) and 226.8 during the fiscal year in which the funds are made available.

- (k) **Method of funding.** FNS shall authorize funds for State agencies in accordance with 2 CFR part 200, subpart D, and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415, as applicable.
- (l) **Special developmental projects.** The State agency may use in carrying out special developmental projects an amount not to exceed one percent of Program funds used in the second prior fiscal year. Special developmental projects shall conform to FNS guidance and be approved in writing by FNS.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982, as amended at 52 FR 36906, Oct. 2, 1987; 53 FR 52588, Dec. 28, 1988; 62 FR 902, Jan. 7, 1997; 63 FR 9728, Feb. 26, 1998; 69 FR 53536, Sept. 1, 2004; 71 FR 4, Jan. 3, 2006; 71 FR 39518, July 13, 2006; 72 FR 41603, 41604, July 31, 2007; 75 FR 16327, Apr. 1, 2010; 76 FR 34569, June 13, 2011; 78 FR 13451, Feb. 28, 2013; 81 FR 66492, Sept. 28, 2016; 88 FR 57851, Aug. 23, 2023]

§ 226.5 Donation of commodities.

- (a) USDA foods available under section 6 of this Act, section 416 of the Agricultural Act of 1949 (7 U.S.C. 1431) or purchased under section 32 of the Act of August 24, 1935 (7 U.S.C. 1431), section 709 of the Food and Agriculture Act of 1965 (7 U.S.C. 1446a-1), or other authority, and donated by the Department shall be made available to each State.
- (b) The value of such commodities donated to each State for each school year shall be, at a minimum, the amount obtained by multiplying the number of reimbursable lunches and suppers served in participating institutions in that State during the preceding school year by the rate for commodities established under section 6(e) of the Act for the current school year. Adjustments shall be made at the end of each school year to reflect the difference between the number of reimbursable lunches and suppers served during the preceding year and the number served during the current year, and subsequent commodity entitlement shall be based on the adjusted meal counts. At the discretion of FNS, current-year adjustments may be made for significant variations in the number of reimbursable meals served. Such current-year adjustments will not be routine and will only be made for unusual problems encountered in a State, such as a disaster that necessitates institutional closures for a prolonged period of time. CACFP State agencies electing to receive cash-in-lieu of commodities will receive payments based on the number of reimbursable meals actually served during the current school year.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982, as amended at 62 FR 23618, May 1, 1997]

Subpart C—State Agency Provisions

§ 226.6 State agency administrative responsibilities.

- (a) **State agency personnel.** Each State agency must provide sufficient consultative, technical, and managerial personnel to:
 - (1) Administer the Program;
 - (2) Provide sufficient training and technical assistance to institutions;
 - (3) Monitor Program performance;
 - (4) Facilitate expansion of the Program in low-income and rural areas; and
 - (5) Ensure effective operation of the Program by participating institutions.

(b) **Program applications and agreements.** Each State agency must establish application review procedures, as described in paragraph (b)(1) of this section, to determine the eligibility of new institutions and facilities for which applications are submitted by sponsoring organizations. Each State agency must establish procedures for the review of renewal information, as described in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, to determine the continued eligibility of renewing institutions. The State agency must enter into written agreements with institutions, as described in paragraph (b)(4) of this section.

(1) **Application procedures for new institutions.** Each State agency must establish application procedures to determine the eligibility of new institutions under this part. At a minimum, such procedures must require that institutions submit information to the State agency in accordance with paragraph (f) of this section. For new private nonprofit and proprietary child care institutions, such procedures must also include a pre-approval visit by the State agency to confirm the information in the institution's application and to further assess its ability to manage the Program. The State agency must establish factors, consistent with § 226.16(b)(1), that it will consider in determining whether a new sponsoring organization has sufficient staff to perform required monitoring responsibilities at all of its sponsored facilities. As part of the review of the sponsoring organization's management plan, the State agency must determine the appropriate level of staffing for each sponsoring organization, consistent with the staffing range of monitors set forth at § 226.16(b)(1) and the factors it has established. The State agency must ensure that each new sponsoring organization applying for participation after July 29, 2002 meets this requirement. In addition, the State agency's application review procedures must ensure that the following information is included in a new institution's application:

(i) **Participant eligibility information.** Centers must submit current information on the number of enrolled participants who are eligible for free, reduced-price and paid meals;

(ii) **Enrollment information.** Sponsoring organizations of day care homes must submit current information on:

(A) The total number of children enrolled in all homes in the sponsorship;

(B) An assurance that day care home providers' own children whose meals are claimed for reimbursement in the Program are eligible for free or reduced-price meals;

(C) The total number of tier I and tier II day care homes that it sponsors;

(D) The total number of children enrolled in tier I day care homes;

(E) The total number of children enrolled in tier II day care homes; and

(F) The total number of children in tier II day care homes that have been identified as eligible for free or reduced-price meals;

(iii) **Nondiscrimination statement.** Institutions must submit their nondiscrimination policy statement and a media release, unless the State agency has issued a Statewide media release on behalf of all institutions;

(iv) **Management plan.** Sponsoring organizations must submit a complete management plan that includes:

(A) Detailed information on the organization's management and administrative structure;

(B) A list or description of the staff assigned to Program monitoring, in accordance with the requirements set forth at § 226.16(b)(1);

- (C) An administrative budget that includes projected CACFP administrative earnings and expenses;
- (D) The procedures to be used by the organization to administer the Program in, and disburse payments to, the child care facilities under its sponsorship; and
- (E) For sponsoring organizations of family day care homes, a description of the system for making tier I day care home determinations, and a description of the system of notifying tier II day care homes of their options for reimbursement;
- (v) **Budget.** An institution must submit a budget that the State agency must review in accordance with § 226.7(g);
- (vi) **Documentation of licensing/approval.** All centers and family day care homes must document that they meet Program licensing/approval requirements;
- (vii) **Documentation of tax-exempt status.** All private nonprofit institutions must document their tax-exempt status;
- (viii) **At-risk afterschool care centers.** Institutions (independent at-risk afterschool care centers and sponsoring organizations of at-risk afterschool care centers) must submit documentation sufficient to determine that each at-risk afterschool care center meets the program eligibility requirements in § 226.17a(a), and sponsoring organizations must submit documentation that each sponsored at-risk afterschool care center meets the area eligibility requirements in § 226.17a(i).
- (ix) **Documentation of for-profit center eligibility.** Institutions must document that each for-profit center for which application is made meets the definition of a *For-profit center*, as set forth at § 226.2;
- (x) **Preference for commodities/cash-in-lieu of commodities.** Institutions must state their preference to receive commodities or cash-in-lieu of commodities;
- (xi) **Providing benefits to unserved facilities or participants —**
 - (A) **Criteria.** The State agency must develop criteria for determining whether a new sponsoring organization's participation will help ensure the delivery of benefits to otherwise unserved facilities or participants, and must disseminate these criteria to new sponsoring organizations when they request information about applying to the Program; and
 - (B) **Documentation.** The new sponsoring organization must submit documentation that its participation will help ensure the delivery of benefits to otherwise unserved facilities or participants in accordance with the State agency's criteria;
- (xii) **Presence on the National disqualified list.** If an institution or one of its principals is on the National disqualified list and submits an application, the State agency may not approve the application. If a sponsoring organization submits an application on behalf of a facility, and either the facility or any of its principals is on the National disqualified list, the State agency may not approve the application. In accordance with paragraph (k)(3)(vii) of this section, in this circumstance, the State agency's refusal to consider the application is not subject to administrative review.
- (xiii) **Ineligibility for other publicly funded programs —**

- (A) **General.** A State agency is prohibited from approving an institution's application if, during the past seven years, the institution or any of its principals have been declared ineligible for any other publicly funded program by reason of violating that program's requirements. However, this prohibition does not apply if the institution or the principal has been fully reinstated in, or determined eligible for, that program, including the payment of any debts owed;
 - (B) **Certification.** Institutions must submit:
 - (1) A statement listing the publicly funded programs in which the institution and its principals have participated in the past seven years; and
 - (2) A certification that, during the past seven years, neither the institution nor any of its principals have been declared ineligible to participate in any other publicly funded program by reason of violating that program's requirements; or
 - (3) In lieu of the certification, documentation that the institution or the principal previously declared ineligible was later fully reinstated in, or determined eligible for, the program, including the payment of any debts owed; and
 - (C) **Follow-up.** If the State agency has reason to believe that the institution or its principals were determined ineligible to participate in another publicly funded program by reason of violating that program's requirements, the State agency must follow up with the entity administering the publicly funded program to gather sufficient evidence to determine whether the institution or its principals were, in fact, determined ineligible;
- (xiv) **Information on criminal convictions.**
- (A) A State agency is prohibited from approving an institution's application if the institution or any of its principals has been convicted of any activity that occurred during the past seven years and that indicated a lack of business integrity. A lack of business integrity includes fraud, antitrust violations, embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, receiving stolen property, making false claims, obstruction of justice, or any other activity indicating a lack of business integrity as defined by the State agency; and
 - (B) Institutions must submit a certification that neither the institution nor any of its principals has been convicted of any activity that occurred during the past seven years and that indicated a lack of business integrity. A lack of business integrity includes fraud, antitrust violations, embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, receiving stolen property, making false claims, obstruction of justice, or any other activity indicating a lack of business integrity as defined by the State agency;
- (xv) **Certification of truth of applications and submission of names and addresses.** Institutions must submit a certification that all information on the application is true and correct, along with the names, mailing addresses, and dates of birth of the institution's executive director and chair of the board of directors or the owner, in the case of a for-profit center that does not have an executive director or is not required to have a board of directors. In addition, the institution's Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) or the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) must be provided;

- (xvi) **Outside employment policy.** Sponsoring organizations must submit an outside employment policy. The policy must restrict other employment by employees that interferes with an employee's performance of Program-related duties and responsibilities, including outside employment that constitutes a real or apparent conflict of interest. Sponsoring organizations that are participating on July 29, 2002, must submit an outside employment policy not later than September 27, 2002. The policy will be effective unless disapproved by the State agency;
- (xvii) **Bond.** Sponsoring organizations applying for initial participation on or after June 20, 2000, must submit a bond, if such bond is required by State law, regulation, or policy. If the State agency requires a bond for sponsoring organizations pursuant to State law, regulation, or policy, the State agency must submit a copy of that requirement and a list of sponsoring organizations posting a bond to the appropriate FNSRO on an annual basis; and
- (xviii) **Compliance with performance standards.** Each new institution must submit information sufficient to document that it is financially viable, is administratively capable of operating the Program in accordance with this part, and has internal controls in effect to ensure accountability. To document this, any new institution must demonstrate in its application that it is capable of operating in conformance with the following performance standards. The State agency must only approve the applications of those new institutions that meet these performance standards, and must deny the applications of those new institutions that do not meet the standards. In ensuring compliance with these performance standards, the State agency should use its discretion in determining whether the institution's application, in conjunction with its past performance in CACFP, establishes to the State agency's satisfaction that the institution meets the performance standards.
 - (A) **Performance Standard 1—Financial viability and financial management.** The new institution must be financially viable. Program funds must be expended and accounted for in accordance with the requirements of this part, FNS Instruction 796-2 ("Financial Management in the Child and Adult Care Food Program"), and 2 CFR part 200, subpart D and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415. To demonstrate financial viability, the new institution must document that it meets the following criteria:
 - (1) **Description of need/recruitment.** A new sponsoring organization must demonstrate in its management plan that its participation will help ensure the delivery of Program benefits to otherwise unserved facilities or participants, in accordance with criteria developed by the State agency pursuant to paragraph (b)(1)(x) of this section. A new sponsoring organization must demonstrate that it will use appropriate practices for recruiting facilities, consistent with paragraph (p) of this section and any State agency requirements;
 - (2) **Fiscal resources and financial history.** A new institution must demonstrate that it has adequate financial resources to operate the CACFP on a daily basis, has adequate sources of funds to continue to pay employees and suppliers during periods of temporary interruptions in Program payments and/or to pay debts when fiscal claims have been assessed against the institution, and can document financial viability (for example, through audits, financial statements, etc.); and
 - (3) **Budgets.** Costs in the institution's budget must be necessary, reasonable, allowable, and appropriately documented;

- (B) **Performance Standard 2—Administrative capability.** The new institution must be administratively capable. Appropriate and effective management practices must be in effect to ensure that the Program operates in accordance with this part. To demonstrate administrative capability, the new institution must document that it meets the following criteria:
- (1) Has an adequate number and type of qualified staff to ensure the operation of the Program in accordance with this part;
 - (2) If a sponsoring organization, documents in its management plan that it employs staff sufficient to meet the ratio of monitors to facilities, taking into account the factors that the State agency will consider in determining a sponsoring organization's staffing needs, as set forth in § 226.16(b)(1); and
 - (3) If a sponsoring organization, has Program policies and procedures in writing that assign Program responsibilities and duties, and ensure compliance with civil rights requirements; and
- (C) **Performance Standard 3—Program accountability.** The new institution must have internal controls and other management systems in effect to ensure fiscal accountability and to ensure that the Program will operate in accordance with the requirements of this part. To demonstrate Program accountability, the new institution must document that it meets the following criteria:
- (1) **Governing board of directors.** Has adequate oversight of the Program by an independent governing board of directors as defined at § 226.2;
 - (2) **Fiscal accountability.** Has a financial system with management controls specified in writing. For new sponsoring organizations, these written operational policies must assure:
 - (i) Fiscal integrity and accountability for all funds and property received, held, and disbursed;
 - (ii) The integrity and accountability of all expenses incurred;
 - (iii) That claims will be processed accurately, and in a timely manner;
 - (iv) That funds and property are properly safeguarded and used, and expenses incurred, for authorized Program purposes; and
 - (v) That a system of safeguards and controls is in place to prevent and detect improper financial activities by employees;
 - (3) **Recordkeeping.** Maintains appropriate records to document compliance with Program requirements, including budgets, accounting records, approved budget amendments, and, if a sponsoring organization, management plans and appropriate records on facility operations;
 - (4) **Sponsoring organization operations.** If a new sponsoring organization, documents in its management plan that it will:

- (i) Provide adequate and regular training of sponsoring organization staff and sponsored facilities in accordance with §§ 226.15(e)(12) and (e)(14) and 226.16(d)(2) and (d)(3);
 - (ii) Perform monitoring in accordance with § 226.16(d)(4), to ensure that sponsored facilities accountably and appropriately operate the Program;
 - (iii) If a sponsor of family day care homes, accurately classify day care homes as tier I or tier II in accordance with § 226.15(f); and
 - (iv) Have a system in place to ensure that administrative costs funded from Program reimbursements do not exceed regulatory limits set forth at §§ 226.12(a) and 226.16(b)(1); and
- (5) **Meal service and other operational requirements.** Independent centers and facilities will follow practices that result in the operation of the Program in accordance with the meal service, recordkeeping, and other operational requirements of this part. These practices must be documented in the independent center's application or in the sponsoring organization's management plan and must demonstrate that independent centers or sponsored facilities will:
 - (i) Provide meals that meet the meal patterns set forth in § 226.20;
 - (ii) Comply with licensure or approval requirements set forth in paragraph (d) of this section;
 - (iii) Have a food service that complies with applicable State and local health and sanitation requirements;
 - (iv) Comply with civil rights requirements;
 - (v) Maintain complete and appropriate records on file; and
 - (vi) Claim reimbursement only for eligible meals.
- (2) **Annual information submission requirements for State agency review of renewing institutions.** Each State agency must establish annual information submission procedures to confirm the continued eligibility of renewing institutions under this part. Renewing institutions must not be required to submit a free and reduced-price policy statement or a nondiscrimination statement unless they make substantive changes to either statement. In addition, the State agency's review procedures must ensure that institutions annually submit information or certify that certain information is still true based on the requirements of this section. For information that must be certified, any new changes made in the past year and not previously reported to the State agency must be updated in the annual renewal information submission. Any additional information submitted in the renewal must be certified by the institution to be true.
 - (i) This paragraph (b)(2) contains the information that must be certified. The State agency must ensure that renewing independent centers certify the following to be true:
 - (A) The institution and its principals are not currently on the National disqualified list, per paragraph (b)(1)(xii) of this section;

- (B) A list of any publicly funded programs that the sponsoring organization and its principals have participated in, in the past 7 years, is current, per paragraph (b)(1)(xiii)(B) of this section;
 - (C) The institution and its principals have not been determined ineligible for any other publicly funded programs due to violation of that program's requirements, in the past 7 years, per paragraphs (b)(1)(xiii)(B) and (C) of this section;
 - (D) No principals have been convicted of any activity that occurred during the past 7 years and that indicated a lack of business integrity, per paragraph (b)(1)(xiv)(B) of this section;
 - (E) The names, mailing addresses, and dates of birth of all current principals have been submitted to the State agency, per paragraph (b)(1)(xv) of this section;
 - (F) The institution is currently compliant with the required performance standards of financial viability and management, administrative capability, and program accountability, per paragraph (b)(1)(xviii) of this section; and
 - (G) Licensing or approval status of each child care center or adult day care center is up-to-date.
- (ii) The State agency must ensure that renewing sponsoring organizations certify the following to be true:
- (A) All of the requirements under paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section are certified to be true;
 - (B) The management plan on file with the State agency is complete and up to date, per paragraph (b)(1)(iv) of this section;
 - (C) No sponsored facility or principal of a sponsored facility is currently on the National disqualified list, per paragraph (b)(1)(xii) of this section;
 - (D) The outside employment policy most recently submitted to the State agency remains current and in effect, per paragraph (b)(1)(xvi) of this section;
 - (E) Licensing or approval status of each sponsored child care center, adult day care center, or day care home is up-to-date;
 - (F) The list of the sponsoring organization's facilities on file with the State agency is up-to-date; and
 - (G) All facilities under the sponsoring organization's oversight have adhered to Program training requirements.
- (iii) **State agency review of institution information.** The State agency's review of information that must be submitted, certified or updated annually is as follows:
- (A) **Management plan.** The State agency must ensure that renewing sponsoring organizations certify that the sponsoring organization has reviewed the current management plan on file with the State agency and that it is complete and up to date. If the management plan has changed, the sponsoring organization must submit updates to the management plan that meet the requirements of § 226.16(b)(1). The State agency must establish factors, consistent with § 226.16(b)(1), that it will consider in determining whether a renewing sponsoring organization has sufficient staff to perform required monitoring responsibilities at all of its sponsored facilities. As part of its management plan review,

the State agency must determine the appropriate level of staffing for the sponsoring organization, consistent with the staffing range of monitors set forth at § 226.6(b)(1) and the factors the State agency has established.

- (B) **Administrative budget submission.** The State agency must ensure that renewing sponsoring organizations submit an administrative budget for the upcoming year with sufficiently detailed information concerning projected CACFP administrative earnings and expenses, as well as other non-Program funds to be used in Program administration. The State agency must be able to determine the allowability, necessity, and reasonableness of all proposed expenditures, and to assess the sponsoring organization's capability to manage Program funds. The administrative budget must demonstrate that the sponsoring organization will expend and account for funds in accordance with regulatory requirements, FNS Instruction 796-2 (*Financial Management in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*), 2 CFR part 200, subpart D and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415, and applicable Office of Management and Budget circulars. The administrative budget submitted by a sponsoring organization of centers must demonstrate that the administrative costs to be charged to the Program do not exceed 15 percent of the meal reimbursements estimated or actually earned during the budget year, unless the State agency grants a waiver, as described in § 226.7(g). For sponsoring organizations of day care homes seeking to carry over administrative funds, as described in § 226.12(a)(3), the budget must include an estimate of requested administrative fund carryover amounts and a description of proposed purpose for which those funds would be obligated or expended.
- (C) **Presence on the National disqualified list.** The State agency must ensure that renewing institutions certify that neither the institution nor its principals are on the National disqualified list. The State agency must also ensure that renewing sponsoring organizations certify that no sponsored facility or facility principal is on the National disqualified list.
- (D) **Ineligibility for other publicly funded programs.** A State agency is prohibited from approving a renewing institution or facility's application if, during the past 7 years, the institution, facility, responsible principals, or responsible individuals have been declared ineligible for any other publicly funded program by reason of violating that program's requirements. However, this prohibition does not apply if the institution, facility, responsible principals, or responsible individuals have been fully reinstated in or determined eligible for that program, including the payment of any debts owed. The State agency must follow up with the entity administering the publicly funded program to gather sufficient evidence to determine whether the institution or its principals were, in fact, determined ineligible.
- (E) **Information on criminal convictions.** The State agency must ensure that renewing institutions certify that the institution's principals have not been convicted of any activity that occurred during the past 7 years and that indicates a lack of business integrity, as defined in paragraph (c)(1)(ii)(A) of this section.
- (F) **Submission of names and addresses.** The State agency must ensure that renewing institutions submit a certification attesting to the validity of the following information: full legal name and any names previously used, mailing address, and dates of birth of the institution's executive director and chair of the board of directors or the owner, in the case

of a for-profit center that does not have an executive director or is not required to have a board of directors. In addition, the institution's Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) or the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) must be provided.

- (G) **Outside employment policy.** The State agency must ensure that renewing sponsoring organizations certify that the outside employment policy most recently submitted to the State agency remains current and in effect or the sponsoring organization must submit an updated outside employment policy at the time of renewal. The policy must restrict other employment by employees that interferes with an employee's performance of Program-related duties and responsibilities, including outside employment that constitutes a real or apparent conflict of interest.
- (H) **Compliance with performance standards.** The State agency must ensure that each renewing institution certifies that it is still in compliance with the performance standards described in paragraph (b)(1)(xviii) of this section, meaning it is financially viable, is administratively capable of operating the Program in accordance with this part, and has internal controls in effect to ensure accountability.
- (I) **Licensing.** The State agency must ensure that each independent center certifies that its licensing or approval status is up-to-date and that it continues to meet the licensing requirements described in paragraphs (d) and (e) of this section. Sponsoring organizations must certify that the licensing or approval status of their facilities is up-to-date and that they continue to meet the licensing requirements described in paragraphs (d) and (e) of this section. If the independent center or facility has a new license not previously on file with the State agency, a copy must be submitted, unless the State agency has other means of confirming the licensing or approval status of any independent center or facility providing care.
- (J) **Facility lists.** The State agency must ensure that each sponsoring organization certifies that the list of all of their applicant day care homes, child care centers, outside-school-hours-care centers, at-risk afterschool care centers, emergency shelters, and adult day care centers on file with the State agency is up-to-date.
- (K) **Facility training.** The State agency must ensure that renewing sponsoring organizations certify that all facilities under their oversight have adhered to the training requirements set forth in Program regulations.
- (iv) **Additional Information collection.** Institutions must provide information to the State agency as specified in paragraphs (f)(3), (f)(4), and (f)(7) of this section.
- (3) **State agency notification requirements.**
 - (i) Any new institution applying for participation in the Program must be notified in writing of approval or disapproval by the State agency, within 30 calendar days of the State agency's receipt of a complete application. Whenever possible, State agencies should provide assistance to institutions that have submitted an incomplete application. Any disapproved applicant institution must be notified of the reasons for its disapproval and its right to appeal, as described in paragraph (k) of this section. Any disapproved applicant day care home or unaffiliated center must be notified of the reasons for its disapproval and its right to appeal, as described in paragraph (l) of this section.

- (ii) Any renewing institution must be provided written notification indicating whether it has completely and sufficiently met all renewal information requirements within 30 days of the submission of renewal information. Whenever possible, State agencies should provide assistance to institutions whose information is incomplete.

(4) **Program agreements.**

- (i) The State agency must require each institution that has been approved for participation in the Program to enter into a permanent agreement governing the rights and responsibilities of each party. The existence of a valid permanent agreement, however, does not eliminate the need for an institution to comply with the annual information submission requirements and related provisions at paragraphs (b) and (f) of this section.
- (ii) The existence of a valid permanent agreement does not limit the State agency's ability to terminate the agreement, as provided under paragraph (c)(3) of this section. The State agency must terminate the institution's agreement whenever an institution's participation in the Program ends. The State agency must terminate the agreement for cause based on violations by the institution, facility, responsible principals, or responsible individuals, as described in paragraph (c) of this section. The State agency or institution may terminate the agreement at its convenience for considerations unrelated to the institution's performance of Program responsibilities under the agreement. However, any action initiated by the State agency to terminate an agreement for its convenience requires prior consultation with FNS. Termination for convenience does not result in ineligibility for any program authorized under this part or parts 210, 215, 220, or 225 of this chapter.
- (iii) The Program agreement must include the following requirements:
 - (A) The responsibility of the institution to accept final financial and administrative management of a proper, efficient, and effective food service, and comply with all requirements under this part.
 - (B) The responsibility of the institution to comply with all requirements of title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Department's regulations concerning nondiscrimination (parts 15, 15a and 15b of this title), including requirements for racial and ethnic participation data collection, public notification of the nondiscrimination policy, and reviews to assure compliance with the nondiscrimination policy, to the end that no person may, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under, the Program.
 - (C) The right of the State agency, the Department, and other State or Federal officials to make announced or unannounced reviews of their operations during the institution's normal hours of child or adult care operations, and that anyone making such reviews must show photo identification that demonstrates that they are employees of one of these entities.

(c) **Denial of applications and termination of agreements –**

(1) **Denial of a new institution's application –**

- (i) **General.** If a new institution's application does not meet all of the requirements in paragraph (b) of this section and in §§ 226.15(b) and 226.16(b), the State agency must deny the application. If, in reviewing a new institution's application, the State agency determines that the institution has committed one or more serious deficiency listed in paragraph (c)(1)(ii) of this section, the State agency must initiate action to:
 - (A) Deny the new institution's application; and
 - (B) Disqualify the new institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals (e.g., the person who signs the application).
- (ii) **List of serious deficiencies for new institutions.** The list of serious deficiencies is not identical for each category of institution (new, renewing, participating) because the type of information likely to be available to the State agency is different, depending on whether the State agency is reviewing a new or renewing institution's application or is conducting a review of a participating institution. Serious deficiencies for new institutions are:
 - (A) Submission of false information on the institution's application, including but not limited to a determination that the institution has concealed a conviction for any activity that occurred during the past seven years and that indicates a lack of business integrity. A lack of business integrity includes fraud, antitrust violations, embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, receiving stolen property, making false claims, obstruction of justice, or any other activity indicating a lack of business integrity as defined by the State agency; or
 - (B) Any other action affecting the institution's ability to administer the Program in accordance with Program requirements.
- (iii) **Serious deficiency notification procedures for new institutions.** If the State agency determines that a new institution has committed one or more serious deficiency listed in paragraph (c)(1)(ii) of this section, the State agency must use the following procedures to provide the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals with notice of the serious deficiency(ies) and an opportunity to take corrective action.
 - (A) **Notice of serious deficiency.** The State agency must notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors that the institution has been determined to be seriously deficient. The notice must identify the responsible principals and responsible individuals (e.g., for new institutions, the person who signed the application) and must be sent to those persons as well. The State agency may specify in the notice different corrective action, and time periods for completing the corrective action, for the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals. At the same time the notice is issued, the State agency must add the institution to the State agency list, along with the basis for the serious deficiency determination, and provide a copy of the notice to the appropriate FNSRO. The notice must also specify:
 - (1) The serious deficiency(ies);
 - (2) The actions to be taken to correct the serious deficiency(ies);
 - (3) The time allotted to correct the serious deficiency(ies) in accordance with paragraph (c)(4) of this section.
 - (4) That the serious deficiency determination is not subject to administrative review;

- (5) That failure to fully and permanently correct the serious deficiency(ies) within the allotted time will result in denial of the institution's application and the disqualification of the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals;
- (6) That the State agency will not pay any claims for reimbursement for eligible meals served or allowable administrative expenses incurred until the State agency has approved the institution's application and the institution has signed a Program agreement; and
- (7) That the institution's withdrawal of its application, after having been notified that it is seriously deficient, will still result in the institution's formal termination by the State agency and placement of the institution and its responsible principals and individuals on the National disqualified list; and
- (8) That, if the State agency does not possess the date of birth for any individual named as a "responsible principal or individual" in the serious deficiency notice, the submission of that person's date of birth is a condition of corrective action for the institution and/or individual.

(B) ***Successful corrective action.***

- (1) If corrective action has been taken to fully and permanently correct the serious deficiency(ies) within the allotted time and to the State agency's satisfaction, the State agency must:
 - (i) Notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals, that the State agency has temporarily defer its serious deficiency determination; and
 - (ii) Offer the new institution the opportunity to resubmit its application. If the new institution resubmits its application, the State agency must complete its review of the application within 30 days after receiving a complete and correct application.
- (2) If corrective action is complete for the institution but not for all of the responsible principals and responsible individuals (or vice versa), the State agency must:
 - (i) Continue with the actions (as set forth in paragraph (c)(1)(iii)(C) of this section) against the remaining parties;
 - (ii) At the same time the notice is issued, the State agency must also update the State agency list to indicate that the serious deficiency(ies) has(ve) been corrected and provide a copy of the notice to the appropriate FNSRO; and
 - (iii) If the new institution has corrected the serious deficiency(ies), offer it the opportunity to resubmit its application. If the new institution resubmits its application, the State agency must complete its review of the application within 30 days after receiving a complete and correct application.

(3) If the State agency initially determines that the institution's corrective action is complete, but later determines that the serious deficiency(ies) has recurred, the State agency must move immediately to issue a notice of intent to terminate and disqualify the institution, in accordance with paragraph (c)(1)(iii)(C) of this section.

(C) **Application denial and proposed disqualification.** If timely corrective action is not taken to fully and permanently correct the serious deficiency(ies), the State agency must notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals, that the institution's application has been denied. At the same time the notice is issued, the State agency must also update the State agency list and provide a copy of the notice to the appropriate FNSRO. The notice must also specify:

(1) That the institution's application has been denied and the State agency is proposing to disqualify the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals;

(2) The basis for the actions; and

(3) The procedures for seeking an administrative review (in accordance with paragraph (k) of this section) of the application denial and proposed disqualifications.

(D) **Program payments.** The State agency is prohibited from paying any claims for reimbursement from a new institution for eligible meals served or allowable administrative expenses incurred until the State agency has approved its application and the institution and State agency have signed a Program agreement.

(E) **Disqualification.** When the time for requesting an administrative review expires or when the administrative review official upholds the State agency's denial and proposed disqualifications, the State agency must notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals that the institution and the responsible principal and responsible individuals have been disqualified. At the same time the notice is issued, the State agency must also update the State agency list and provide a copy of the notice and the mailing address and date of birth for each responsible principal and responsible individual to the appropriate FNSRO.

(2) **Denial of a renewing institution's application –**

(i) **General.** If a renewing institution's application does not meet all of the requirements in paragraph (b) of this section and in §§ 226.15(b) and 226.16(b), the State agency must deny the application. If, in reviewing a renewing institution's application, the State agency determines that the institution has committed one or more serious deficiency listed in paragraph (c)(2)(ii) of this section, the State agency must *initiate* action to deny the renewing institution's application and *initiate* action to disqualify the renewing institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals.

(ii) **List of serious deficiencies for renewing institutions.** The list of serious deficiencies is not identical for each category of institution (new, renewing, participating) because the type of information likely to be available to the State agency is different, depending on whether the State agency is reviewing a new or renewing institution's application or is conducting a review of a participating institution. Serious deficiencies for renewing institutions are:

- (A) Submission of false information on the institution's application, including but not limited to a determination that the institution has concealed a conviction for any activity that occurred during the past seven years and that indicates a lack of business integrity. A lack of business integrity includes fraud, antitrust violations, embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, receiving stolen property, making false claims, obstruction of justice, or any other activity indicating a lack of business integrity as defined by the State agency;
 - (B) Failure to operate the Program in conformance with the performance standards set forth in paragraphs (b)(1)(xviii) and (b)(2)(vii) of this section;
 - (C) Failure to comply with the bid procedures and contract requirements of applicable Federal procurement regulations;
 - (D) Use of a food service management company that is in violation of health codes;
 - (E) Failure by a sponsoring organization of day care homes to properly classify day care homes as tier I or tier II in accordance with § 226.15(f);
 - (F) Failure by a sponsoring organization to properly train or monitor sponsored facilities in accordance with § 226.16(d);
 - (G) Failure to perform any of the other financial and administrative responsibilities required by this part;
 - (H) Failure to properly implement and administer the day care home termination and administrative review provisions set forth at paragraph (I) of this section and § 226.16(l); or
 - (I) Any other action affecting the institution's ability to administer the Program in accordance with Program requirements.
- (iii) ***Serious deficiency notification procedures for renewing institutions.*** If the State agency determines that a renewing institution has committed one or more serious deficiency listed in paragraph (c)(2)(ii) of this section, the State agency must use the following procedures to provide the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals notice of the serious deficiency(ies) and an opportunity to take corrective action.
- (A) ***Notice of serious deficiency.*** The State agency must notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors that the institution has been determined to be seriously deficient. The notice must identify the responsible principals and responsible individuals and must be sent to those persons as well. The State agency may specify in the notice different corrective action, and time periods for completing the corrective action, for the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals. At the same time the notice is issued, the State agency must add the institution to the State agency list, along with the basis for the serious deficiency determination, and provide a copy of the notice to the appropriate FNSRO. The notice must also specify:
 - (1) The serious deficiency(ies);
 - (2) The actions to be taken to correct the serious deficiency(ies);
 - (3) The time allotted to correct the serious deficiency(ies) in accordance with paragraph (c)(4) of this section;

- (4) That the serious deficiency determination is not subject to administrative review.
- (5) That failure to fully and permanently correct the serious deficiency(ies) within the allotted time will result in the State agency's denial of the institution's application, the proposed termination of the institution's agreement and the proposed disqualification of the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals;
- (6) That the institution's voluntary termination of its agreement with the State agency after having been notified that it is seriously deficient will still result in the institution's formal termination by the State agency and placement of the institution and its responsible principals and responsible individuals on the National disqualified list; and
- (7) That, if the State agency does not possess the date of birth for any individual named as a "responsible principal or individual" in the serious deficiency notice, the submission of that person's date of birth is a condition of corrective action for the institution and/or individual.

(B) Successful corrective action.

- (1) If corrective action has been taken to fully and permanently correct the serious deficiency(ies) within the allotted time and to the State agency's satisfaction, the State agency must:
 - (i) Notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals, that the State agency has temporarily defer its serious deficiency determination; and
 - (ii) Offer the renewing institution the opportunity to resubmit its application. If the renewing institution resubmits its application, the State agency must complete its review of the application within 30 days after receiving a complete and correct application.
- (2) If corrective action is complete for the institution but not for all of the responsible principals and responsible individuals (or vice versa), the State agency must:
 - (i) Continue with the actions (as set forth in paragraph (c)(2)(iii)(C) of this section) against the remaining parties;
 - (ii) At the same time the notice is issued, the State agency must also update the State agency list to indicate that the serious deficiency(ies) has(ve) been corrected and provide a copy of the notice to the appropriate FNSRO; and
 - (iii) If the renewing institution has corrected the serious deficiency(ies), offer it the opportunity to resubmit its application. If the renewing institution resubmits its application, the State agency must complete its review of the application within 30 days after receiving a complete and correct application.
- (3) If the State agency initially determines that the institution's corrective action is complete, but later determines that the serious deficiency(ies) have recurred, the state agency must move immediately to issue a notice of intent to terminate and disqualify the institution, in accordance with paragraph (c)(2)(iii)(C) of this section.

- (C) ***Application denial and proposed disqualification.*** If timely corrective action is not taken to fully and permanently correct the serious deficiency(ies), the State agency must notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals, that the institution's application has been denied. At the same time the notice is issued, the State agency must update the State agency list and provide a copy of the notice to the appropriate FNSRO. The notice must also specify:
 - (1) That the institution's application has been denied and the State agency is proposing to terminate the institution's agreement and to disqualify the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals;
 - (2) The basis for the actions;
 - (3) That, if the institution voluntarily terminates its agreement after receiving the notice of the proposed termination, the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals will be disqualified;
 - (4) The procedures for seeking an administrative review (in accordance with paragraph (k) of this section) of the application denial and proposed disqualifications; and
 - (5) That the institution may continue to participate in the Program and receive Program reimbursement for eligible meals served and allowable administrative costs incurred until its administrative review is completed.
- (D) ***Agreement termination and disqualification.*** When the time for requesting an administrative review expires or when the administrative review official upholds the State agency's denial of the institution's application, the proposed termination, and the proposed disqualifications, the State agency must:
 - (1) Notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals, that the agreement has been terminated and that the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals have been disqualified;
 - (2) Update the State agency list at the time such notice is issued; and
 - (3) Provide a copy of the notice and the mailing address and date of birth for each responsible principal and responsible individual to the appropriate FNSRO.
- (3) ***Termination of a participating institution's agreement.***
 - (i) ***General.*** If the State agency holds an agreement with an institution operating in more than one State that has been disqualified from the Program by another State agency and placed on the National disqualified list, the State agency must terminate the institution's agreement effective no later than 45 days of the date of the institution's disqualification by the other State agency. At the same time the notice of termination is issued, the State agency must add the institution to the State agency list and indicate that the institution's agreement has been terminated and provide a copy of the notice to the appropriate FNSRO. If the State agency determines that a participating institution has committed one or more serious deficiency listed in paragraph (c)(3)(ii) of this section, the State agency must *initiate* action to terminate the agreement of a participating institution and *initiate* action to disqualify the institution and any responsible principals and responsible individuals.

- (ii) **List of serious deficiencies for participating institutions.** The list of serious deficiencies is not identical for each category of institution (new, renewing, participating) because the type of information likely to be available to the State agency is different, depending on whether the State agency is reviewing a new or renewing institution's application or is conducting a review of a participating institution. Serious deficiencies for participating institutions are:
- (A) Submission of false information on the institution's application, including but not limited to a determination that the institution has concealed a conviction for any activity that occurred during the past seven years and that indicates a lack of business integrity. A lack of business integrity includes fraud, antitrust violations, embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, receiving stolen property, making false claims, obstruction of justice, or any other activity indicating a lack of business integrity as defined by the State agency;
 - (B) Permitting an individual who is on the National disqualified list to serve in a principal capacity with the institution or, if a sponsoring organization, permitting such an individual to serve as a principal in a sponsored center or as a day care home;
 - (C) Failure to operate the Program in conformance with the performance standards set forth in paragraphs (b)(1)(xviii) and (b)(2)(vii) of this section;
 - (D) Failure to comply with the bid procedures and contract requirements of applicable Federal procurement regulations;
 - (E) Failure to return to the State agency any advance payments that exceeded the amount earned for serving eligible meals, or failure to return disallowed start-up or expansion payments;
 - (F) Failure to maintain adequate records;
 - (G) Failure to adjust meal orders to conform to variations in the number of participants;
 - (H) Claiming reimbursement for meals not served to participants;
 - (I) Claiming reimbursement for a significant number of meals that do not meet Program requirements;
 - (J) Use of a food service management company that is in violation of health codes;
 - (K) Failure of a sponsoring organization to disburse payments to its facilities in accordance with the regulations at § 226.16(g) and (h) or in accordance with its management plan;
 - (L) Claiming reimbursement for meals served by a for-profit child care center or a for-profit outside-school-hours care center during a calendar month in which less than 25 percent of the children in care (enrolled or licensed capacity, whichever is less) were eligible for free or reduced-price meals or were title XX beneficiaries;
 - (M) Claiming reimbursement for meals served by a for-profit adult day care center during a calendar month in which less than 25 percent of its enrolled adult participants were title XIX or title XX beneficiaries;
 - (N) Failure by a sponsoring organization of day care homes to properly classify day care homes as tier I or tier II in accordance with § 226.15(f);

- (O) Failure by a sponsoring organization to properly train or monitor sponsored facilities in accordance with § 226.16(d);
 - (P) Use of day care home funds by a sponsoring organization to pay for the sponsoring organization's administrative expenses;
 - (Q) Failure to perform any of the other financial and administrative responsibilities required by this part;
 - (R) Failure to properly implement and administer the day care home termination and administrative review provisions set forth at paragraph (I) of this section and § 226.16(l);
 - (S) The fact the institution or any of the institution's principals have been declared ineligible for any other publicly funded program by reason of violating that program's requirements. However, this prohibition does not apply if the institution or the principal has been fully reinstated in, or is now eligible to participate in, that program, including the payment of any debts owed;
 - (T) Conviction of the institution or any of its principals for any activity that occurred during the past seven years and that indicates a lack of business integrity. A lack of business integrity includes fraud, antitrust violations, embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, receiving stolen property, making false claims, obstruction of justice, or any other activity indicating a lack of business integrity as defined by the State agency; or
 - (U) Any other action affecting the institution's ability to administer the Program in accordance with Program requirements.
- (iii) ***Serious deficiency notification procedures for participating institutions.*** If the State agency determines that a participating institution has committed one or more serious deficiency listed in paragraph (c)(3)(ii) of this section, the State agency must use the following procedures to provide the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals notice of the serious deficiency(ies) and an opportunity to take corrective action. However, if the serious deficiency(ies) constitutes an imminent threat to the health or safety of participants, or the institution has engaged in activities that threaten the public health or safety, the State agency must follow the procedures in paragraph (c)(5)(i) of this section instead of the procedures below. Further, if the serious deficiency is the submission of a false or fraudulent claim, in addition to the procedures below, the State agency may suspend the institution's participation in accordance with paragraph (c)(5)(ii) of this section.
- (A) ***Notice of serious deficiency.*** The State agency must notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors that the institution has been determined seriously deficient. The notice must identify the responsible principals and responsible individuals and must be sent to those persons as well. The State agency may specify in the notice different corrective action and time periods for completing the corrective action for the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals. At the same time the notice is issued, the State agency must add the institution to the State agency list, along with the basis for the serious deficiency determination, and provide a copy of the notice to the appropriate FNSRO. The notice must also specify:
 - (1) The serious deficiency(ies);

- (2) The actions to be taken to correct the serious deficiency(ies);
- (3) The time allotted to correct the serious deficiency(ies) in accordance with paragraph (c)(4) of this section;
- (4) That the serious deficiency determination is not subject to administrative review.
- (5) That failure to fully and permanently correct the serious deficiency(ies) within the allotted time will result in the State agency's proposed termination of the institution's agreement and the proposed disqualification of the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals;
- (6) That the institution's voluntary termination of its agreement with the State agency after having been notified that it is seriously deficient will still result in the institution's formal termination by the State agency and placement of the institution and its responsible principals and responsible individuals on the National disqualified list; and
- (7) That, if the State agency does not possess the date of birth for any individual named as a "responsible principal or individual" in the serious deficiency notice, the submission of that person's date of birth is a condition of corrective action for the institution and/or individual.

(B) ***Successful corrective action.***

- (1) If corrective action has been taken to fully and permanently correct the serious deficiency(ies) within the allotted time and to the State agency's satisfaction, the State agency must:
 - (i) Notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals, that the State agency has temporarily defer its serious deficiency determination; and
 - (ii) Offer the participating institution the opportunity to resubmit its application. If the participating institution resubmits its application, the State agency must complete its review of the application within 30 days after receiving a complete and correct application.
- (2) If corrective action is complete for the institution but not for all of the responsible principals and responsible individuals (or vice versa), the State agency must:
 - (i) Continue with the actions (as set forth in paragraph (c)(3)(iii)(C) of this section) against the remaining parties;
 - (ii) At the same time the notice is issued, the State agency must also update the State agency list to indicate that the serious deficiency(ies) has(ve) been corrected and provide a copy of the notice to the appropriate FNSRO; and
 - (iii) If the participating institution has corrected the serious deficiency(ies), offer it the opportunity to resubmit its application. If the participating institution resubmits its application, the State agency must complete its review of the application within 30 days after receiving a complete and correct application.

- (3) If the State agency initially determines that the institution's corrective action is complete, but later determines that the serious deficiency(ies) has recurred, the State agency must move immediately to issue a notice of intent to terminate and disqualify the institution, in accordance with paragraph (c)(1)(iii)(C) of this section.
- (C) **Proposed termination and proposed disqualification.** If timely corrective action is not taken to fully and permanently correct the serious deficiency(ies), the State agency must notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals, that the State agency is proposing to terminate the institution's agreement and to disqualify the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals. At the same time the notice is issued, the State agency must also update the State agency list and provide a copy of the notice to the appropriate FNSRO. The notice must also specify:
 - (1) That the State agency is proposing to terminate the institution's agreement and to disqualify the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals;
 - (2) The basis for the actions;
 - (3) That, if the institution voluntarily terminates its agreement after receiving the notice of proposed termination, the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals will be disqualified.
 - (4) The procedures for seeking an administrative review (in accordance with paragraph (k) of this section) of the application denial and proposed disqualifications; and
 - (5) That, unless participation has been suspended, the institution may continue to participate and receive Program reimbursement for eligible meals served and allowable administrative costs incurred until its administrative review is completed.
- (D) **Program payments and extended agreement.** If the participating institution must renew its application, or its agreement expires, before the end of the time allotted for corrective action and/or the conclusion of any administrative review requested by the participating institution:
 - (1) The State agency must temporarily extend its current agreement with the participating institution and continue to pay any valid unpaid claims for reimbursement for eligible meals served and allowable administrative expenses incurred; and
 - (2) During this period, the State agency may base administrative payments to the institution on the institution's previous approved budget, or may base administrative payments to the institution on the budget submitted by the institution as part of its renewal application; and
 - (3) The actions set forth in paragraphs (c)(3)(iii)(D)(1) and (c)(3)(iii)(D)(2) of this section must be taken either until the serious deficiency(ies) is corrected or until the institution's agreement is terminated, including the period of any administrative review;
- (E) **Agreement termination and disqualification.** When the time for requesting an administrative review expires or when the administrative review official upholds the State agency's proposed termination and disqualifications, the State agency must:

- (1) Notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals, that the institution's agreement has been terminated and that the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals have been disqualified;
 - (2) Update the State agency list at the time such notice is issued; and
 - (3) Provide a copy of the notice and the mailing address and date of birth for each responsible principal and responsible individual to the appropriate FNSRO.
- (4) **Corrective action timeframes** —
 - (i) **General.** Except as noted in this paragraph (c)(4), the State agency is prohibited from allowing more than 90 days for corrective action from the date the institution receives the serious deficiency notice.
 - (ii) **Unlawful practices.** If the State agency determines that the institution has engaged in unlawful practices, submitted false or fraudulent claims or other information to the State agency, or been convicted of or concealed a criminal background, the State agency is prohibited from allowing more than 30 days for corrective action.
 - (iii) **Long-term changes.** For serious deficiencies requiring the long-term revision of management systems or processes, the State agency may permit more than 90 days to complete the corrective action as long as a corrective action plan is submitted to and approved by the State agency within 90 days (or such shorter deadline as the State agency may establish). The corrective action must include milestones and a definite completion date that the State agency will monitor. The determination of serious deficiency will remain in effect until the State agency determines that the serious deficiency(ies) has(ve) been fully and permanently corrected within the allotted time.
- (5) **Suspension of an institution's participation.** A State agency is prohibited from suspending an institution's participation (including all Program payments) except for the reasons set forth in this paragraph (c)(5).
 - (i) **Public health or safety** —
 - (A) **General.** If State or local health or licensing officials have cited an institution for serious health or safety violations, the State agency must immediately suspend the institution's Program participation, initiate action to terminate the institution's agreement, and initiate action to disqualify the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals prior to any formal action to revoke the institution's licensure or approval. If the State agency determines that there is an imminent threat to the health or safety of participants at an institution, or that the institution has engaged in activities that threaten the public health or safety, the State agency must immediately notify the appropriate State or local licensing and health authorities and take action that is consistent with the recommendations and requirements of those authorities. An imminent threat to the health or safety of participants and engaging in activities that threaten the public health or safety constitute serious deficiencies; however, the State agency must use the procedures in this paragraph (c)(5)(i) (instead of the procedures in paragraph (c)(3) of this section) to provide the institution notice of the suspension of participation, serious deficiency, proposed termination of the institution's agreement, and proposed disqualification of the responsible principals and responsible individuals.

- (B) **Notice of suspension, serious deficiency, proposed termination, and proposed disqualification.** The State agency must notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors that the institution's participation (including Program payments) has been suspended, that the institution has been determined to be seriously deficient, and that the State agency proposes to terminate the institution's agreement and to disqualify the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals. The notice must also identify the responsible principals and responsible individuals and must be sent to those persons as well. At the same time this notice is sent, the State agency must add the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals to the State agency list, along with the basis for the serious deficiency determination and provide a copy of the notice to the appropriate FNSRO. The notice must also specify:
- (1) That the State agency is suspending the institution's participation (including Program payments), proposing to terminate the institution's agreement, and proposing to disqualify the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals;
 - (2) The serious deficiency(ies);
 - (3) That, if the institution voluntarily terminates its agreement with the State agency after having been notified of the proposed termination, the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals will be disqualified;
 - (4) That the serious deficiency determination is not subject to administrative review;
 - (5) The procedures for seeking an administrative review (consistent with paragraph (k) of this section) of the suspension, proposed termination, and proposed disqualifications; and
 - (6) That, if the administrative review official overturns the suspension, the institution may claim reimbursement for eligible meals served and allowable administrative costs incurred during the suspension period.
- (C) **Agreement termination and disqualification.** When the time for requesting an administrative review expires or when the administrative review official upholds the State agency's proposed termination and disqualifications, the State agency must:
- (1) Notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals, that the institution's agreement has been terminated and that the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals have been disqualified;
 - (2) Update the State agency list at the time such notice is issued; and
 - (3) Provide a copy of the notice and the mailing address and date of birth for each responsible principal and responsible individual to the appropriate FNSRO.
- (D) **Program payments.** The State agency is prohibited from paying any claims for reimbursement from a suspended institution. However, if the suspended institution prevails in the administrative review of the proposed termination, the State agency must pay any claims for reimbursement for eligible meals served and allowable administrative costs incurred during the suspension period.

(ii) **False or fraudulent claims —**

- (A) **General.** If the State agency determines that an institution has knowingly submitted a false or fraudulent claim, the State agency *may* initiate action to suspend the institution's participation and must *initiate* action to terminate the institution's agreement and initiate action to disqualify the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals (in accordance with paragraph (c)(3) of this section). The submission of a false or fraudulent claim constitutes a serious deficiency as set forth in paragraph (c)(3)(ii) of this section, which lists serious deficiencies for participating institutions. If the State agency wishes to suspend the institution's participation, it must use the following procedures to issue the notice of proposed suspension of participation *at the same time* it issues the serious deficiency notice, which must include the information described in paragraph (c)(3)(iii)(A) of this section.
- (B) **Proposed suspension of participation.** If the State agency decides to propose to suspend an institution's participation due to the institution's submission of a false or fraudulent claim, it must notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors that the State agency intends to suspend the institution's participation (including all Program payments) unless the institution requests a review of the proposed suspension. At the same time the notice is issued, the State agency must also update the State agency list and provide a copy of the notice to the appropriate FNSRO. The notice must identify the responsible principals and responsible individuals and must be sent to those persons as well. The notice must also specify:
- (1) That the State agency is proposing to suspend the institution's participation;
 - (2) That the proposed suspension is based on the institution's submission of a false or fraudulent claim, as described in the serious deficiency notice;
 - (3) The effective date of the suspension (which may be no earlier than 10 days after the institution receives the suspension notice);
 - (4) The name, address and telephone number of the suspension review official who will conduct the suspension review; and
 - (5) That if the institution wishes to have a suspension review, it must request a review and submit to the suspension review official written documentation opposing the proposed suspension within 10 days of the institution's receipt of the notice.
- (C) **Suspension review.** If the institution requests a review of the State agency's proposed suspension of participation, the suspension review must be heard by a suspension review official who must:
- (1) Be an independent and impartial person other than, and not accountable to, any person involved in the decision to initiate suspension proceedings;
 - (2) Immediately notify the State agency that the institution has contested the proposed suspension and must obtain from the State agency its notice of proposed suspension of participation, along with all supporting documentation; and
 - (3) Render a decision on suspension of participation within 10 days of the deadline for receiving the institution's documentation opposing the proposed suspension.

- (D) ***Suspension review decision.*** If the suspension review official determines that the State agency's proposed suspension is not appropriate, the State agency is prohibited from suspending participation. If the suspension review official determines, based on a preponderance of the evidence, that the State agency's action was appropriate, the State agency must suspend the institution's participation (including all Program payments), effective on the date of the suspension review decision. The State agency must notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals, that the institution's participation has been suspended. At the same time the notice is issued, the State agency must also update the State agency list and provide a copy of the notice to the appropriate FNSRO. The notice must also specify:
- (1) That the State agency is suspending the institution's participation (including Program payments);
 - (2) The effective date of the suspension (the date of the suspension review decision);
 - (3) The procedures for seeking an administrative review (in accordance with paragraph (k) of this section) of the suspension; and
 - (4) That if the administrative review official overturns the suspension, the institution may claim reimbursement for eligible meals served and allowable administrative costs incurred during the suspension period.
- (E) ***Program payments.*** A State agency is prohibited from paying any claims for reimbursement submitted by a suspended institution. However, if the institution suspended for the submission of false or fraudulent claims is a sponsoring organization, the State agency must ensure that sponsored facilities continue to receive reimbursement for eligible meals served during the suspension period. If the suspended institution prevails in the administrative review of the proposed termination, the State agency must pay any valid unpaid claims for reimbursement for eligible meals served and allowable administrative costs incurred during the suspension period.
- (F) ***Maximum time for suspension.*** Under no circumstances may the suspension of participation remain in effect for more than 120 days following the suspension review decision.

(6) ***FNS determination of serious deficiency –***

- (i) ***General.*** FNS may determine independently that a participating institution has committed one or more serious deficiency listed in paragraph (c)(3)(ii) of this section, which lists serious deficiencies for participating institutions.
- (ii) ***Serious deficiency notification procedures.*** If FNS determines that an institution has committed one or more serious deficiency listed in paragraph (c)(3)(ii) of this section (the list of serious deficiencies for participating institutions), FNS will use the following procedures to provide the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals with notice of the serious deficiency(ies) and an opportunity to take corrective action.
 - (A) ***Notice of serious deficiency.*** FNS will notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors that the institution has been found to be seriously deficient. The notice will identify the responsible principals and responsible individuals

and will be sent to them as well. FNS may specify in the notice different corrective action and time periods for completing the corrective action, for the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals. The notice will also specify:

- (1) The serious deficiency(ies);
 - (2) The actions to be taken to correct the serious deficiency(ies);
 - (3) The time allotted to correct the serious deficiency(ies) in accordance with paragraph (c)(4) of this section;
 - (4) That failure to fully and permanently correct the serious deficiency(ies) within the allotted time, or the institution's voluntary termination of its agreement(s) with any State agency after having been notified that it is seriously deficient, will result in the proposed disqualification of the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals and the termination of its agreement(s) with all State agencies; and
 - (5) That the serious deficiency determination is not subject to administrative review.
- (B) ***Suspension of participation.*** If FNS determines that there is an imminent threat to the health or safety of participants at an institution, or that the institution has engaged in activities that threaten the public health or safety, any State agency that holds an agreement with the institution must suspend the participation of the institution. If FNS determines that the institution has submitted a false or fraudulent claim, it may require any State agency that holds an agreement with the institution to initiate action to suspend the institution's participation for false or fraudulent claims in accordance with paragraph (c)(5)(ii) of this section (which deals with an institution's suspension by a State agency for submission of false or fraudulent claims). In both cases, FNS will provide the State agency the information necessary to support these actions and, in the case of a false and fraudulent claim, will provide an individual to serve as the suspension review official if requested by the State agency.
- (C) ***Successful corrective action.***
- (1) If corrective action has been taken to fully and permanently correct the serious deficiency(ies) within the allotted time and to FNS's satisfaction, FNS will notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals, that it has temporarily defer its serious deficiency determination; and
 - (2) If corrective action is complete for the institution but not for all of the responsible principals and responsible individuals (or vice versa), FNS will continue with the actions (as set forth in paragraph (c)(6)(ii)(D) of this section) against the remaining parties.
 - (3) If FNS initially determines that the institution's corrective action is complete, but later determines that the serious deficiency(ies) has recurred, FNS will move immediately to issue a notice of intent to terminate and disqualify the institution, in accordance with paragraph (c)(6)(ii)(D) of this section.

- (D) **Proposed disqualification.** If timely corrective action is not taken to fully and permanently correct the serious deficiency(ies), FNS will notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals, that FNS is proposing to disqualify them. The notice will also specify:
- (1) That FNS is proposing to disqualify the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals;
 - (2) The basis for the actions;
 - (3) That, if the institution seeks to voluntarily terminate its agreement after receiving the notice of proposed disqualification, the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals will be disqualified;
 - (4) The procedures for seeking an administrative review (in accordance with paragraph (k) of this section) of the proposed disqualifications;
 - (5) That unless participation has been suspended, the institution may continue to participate and receive Program reimbursement for eligible meals served and allowable administrative costs incurred until its administrative review is completed; and
 - (6) That if the institution does not prevail in the administrative review, any State agency holding an agreement with the institution will be required to terminate that agreement and the institution is prohibited from seeking an administrative review of the termination of the agreement by the State agency(ies).
- (E) **Disqualification.** When the time for requesting an administrative review expires or when the administrative review official upholds FNS's proposed disqualifications, FNS will notify the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals, that the institution and the responsible principal or responsible individual have been disqualified.
- (F) **Program payments.** If the State agency holds an agreement with an institution that FNS has determined to be seriously deficient, the State agency must continue to pay any valid unpaid claims for reimbursement for eligible meals served and allowable administrative expenses incurred until the serious deficiency(ies) is corrected or the State agency terminates the institution's agreement, including the period of any administrative review, unless participation has been suspended.
- (G) **Required State agency action.**
- (1) **Disqualified institutions.** If the State agency holds an agreement with an institution that FNS determines to be seriously deficient and subsequently disqualifies, the State agency must terminate the institution's agreement effective no later than 45 days after the date of the institution's disqualification by FNS. As noted in paragraph (k)(3)(iv) of this section, the termination is not subject to administrative review. At the same time the notice of termination is issued, the State agency must add the institution to the State agency list and provide a copy of the notice to the appropriate FNSRO.

- (2) **Disqualified principals.** If the State agency holds an agreement with an institution whose principal FNS determines to be seriously deficient and subsequently disqualifies, the State agency must determine the institution to be seriously deficient and initiate action to terminate and disqualify the institution in accordance with the procedures in paragraph (c)(3) of this section. The State agency must initiate these actions no later than 45 days after the date of the principal's disqualification by FNS.

(7) **National disqualified list –**

- (i) **Maintenance and availability of list.** FNS will maintain the National disqualified list and make it available to all State agencies and all sponsoring organizations.
- (ii) **Effect on institutions.** No organization on the National disqualified list may participate in the Program as an institution. As noted in paragraphs (b)(1)(xii) and (b)(2)(ii) of this section, the State agency must not approve the application of a new or renewing institution if the institution is on the National disqualified list. In addition, as noted in paragraphs (c)(3)(i) and (c)(6)(ii)(G)(1) of this section, the State agency must terminate the agreement of any participating institution that is disqualified by another State agency or by FNS.
- (iii) **Effect on sponsored centers.** No organization on the National disqualified list may participate in the Program as a sponsored center. As noted in § 226.16(b) and paragraphs (b)(1)(xii) and (b)(2)(ii) of this section, a sponsoring organization is prohibited from submitting an application on behalf of a sponsored facility (and a State agency is prohibited from approving such an application) if the facility is on the National disqualified list.
- (iv) **Effect on individuals.** No individual on the National disqualified list may serve as a principal in any institution or facility or as a day care home provider.
 - (A) **Principal for an institution or a sponsored facility.** As noted in paragraphs (b)(1)(xii) and (b)(2)(ii) of this section, the State agency must not approve the application of a new or renewing institution if any of the institution's principals is on the National disqualified list. As noted in paragraphs (c)(3)(ii)(B) and (c)(6)(ii)(G)(2) of this section, the State agency must declare an institution seriously deficient and initiate action to terminate the institution's agreement and disqualify the institution if the institution permits an individual who is on the National disqualified list to serve in a principal capacity for the institution or one of its facilities.
 - (B) **Principal for a sponsored facility.** As noted in § 226.16(b) and paragraphs (b)(1)(xii) and (b)(2)(ii) of this section, a sponsoring organization is prohibited from submitting an application on behalf of a sponsored facility (or a State agency from approving such an application) if any of the facility's principals are on the National disqualified list.
 - (C) **Serving as a day care home.** As noted in § 226.16(b) and paragraphs (b)(1)(xii) and (b)(2)(ii) of this section, a sponsoring organization is prohibited from submitting an application on behalf of a sponsored facility (and a State agency is prohibited from approving such an application) if the facility is on the National disqualified list.
- (v) **Removal of institutions, principals, and individuals from the list.** Once included on the National disqualified list, an institution and responsible principals and responsible individuals remain on the list until such time as FNS, in consultation with the appropriate State agency, determines that the serious deficiency(ies) that led to their placement on the list has(ve) been corrected, or

until seven years have elapsed since they were disqualified from participation. However, if the institution, principal or individual has failed to repay debts owed under the Program, they will remain on the list until the debt has been repaid.

- (vi) **Removal of day care homes from the list.** Once included on the National disqualified list, a day care home will remain on the list until such time as the State agency determines that the serious deficiency(ies) that led to its placement on the list has(ve) been corrected, or until seven years have elapsed since its agreement was terminated for cause. However, if the day care home has failed to repay debts owed under the Program, it will remain on the list until the debt has been repaid.

(8) **State agency list –**

- (i) **Maintenance of the State agency list.** The State agency must maintain a State agency list (in the form of an actual paper or electronic list or retrievable paper records). The list must be made available to FNS upon request, and must include the following information:

- (A) Institutions determined to be seriously deficient by the State agency, including the names and mailing addresses of the institutions and the status of the institutions as they move through the possible subsequent stages of corrective action, proposed termination, suspension, agreement termination, and/or disqualification, as applicable;
- (B) Responsible principals and individuals who have been disqualified from participation by the State agency, including their names, mailing addresses, and dates of birth; and
- (C) Day care home providers whose agreements have been terminated for cause by a sponsoring organization in the State, including their names, mailing addresses, and dates of birth.

- (ii) **Referral of disqualified day care homes to FNS.** Within 10 days of receiving a notice of termination and disqualification from a sponsoring organization, the State agency must provide the appropriate FNSRO the name, mailing address, and date of birth of each day care home provider whose agreement is terminated for cause on or after July 29, 2002.

- (iii) **Prior lists of disqualified day care homes.** If on July 29, 2002 the State agency maintains a list of day care homes that have been disqualified from participation, the State agency may continue to prohibit participation by those day care homes. However, the State agency must remove a day care home from its prior list no later than the time at which the State agency determines that the serious deficiency(ies) that led to the day care home's placement on the list has(ve) been corrected or July 29, 2009 (unless the day care home has failed to repay debts owed under the Program). If the day care home has failed to repay its debt, the State agency may keep the day care home on its prior list until the debt has been repaid.

- (d) **Licensing/approval for institutions or facilities providing child care.** This section prescribes State agency responsibilities to ensure that child care centers, at-risk afterschool care centers, outside-school-hours care centers, and day care homes meet the licensing/approval criteria set forth in this part. Emergency shelters are exempt from licensing/approval requirements contained in this section but must meet the requirements of paragraph (d)(2) to be eligible to participate in the Program. Independent centers shall submit such documentation to the State agency on their own behalf.

- (1) **General.** Each State agency must establish procedures to annually review information submitted by institutions to ensure that all participating child care centers, at-risk afterschool care centers, outside-school hours care centers, and day care homes:
 - (i) Are licensed or approved by Federal, State, or local authorities, provided that institutions that are approved for Federal programs on the basis of State or local licensing are not eligible for the Program if their licenses lapse or are terminated; or
 - (ii) Are complying with applicable procedures to renew licensing or approval in situations where the State agency has no information that licensing or approval will be denied; or
 - (iii) Demonstrate compliance with applicable State or local child care standards to the State agency, if licensing is not available; or
 - (iv) Demonstrate compliance with CACFP child care standards to the State agency, if licensing or approval is not available; or
 - (v) If Federal, State or local licensing or approval is not otherwise required, at-risk afterschool care centers and outside-school-hours care centers must meet State or local health and safety standards. When State or local health and safety standards have not been established, State agencies are encouraged to work with appropriate State and local officials to create such standards. Meeting these standards will remain a precondition for any afterschool center's eligibility for CACFP nutrition benefits.
- (2) **Health and safety requirements for emergency shelters.** To be eligible to participate in the Program, emergency shelters must meet applicable State or local health and safety standards.
- (3) **CACFP child care standards.** When licensing or approval is not available, independent child care centers, and sponsoring organizations on behalf of their child care centers or day care homes, may elect to demonstrate compliance, annually, with the following CACFP child care standards or other standards specified in paragraph (d)(4) of this section:
 - (i) **Staff/child ratios.**
 - (A) Day care homes provide care for no more than 12 children at any one time. One home caregiver is responsible for no more than 6 children ages 3 and above, or no more than 5 children ages 0 and above. No more than 2 children under the age of 3 are in the care of 1 caregiver. The home provider's own children who are in care and under the age of 14 are counted in the maximum ratios of caregivers to children.
 - (B) Child care centers do not fall below the following staff/child ratios:
 - (1) For children under 6 weeks of age—1:1;
 - (2) For children ages 6 weeks up to 3 years—1:4;
 - (3) For children ages 3 years up to 6 years—1:6;
 - (4) For children ages 6 years up to 10 years—1:15; and
 - (5) For children ages 10 and above—1:20.
 - (ii) **Nondiscrimination.** Day care services are available without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or handicap.
 - (iii) **Safety and sanitation.**

- (A) A current health/sanitation permit or satisfactory report of an inspection conducted by local authorities within the past 12 months shall be submitted.
- (B) A current fire/building safety permit or satisfactory report of an inspection conducted by local authorities within the past 12 months shall be submitted.
- (C) Fire drills are held in accordance with local fire/building safety requirements.
- (iv) **Suitability of facilities.**
 - (A) Ventilation, temperature, and lighting are adequate for children's safety and comfort.
 - (B) Floors and walls are cleaned and maintained in a condition safe for children.
 - (C) Space and equipment, including rest arrangements for preschool age children, are adequate for the number of age ranges of participating children.
- (v) **Social services.** Independent centers, and sponsoring organizations in coordination with their facilities, have procedures for referring families of children in care to appropriate local health and social service agencies.
- (vi) **Health services.**
 - (A) Each child is observed daily for indications of difficulties in social adjustment, illness, neglect, and abuse, and appropriate action is initiated.
 - (B) A procedure is established to ensure prompt notification of the parent or guardian in the event of a child's illness or injury, and to ensure prompt medical treatment in case of emergency.
 - (C) Health records, including records of medical examinations and immunizations, are maintained for each enrolled child. (Not applicable to day care homes.)
 - (D) At least one full-time staff member is currently qualified in first aid, including artificial respiration techniques. (Not applicable to day care homes.)
 - (E) First aid supplies are available.
 - (F) Staff members undergo initial and periodic health assessments.
- (vii) **Staff training.** The institution provides for orientation and ongoing training in child care for all caregivers.
- (viii) **Parental involvement.** Parents are afforded the opportunity to observe their children in day care.
- (ix) **Self-evaluation.** The institution has established a procedure for periodic self-evaluation on the basis of CACFP child care standards.
- (4) **Alternate approval procedures.** Each State agency shall establish procedures to review information submitted by institutions for centers or homes for which licensing or approval is not available in order to establish eligibility for the Program. Licensing or approval is not available when
 - (i) no Federal, State, or local licensing/approval standards have been established for child care centers, or day care homes; or

- (ii) no mechanism exists to determine compliance with licensing/approval standards. In these situations, independent centers, and sponsoring organizations on behalf of their facilities, may choose to demonstrate compliance with either CACFP child care standards, applicable State child care standards, or applicable local child care standards. State agencies shall provide information about applicable State child care standards and CACFP child care standards to institutions, but may require institutions electing to demonstrate compliance with applicable local child care standards to identify and submit these standards. The State agency may permit independent centers, and sponsoring organizations on behalf of their facilities, to submit self-certification forms, and may grant approval without first conducting a compliance review at the center or facility. But the State agency shall require submission of health/sanitation and fire/safety permits or certificates for all independent centers and facilities seeking alternate child care standards approval. Compliance with applicable child care standards are subject to review in accordance with § 226.6(o).

(e) **Licensing/approval for adult day care centers.** This paragraph prescribes State agency responsibilities to ensure that adult day care centers meet the licensing/approval criteria set forth in this part. Sponsoring organizations shall submit to the State agency documentation that facilities under their jurisdiction are in compliance with licensing/approval requirements. Independent adult day care centers shall submit such documentation to the State agency on their own behalf. Each State agency shall establish procedures to annually review information submitted by institutions to ensure that all participating adult day care centers either:

- (1) Are licensed or approved by Federal, State or local authorities, provided that institutions which are approved for Federal programs on the basis of State or local licensing shall not be eligible for the Program if their licenses lapse or are terminated; or
- (2) Are complying with applicable procedures to renew licensing or approval in situations where the State agency has no information that licensing or approval will be denied.

(f) **Miscellaneous responsibilities.** State agencies must require institutions to comply with the applicable provisions of this part and must provide or collect the information specified in this paragraph (f).

- (1) **Annual responsibilities.** In addition to its other responsibilities under this part, each State agency must annually:
 - (i) Inform institutions that are pricing programs of their responsibility to ensure that free and reduced-price meals are served to participants unable to pay the full price;
 - (ii) Provide to all institutions a copy of the income standards to be used by institutions for determining the eligibility of participants for free and reduced-price meals under the Program;
 - (iii) Require centers to submit current eligibility information on enrolled participants, in order to calculate a blended rate or claiming percentage in accordance with § 226.9(b);
 - (iv) Require each sponsoring organization to submit an administrative budget with sufficiently detailed information concerning projected CACFP administrative earnings and expenses, as well as other non-Program funds to be used in Program administration, for the State agency to determine the allowability, necessity, and reasonableness of all proposed expenditures, and to assess the sponsoring organization's capability to manage Program funds. The administrative budget must demonstrate that the sponsoring organization will expend and account for funds in accordance with regulatory requirements, FNS Instruction 796-2 (*Financial Management—Child and Adult Care Food Program*), 2 CFR part 200, subpart D, and USDA

implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415, and applicable Office of Management and Budget circulars. The administrative budget submitted by a sponsoring organization of centers must demonstrate that the administrative costs to be charged to the Program do not exceed 15 percent of the meal reimbursements estimated or actually earned during the budget year, unless the State agency grants a waiver, as described in § 226.7(g). For sponsoring organizations of day care homes seeking to carry over administrative funds, as described in § 226.12(a)(3), the budget must include an estimate of requested administrative fund carryover amounts and a description of proposed purpose for which those funds would be obligated or expended.

- (v) Require each institution to issue a media release, unless the State agency has issued a Statewide media release on behalf of all its institutions;
- (vi) Require each independent center to provide information concerning its licensing/approval status, and require each sponsoring organization to provide information concerning the licensing/approval status of its facilities, unless the State agency has other means of confirming the licensing/approval status of any independent center or facility providing care;
- (vii) Require each sponsoring organization to submit verification that all facilities under its sponsorship have adhered to the training requirements set forth in Program regulations; and
- (viii) Comply with the following requirements for tiering of day care homes:
 - (A) Coordinate with the State agency that administers the National School Lunch Program (the NSLP State agency) to ensure the receipt of a list of schools in the State in which at least one-half of the children enrolled are certified eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals. The State agency must provide the list of schools to sponsoring organizations of day care homes by February 15 each year unless the NSLP State agency has elected to base data for the list on a month other than October. In that case, the State agency must provide the list to sponsoring organizations of day care homes within 15 calendar days of its receipt from the NSLP State agency.
 - (B) For tiering determinations of day care homes that are based on school or census data, the State agency must ensure that sponsoring organizations of day care homes use the most recent available data, as described in § 226.15(f).
 - (C) For tiering determinations of day care homes that are based on the provider's household income, the State agency must ensure that sponsoring organizations annually determine the eligibility of each day care home, as described in § 226.15(f).
 - (D) The State agency must provide all sponsoring organizations of day care homes in the State with a listing of State-funded programs, participation in which by a parent or child will qualify a meal served to a child in a tier II home for the tier I rate of reimbursement.
 - (E) The State agency must require each sponsoring organization of family day care homes to submit to the State agency a list of family day care home providers receiving tier I benefits on the basis of their participation in the SNAP. Within 30 days of receiving this list, the State agency will provide this list to the State agency responsible for the administration of the SNAP.
- (ix) Comply with the following requirements for determining the eligibility of at-risk afterschool care centers:

- (A) Coordinate with the NSLP State agency to ensure the receipt of a list of schools in the State in which at least one-half of the children enrolled are certified eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals. The State agency must provide the list of schools to independent at-risk afterschool care centers and sponsoring organizations of at-risk afterschool care centers upon request. The list must represent data from the preceding October, unless the NSLP State agency has elected to base data for the list on a month other than October. If the NSLP State agency chooses a month other than October, it must do so for the entire State.
- (B) The State agency must determine the area eligibility for each independent at-risk afterschool care center. The State agency must use the most recent data available, as described in § 226.6(f)(1)(ix)(A). The State agency must use attendance area information that it has obtained, or verified with the appropriate school officials to be current, within the last school year.
- (C) The State agency must determine the area eligibility of each sponsored at-risk afterschool care center based on the documentation submitted by the sponsoring organization in accordance with § 226.15(g).
- (D) The State agency must determine whether the afterschool care programs of at-risk afterschool care centers meet the requirements of § 226.17a(b) before the centers begin participating in the Program.

(2) ***Responsibilities at other time intervals –***

- (i) ***Day care home tiering redeterminations based on school data.*** As described in § 226.15(f), tiering determinations are valid for five years if based on school data. The State agency must ensure that the most recent available data is used if the determination of a day care home's eligibility as a tier I day care home is made using school data. The State agency must not routinely require annual redeterminations of the tiering status of tier I day care homes based on updated school data. However, a sponsoring organization, the State agency, or FNS may change the determination if information becomes available indicating that a day care home is no longer in a qualified area.
- (ii) ***Area eligibility redeterminations for at-risk afterschool care centers.*** Area eligibility determinations are valid for five years for at-risk afterschool care centers that are already participating in the Program. The State agency may determine the date in the fifth year when the next five-year cycle of area eligibility will begin. The State agency must redetermine the area eligibility for each independent at-risk afterschool care center in accordance with § 226.6(f)(1)(ix)(B). The State agency must redetermine the area eligibility of each sponsored at-risk afterschool care center based on the documentation submitted by the sponsoring organization in accordance with § 226.15(g). The State agency must not routinely require annual redeterminations of area eligibility based on updated school data during the five-year period, except in cases where the State agency has determined it is most efficient to incorporate area eligibility decisions into the three-year application cycle. However, a sponsoring organization, the State agency, or FNS may change the determination if information becomes available indicating that an at-risk afterschool care center is no longer area eligible.

- (iii) **State agency transmittal of census data.** Upon receipt of census data from FNS (on a decennial basis), the State agency must provide each sponsoring organization of day care homes with census data showing areas in the State in which at least 50 percent of the children are from households meeting the income standards for free or reduced-price meals.
- (iv) **Additional institution requirements.** At intervals and in a manner specified by the State agency, but not more frequently than annually, the State agency may:
 - (A) Require independent centers to submit a budget with sufficiently detailed information and documentation to enable the State agency to make an assessment of the independent center's qualifications to manage Program funds. Such budget must demonstrate that the independent center will expend and account for funds in accordance with regulatory requirements, FNS Instruction 796-2 ("Financial Management in the Child and Adult Care Food Program"), and 2 CFR part 200, subpart D and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415 and applicable Office of Management and Budget circulars;
 - (B) Request institutions to report their commodity preference;
 - (C) Require a private nonprofit institution to submit evidence of tax exempt status in accordance with § 226.15(a);
 - (D) Require for-profit institutions to submit documentation on behalf of their centers of:
 - (1) Eligibility of at least 25 percent of children in care (enrolled or licensed capacity, whichever is less) for free or reduced-price meals; or
 - (2) Compensation received under title XX of the Social Security Act of nonresidential day care services and certification that at least 25 percent of children in care (enrolled or licensed capacity, whichever is less) were title XX beneficiaries during the most recent calendar month.
 - (E) Require for-profit adult care centers to submit documentation that they are currently providing nonresidential day care services for which they receive compensation under title XIX or title XX of the Social Security Act, and certification that not less than 25 percent of enrolled participants in each such center during the most recent calendar month were title XIX or title XX beneficiaries;
 - (F) Request each institution to indicate its choice to receive all, part or none of advance payments, if the State agency chooses to make advance payments available; and
 - (G) Perform verification in accordance with § 226.23(h) and paragraph (m)(4) of this section. State agencies verifying the information on free and reduced-price applications must ensure that verification activities are conducted without regard to the participant's race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.
- (g) **Program expansion.** Each State agency must take action to expand the availability of benefits under this Program, and must conduct outreach to potential sponsoring organizations of family day care homes that might administer the Program in low-income or rural areas.
- (h) **Commodity distribution.** The State agency must require new institutions to state their preference to receive commodities or cash-in-lieu of commodities when they apply, and may periodically inquire as to participating institutions' preference to receive commodities or cash-in-lieu of commodities. State agencies must annually provide institutions with information on foods available in plentiful supply, based

on information provided by the Department. Each institution electing cash-in-lieu of commodities shall receive such payments. Each institution which elects to receive commodities shall have commodities provided to it unless the State agency, after consultation with the State commodity distribution agency, demonstrates to FNS that distribution of commodities to the number of such institutions would be impracticable. The State agency may then, with the concurrence of FNS, provide cash-in-lieu of commodities for all institutions. A State agency request for cash-in-lieu of all commodities shall be submitted to FNS not later than May 1 of the school year preceding the school year for which the request is made. The State agency shall, by June 1 of each year, submit a list of institutions which have elected to receive commodities to the State commodity distribution agency, unless FNS has approved a request for cash-in-lieu of commodities for all institutions. The list shall be accompanied by information on the average daily number of lunches and suppers to be served to participants by each such institution.

- (i) **Standard contract.** Each State agency shall develop a standard contract in accordance with § 226.21 and provide for its use between institutions and food service management companies. The contract shall expressly and without exception stipulate:
 - (1) The institution shall provide the food service management company with a list of the State agency approved child care centers, day care homes, adult day care centers, and outside-school-hours care centers to be furnished meals by the food service management company, and the number of meals, by type, to be delivered to each location;
 - (2) The food service management company shall maintain such records (supported by invoices, receipts or other evidence) as the institution will need to meet its responsibilities under this part, and shall promptly submit invoices and delivery reports to the institution no less frequently than monthly;
 - (3) The food service management company shall have Federal, State or local health certification for the plant in which it proposes to prepare meals for use in the Program, and it shall ensure that health and sanitation requirements are met at all times. In addition, the State agency may require the food service management company to provide for meals which it prepares to be periodically inspected by the local health department or an independent agency to determine bacteria levels in the meals being prepared. These bacteria levels shall conform to the standards which are applied by the local health authority with respect to the level of bacteria which may be present in meals prepared or served by other establishments in the locality. Results of these inspections shall be submitted to the institution and to the State agency;
 - (4) The meals served under the contract shall conform to the cycle menus upon which the bid was based, and to menu changes agreed upon by the institution and food service management company;
 - (5) The books and records of the food service management company pertaining to the institution's food service operation shall be available for inspection and audit by representatives of the State agency, of the Department, and of the U.S. General Accounting Office at any reasonable time and place, for a period of 3 years from the date of receipt of final payment under the contract, or in cases where an audit requested by the State agency or the Department remains unresolved, until such time as the audit is resolved;
 - (6) The food service management company shall operate in accordance with current Program regulations;
 - (7) The food service management company shall not be paid for meals which are delivered outside of the agreed upon delivery time, are spoiled or unwholesome at the time of delivery, or do not otherwise meet the meal requirements contained in the contract;

- (8) Meals shall be delivered in accordance with a delivery schedule prescribed in the contract;
 - (9) Increases and decreases in the number of meal orders may be made by the institution, as needed, within a prior notice period mutually agreed upon in the contract;
 - (10) All meals served under the Program shall meet the requirements of § 226.20;
 - (11) All breakfasts, lunches, and suppers delivered for service in outside-school-hours care centers shall be unitized, with or without milk, unless the State agency determines that unitization would impair the effectiveness of food service operations. For meals delivered to child care centers and day care homes, the State agency may require unitization, with or without milk, of all breakfasts, lunches, and suppers only if the State agency has evidence which indicates that this requirement is necessary to ensure compliance with § 226.20.
- (j) **Procurement provisions.** State agencies must require institutions to adhere to the procurement provisions set forth in § 226.22 and must determine that all meal procurements with food service management companies are in conformance with bid and contractual requirements of § 226.22.
- (k) **Administrative reviews for institutions and responsible principals and responsible individuals –**
- (1) **General.** The State agency must develop procedures for offering administrative reviews to institutions and responsible principals and responsible individuals. The procedures must be consistent with paragraph (k) of this section.
 - (2) **Actions subject to administrative review.** Except as provided in § 226.8(g), the State agency must offer an administrative review for the following actions:
 - (i) **Application denial.** Denial of a new or renewing institution's application for participation (see paragraph (b) of this section, on State agency review of an institution's application; and paragraphs (c)(1) and (c)(2) of this section, on State agency denial of a new or renewing institution's application);
 - (ii) **Denial of sponsored facility application.** Denial of an application submitted by a sponsoring organization on behalf of a facility;
 - (iii) **Notice of proposed termination.** Proposed termination of an institution's agreement (see paragraphs (c)(2)(iii)(C), (c)(3)(iii)(C), and (c)(5)(i)(B) of this section, dealing with proposed termination of agreements with renewing institutions, participating institutions, and participating institutions suspended for health or safety violations);
 - (iv) **Notice of proposed disqualification of a responsible principal or responsible individual.** Proposed disqualification of a responsible principal or responsible individual (see paragraphs (c)(1)(iii)(C), (c)(2)(iii)(C), (c)(3)(iii)(C), and (c)(5)(i)(B) of this section, dealing with proposed disqualification of responsible principals or responsible individuals in new, renewing, and participating institutions, and participating institutions suspended for health or safety violations);
 - (v) **Suspension of participation.** Suspension of an institution's participation (see paragraphs (c)(5)(i)(B) and (c)(5)(ii)(D) of this section, dealing with suspension for health or safety reasons or submission of a false or fraudulent claim);
 - (vi) **Start-up or expansion funds denial.** Denial of an institution's application for start-up or expansion payments (see § 226.7(h));

- (vii) **Advance denial.** Denial of a request for an advance payment (see § 226.10(b));
 - (viii) **Recovery of advances.** Recovery of all or part of an advance in excess of the claim for the applicable period. The recovery may be through a demand for full repayment or an adjustment of subsequent payments (see § 226.10(b)(3));
 - (ix) **Claim denial.** Denial of all or a part of an institution's claim for reimbursement (except for a denial based on a late submission under § 226.10(e)) (see §§ 226.10(f) and 226.14(a));
 - (x) **Claim deadline exceptions and requests for upward adjustments to a claim.** Decision by the State agency not to forward to FNS an exception request by an institution for payment of a late claim, or a request for an upward adjustment to a claim (see § 226.10(e));
 - (xi) **Overpayment demand.** Demand for the remittance of an overpayment (see § 226.14(a)); and
 - (xii) **Other actions.** Any other action of the State agency affecting an institution's participation or its claim for reimbursement.
- (3) **Actions not subject to administrative review.** The State agency is prohibited from offering administrative reviews of the following actions:
- (i) **FNS decisions on claim deadline exceptions and requests for upward adjustments to a claim.** A decision by FNS to deny an exception request by an institution for payment of a late claim, or for an upward adjustment to a claim (see § 226.10(e));
 - (ii) **Determination of serious deficiency.** A determination that an institution is seriously deficient (see paragraphs (c)(1)(iii)(A), (c)(2)(iii)(A), (c)(3)(iii)(A), and (c)(5)(i)(B) of this section, dealing with proposed disqualification of responsible principals or responsible individuals in new, renewing, and participating institutions, and participating institutions suspended for health or safety violations);
 - (iii) **State agency determination that corrective action is inadequate.** A determination by the State agency that the corrective action taken by an institution or by a responsible principal or individual does not completely and permanently correct a serious deficiency;
 - (iv) **Disqualification and placement on State agency list and National disqualified list.** Disqualification of an institution or a responsible principal or responsible individual, and the subsequent placement on the State agency list and the National disqualified list (see paragraphs (c)(1)(iii)(E), (c)(2)(iii)(E), (c)(3)(iii)(E), and (c)(5)(i)(C) of this section, dealing with proposals to disqualify related to new, renewing, and participating institutions, and in institutions suspended for health or safety violations);
 - (v) **Termination.** Termination of a participating institution's agreement, including termination of a participating institution's agreement based on the disqualification of the institution by another State agency or FNS (see paragraphs (c)(3)(i) and (c)(7)(ii) of this section);
 - (vi) **State agency or FNS decision regarding removal from the National disqualified list.** A determination, by either the State agency or by FNS, that the corrective action taken by an institution or a responsible principal or individual is not adequate to warrant the removal of the institution or the responsible principal or individual from the National disqualified list; or

- (vii) **State agency's refusal to consider an application submitted by an institution or facility on the National disqualified list.** The State agency's refusal to consider an institution's application when either the institution or one of its principals is on the National disqualified list, or the State agency's refusal to consider an institution's submission of an application on behalf of a facility when either the facility or one of its principals is on the National disqualified list.
- (4) **Provision of administrative review procedures to institutions and responsible principals and responsible individuals.** The State agency's administrative review procedures must be provided:
 - (i) Annually to all institutions;
 - (ii) To an institution and to each responsible principal and responsible individual when the State agency takes any action subject to an administrative review as described in paragraph (k)(2) of this section; and
 - (iii) Any other time upon request.
- (5) **Procedures.** Except as described in paragraph (k)(9) of this section, which sets forth the circumstances under which an abbreviated administrative review is held, the State agency must follow the procedures in this paragraph (k)(5) when an institution or a responsible principal or responsible individual appeals any action subject to administrative review as described in paragraph (k)(2) of this section.
 - (i) **Notice of action.** The institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals, must be given notice of the action being taken or proposed, the basis for the action, and the procedures under which the institution and the responsible principals or responsible individuals may request an administrative review of the action.
 - (ii) **Time to request administrative review.** The request for administrative review must be submitted in writing not later than 15 days after the date the notice of action is received, and the State agency must acknowledge the receipt of the request for an administrative review within 10 days of its receipt of the request. The State agency must provide a copy of the written request for an administrative review, including the date of receipt of the request to FNS within 10 days of its receipt of the request.
 - (iii) **Representation.** The institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals may retain legal counsel, or may be represented by another person.
 - (iv) **Review of record.** Any information on which the State agency's action was based must be available to the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals for inspection from the date of receipt of the request for an administrative review.
 - (v) **Opposition.** The institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals may refute the findings contained in the notice of action in person or by submitting written documentation to the administrative review official. In order to be considered, written documentation must be submitted to the administrative review official not later than 30 days after receipt of the notice of action.
 - (vi) **Hearing.** A hearing must be held by the administrative review official in addition to, or in lieu of, a review of written information only if the institution or the responsible principals and responsible individuals request a hearing in the written request for an administrative review. If the institution's representative, or the responsible principals or responsible individuals or their

representative, fail to appear at a scheduled hearing, they waive the right to a personal appearance before the administrative review official, unless the administrative review official agrees to reschedule the hearing. A representative of the State agency must be allowed to attend the hearing to respond to the testimony of the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals and to answer questions posed by the administrative review official. If a hearing is requested, the institution, the responsible principals and responsible individuals, and the State agency must be provided with at least 10 days advance notice of the time and place of the hearing.

- (vii) **Administrative review official.** The administrative review official must be independent and impartial. This means that, although the administrative review official may be an employee of the State agency, he/she must not have been involved in the action that is the subject of the administrative review, or have a direct personal or financial interest in the outcome of the administrative review. The institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals must be permitted to contact the administrative review official directly if they so desire.
 - (viii) **Basis for decision.** The administrative review official must make a determination based solely on the information provided by the State agency, the institution, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals, and based on Federal and State laws, regulations, policies, and procedures governing the Program.
 - (ix) **Time for issuing a decision.** Within 60 days of the State agency's receipt of the request for an administrative review, the administrative review official must inform the State agency, the institution's executive director and chairman of the board of directors, and the responsible principals and responsible individuals, of the administrative review's outcome. This timeframe is an administrative requirement for the State agency and may not be used as a basis for overturning the State agency's action if a decision is not made within the specified timeframe. State agencies failing to meet the timeframe set forth in this paragraph are liable for all valid claims for reimbursement to aggrieved institutions, as specified in paragraph (k)(11)(i) of this section.
 - (x) **Final decision.** The determination made by the administrative review official is the final administrative determination to be afforded the institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals.
- (6) **Federal audit findings.** FNS may assert a claim against the State agency, in accordance with the procedures set forth in § 226.14(c), when an administrative review results in the dismissal of a claim against an institution asserted by the State agency based upon Federal audit findings.
 - (7) **Record of result of administrative reviews.** The State agency must maintain searchable records of all administrative reviews and their disposition.
 - (8) **Combined administrative reviews for responsible principals and responsible individuals.** The State agency must conduct the administrative review of the proposed disqualification of the responsible principals and responsible individuals as part of the administrative review of the application denial, proposed termination, and/or proposed disqualification of the institution with which the responsible principals or responsible individuals are associated. However, at the administrative review official's discretion, separate administrative reviews may be held if the institution does not request an administrative review or if either the institution or the responsible principal or responsible individual demonstrates that their interests conflict.

- (9) **Abbreviated administrative review.** The State agency must limit the administrative review to a review of written submissions concerning the accuracy of the State agency's determination if the application was denied or the State agency proposes to terminate the institution's agreement because:
- (i) The information submitted on the application was false (see paragraphs (c)(1)(ii)(A), (c)(2)(ii)(A), and (c)(3)(ii)(A) of this section);
 - (ii) The institution, one of its sponsored facilities, or one of the principals of the institution or its facilities is on the national disqualified list (see paragraph (b)(12) of this section);
 - (iii) The institution, one of its sponsored facilities, or one of the principals of the institution or its facilities is ineligible to participate in any other publicly funded program by reason of violation of the requirements of the program (see paragraph (b)(13) and (c)(3)(ii)(S) of this section); or
 - (iv) The institution, one of its sponsored facilities, or one of the principals of the institution or its facilities has been convicted for any activity that indicates a lack of business integrity (see paragraphs (b)(14) and (c)(3)(ii)(T) of this section).
- (10) **Effect of State agency action.** The State agency's action must remain in effect during the administrative review. The effect of this requirement on particular State agency actions is as follows.
- (i) **Overpayment demand.** During the period of the administrative review, the State agency is prohibited from taking action to collect or offset the overpayment. However, the State agency must assess interest beginning with the initial demand for remittance of the overpayment and continuing through the period of administrative review unless the administrative review official overturns the State agency's action.
 - (ii) **Recovery of advances.** During the administrative review, the State agency must continue its efforts to recover advances in excess of the claim for reimbursement for the applicable period. The recovery may be through a demand for full repayment or an adjustment of subsequent payments.
 - (iii) **Program payments.** The availability of Program payments during an administrative review of the denial of a new institution's application, denial of a renewing institution's application, proposed termination of a participating institution's agreement, and suspension of an institution are addressed in paragraphs (c)(1)(iii)(D), (c)(2)(iii)(D), (c)(3)(iii)(D), (c)(5)(i)(D), and (c)(5)(ii)(E), respectively, of this section.
- (11) **State liability for payments.**
- (i) A State agency that fails to meet the 60-day timeframe set forth in paragraph (k)(5)(ix) of this section must pay, from non-Federal sources, all valid claims for reimbursement to the institution during the period beginning on the 61st day and ending on the date on which the hearing determination is made, unless FNS determines that an exception should be granted.
 - (ii) FNS will notify the State agency of its liability for reimbursement at least 30 days before liability is imposed. The timeframe for written notice from FNS is an administrative requirement and may not be used to dispute the State's liability for reimbursement.

- (iii) The State agency may submit, for FNS review, information supporting a request for a reduction in the State's liability, a reconsideration of the State's liability, or an exception to the 60-day deadline, for exceptional circumstances. After review of this information, FNS will recover any improperly paid Federal funds.

(l) **Administrative reviews for day care homes** —

- (1) **General.** The State agency must ensure that, when a sponsoring organization proposes to terminate its Program agreement with a day care home for cause, the day care home is provided an opportunity for an administrative review of the proposed termination. The State agency may do this either by electing to offer a State-level administrative review, or by electing to require the sponsoring organization to offer an administrative review. The State agency must notify the appropriate FNSRO of its election under this option, or any change it later makes under this option, by September 25, 2002 or within 30 days of any subsequent change under this option. The State agency must make the same election with regard to who offers the administrative review to any day care home in the Program in that State. The State agency or the sponsoring organization must develop procedures for offering and providing these administrative reviews, and these procedures must be consistent with this paragraph (l).
- (2) **Actions subject to administrative review.** The State agency or sponsoring organization must offer an administrative review to a day care home that appeals a notice of intent to terminate their agreement for cause or a suspension of their participation (see §§ 226.16(l)(3)(iii) and (l)(4)(ii)).
- (3) **Actions not subject to administrative review.** Neither the State agency nor the sponsoring organization is required to offer an administrative review for reasons other than those listed in paragraph (l)(2) of this section.
- (4) **Provision of administrative review procedures to day care homes.** The administrative review procedures must be provided:
 - (i) Annually to all day care homes;
 - (ii) To a day care home when the sponsoring organization takes any action subject to an administrative review as described in paragraph (l)(2) of this section; and
 - (iii) Any other time upon request.
- (5) **Procedures.** The State agency or sponsoring organization, as applicable (depending on the State agency's election pursuant to paragraph (l)(1) of this section) must follow the procedures in this paragraph (l)(5) when a day care home requests an administrative review of any action described in paragraph (l)(2) of this section.
 - (i) **Uniformity.** The same procedures must apply to all day care homes.
 - (ii) **Representation.** The day care home may retain legal counsel, or may be represented by another person.
 - (iii) **Review of record and opposition.** The day care home may review the record on which the decision was based and refute the action in writing. The administrative review official is not required to hold a hearing.

- (iv) **Administrative review official.** The administrative review official must be independent and impartial. This means that, although the administrative review official may be an employee of the State agency or an employee or board member of the sponsoring organization, he/she must not have been involved in the action that is the subject of the administrative review or have a direct personal or financial interest in the outcome of the administrative review;
- (v) **Basis for decision.** The administrative review official must make a determination based on the information provided by the sponsoring organization and the day care home and on Federal and State laws, regulations, policies, and procedures governing the Program.
- (vi) **Time for issuing a decision.** The administrative review official must inform the sponsoring organization and the day care home of the administrative review's outcome within the period of time specified in the State agency's or sponsoring organization's administrative review procedures. This timeframe is an administrative requirement for the State agency or sponsoring organization and may not be used as a basis for overturning the termination if a decision is not made within the specified timeframe.
- (vii) **Final decision.** The determination made by the administrative review official is the final administrative determination to be afforded the day care home.

(m) **Program assistance —**

- (1) **General.** The State agency must provide technical and supervisory assistance to institutions and facilities to facilitate effective Program operations, monitor progress toward achieving Program goals, and ensure compliance with all requirements of title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, title IX of the Education amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Department's regulations concerning nondiscrimination (parts 15, 15a, and 15b of this title). The State agency must maintain documentation of supervisory assistance activities, including reviews conducted, corrective actions prescribed, and follow-up efforts.
- (2) **Review priorities.** In choosing institutions for review, in accordance with paragraph (m)(6) of this section, the State agency must target for more frequent review institutions whose prior review included a finding of serious deficiency.
- (3) **Review content.** As part of its conduct of reviews, the State agency must assess each institution's compliance with the requirements of this part pertaining to:
 - (i) Recordkeeping;
 - (ii) Meal counts;
 - (iii) Administrative costs;
 - (iv) Any applicable instructions and handbooks issued by FNS and the Department to clarify or explain this part, and any instructions and handbooks issued by the State agency which are not inconsistent with the provisions of this part;
 - (v) Facility licensing and approval;
 - (vi) Compliance with the requirements for annual updating of enrollment forms;
 - (vii) Compliance with the requirements for submitting and ensuring the accuracy of the annual renewal information;

- (viii) If an independent center, observation of a meal service;
 - (ix) If a sponsoring organization, training and monitoring of facilities, including the timing of reviews, as described in § 226.16(d)(4)(iii);
 - (x) If a sponsoring organization, implementation of the household contact system established by the State agency pursuant to paragraph (m)(5) of this section;
 - (xi) If a sponsoring organization of day care homes, the requirements for classification of tier I and tier II day care homes; and
 - (xii) All other Program requirements.
- (4) **Review of sponsored facilities.** As part of each required review of a sponsoring organization, the State agency must select a sample of facilities, in accordance with paragraph (m)(6) of this section. As part of such reviews, the State agency must conduct verification of Program applications in accordance with § 226.23(h) and must compare enrollment and attendance records (except in those outside-school-hours care centers, at-risk afterschool care centers, and emergency shelters where enrollment records are not required and the sponsoring organization's review results for that facility to meal counts submitted by those facilities for five days.
- (5) **Household contacts.** As part of their monitoring of institutions, State agencies must establish systems for making household contacts to verify the enrollment and attendance of participating children. Such systems must specify the circumstances under which household contacts will be made, as well as the procedures for conducting household contacts. In addition, State agencies must establish a system for sponsoring organizations to use in making household contacts as part of their review and oversight of participating facilities. Such systems must specify the circumstances under which household contacts will be made, as well as the procedures for conducting household contacts. State agencies must submit to FNSROs, no later than April 1, 2005, the policies and procedures they have developed governing household contacts conducted by both the State agency, as part of institution and facility reviews conducted in accordance with this paragraph (m), and by sponsoring organizations as part of the facility review process described in § 226.16(d)(5).
- (6) **Frequency and number of required institution reviews.** The State agency must annually review at least 33.3 percent of all institutions. At least 15 percent of the total number of facility reviews required must be unannounced. The State agency must review institutions according to the following schedule:
- (i) At least once every 3 years, independent centers and sponsoring organizations that operate 1 to 100 facilities must be reviewed. A sponsoring organization review must include reviews of 10 percent of the sponsoring organization's facilities.
 - (ii) At least once every 2 years, sponsoring organizations that operate more than 100 facilities, that conduct activities other than CACFP, that have been identified during a recent review as having serious management problems, or that are at risk of having serious management problems must be reviewed. These reviews must include reviews of 5 percent of the sponsoring organization's first 1,000 facilities and 2.5 percent of the sponsoring organization's facilities in excess of 1,000.

- (iii) At least once every 2 years, independent centers that conduct activities other than CACFP, that have been identified during a recent review as having serious management problems, or that are at risk of having serious management problems must be reviewed.
 - (iv) New sponsoring organizations that operate five or more facilities must be reviewed within the first 90 days of Program operations.
- (n) **Program irregularities.** Each State agency shall promptly investigate complaints received or irregularities noted in connection with the operation of the Program, and shall take appropriate action to correct any irregularities. State agencies shall maintain on file evidence of such investigations and actions. FNS and OIG may make investigations at the request of the State agency, or whenever FNS or OIG determines that investigations are appropriate.
- (o) **Child care standards compliance.** The State agency shall, when conducting administrative reviews of child care centers, and day care homes approved by the State agency under paragraph (d)(3) of this section, determine compliance with the child care standards used to establish eligibility, and the institution shall ensure that all violations are corrected and the State shall ensure that the institution has corrected all violations. If violations are not corrected within the specified timeframe for corrective action, the State agency must issue a notice of serious deficiency in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section or § 226.16(l), as appropriate. However, if the health or safety of the children is imminently threatened, the State agency or sponsoring organization must follow the procedures set forth at paragraph (c)(5)(i) of this section, or § 226.16(l)(4), as appropriate. The State agency may deny reimbursement for meals served to attending children in excess of authorized capacity.
- (p) **Sponsoring organization agreement.**
 - (1) Each State agency must develop and provide for the use of a standard form of written permanent agreement between each sponsoring organization and the day care homes or unaffiliated child care centers, outside-school-hours-care centers, at-risk afterschool care centers, emergency shelters, or adult day care centers for which it has responsibility for Program operations. The agreement must specify the rights and responsibilities of both parties. The State agency may, at the request of the sponsoring organization, approve an agreement developed by the sponsoring organization. Nothing in this paragraph limits the ability of the sponsoring organization to suspend or terminate the permanent agreement, as described in § 226.16(l).
 - (2) At a minimum, the standard agreement must require day care homes and centers to:
 - (i) Allow visits by sponsoring organizations or State agencies to review meal service and records;
 - (ii) Promptly inform the sponsoring organization about any change in its licensing or approval status;
 - (iii) Meet any State agency approved time limit for submission of meal records; and
 - (iv) Distribute to parents a copy of the sponsoring organization's notice to parents if directed to do so by the sponsoring organization.
 - (3) The agreement must include the right of day care homes and centers to receive timely reimbursement. The sponsoring organization must pay program funds to day care homes and centers within 5 working days of receipt from the State agency.

- (4) The State agency must include in this agreement its policy to restrict transfers of day care homes among sponsoring organizations. The policy must restrict the transfers to no more frequently than once per year, except under extenuating circumstances, such as termination of the sponsoring organization's agreement or other circumstances defined by the State agency.
- (5) The State agency may, at the request of the sponsoring organization, approve an agreement developed by the sponsoring organization.
- (q) Following its reviews of institutions and facilities under §§ 226.6(m) and 226.23(h) conducted prior to July 1, 1988, the State agency shall report data on key elements of program operations on a form designated by FNS. These key elements include but are not limited to the program areas of meal requirements, determination of eligibility for free and reduced price meals, and the accuracy of reimbursement claims. These forms shall be submitted within 90 days of the completion of the data collection for the institutions except that, if the State has elected to conduct reviews of verification separate from its administrative reviews, the State shall retain data until all key elements have been reviewed and shall report all data for each institution on one form within 90 days of the completion of the data collection for all key elements for that institution. States shall ensure that all key element data for an institution is collected during a 12-month period.
- (r) **WIC program information.** State agencies must provide information on the importance and benefits of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and WIC income eligibility guidelines, to participating institutions. In addition, the State agency must ensure that:
 - (1) Participating family day care homes and sponsored child care centers receive this information, and periodic updates of this information, from their sponsoring organizations or the State agency; and
 - (2) The parents of enrolled children also receive this information.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982]

Editorial Note: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 226.6, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and at www.govinfo.gov.

§ 226.7 State agency responsibilities for financial management.

- (a) This section prescribes standards of financial management systems in administering Program funds by the State agency and institutions.
- (b) **Financial management system.** Each State agency must establish and maintain an acceptable financial management system, adhere to financial management standards and otherwise carry out financial management policies in accordance with 2 CFR parts 200, 400, 415, 416, 417, 418, and 421, and FNS Instruction 796-2, as applicable, and related FNS guidance to identify allowable Program costs and establish standards for institutional recordkeeping and reporting. The State agency must provide guidance on financial management requirements to each institution.
 - (1) State agencies must also have a system in place for:
 - (i) Annually reviewing at least 1 month's bank account activity of all sponsoring organizations against documents adequate to support that the financial transactions meet Program requirements. The State agency may expand the review to examine additional months of bank account activity if discrepancies are found. If the State agency identifies and is unable to verify

any expenditures that have the appearance of violating Program requirements, or if the discrepancy is significant, the State agency must refer the sponsoring organization's bank account activity to the appropriate State authorities.

(ii) Annually reviewing actual expenditures reported of Program funds and the amount of meal reimbursement funds retained from centers, if any, for administrative costs for all sponsoring organizations of unaffiliated centers. State agencies must reconcile reported expenditures with Program payments to ensure that funds are fully accounted for, and use the reported actual expenditures as the basis for selecting a sample of expenditures for validation. If the State agency identifies and is unable to verify any expenditures that have the appearance of violating Program requirements, the State agency must refer the sponsoring organization's bank account activity to the appropriate State authorities.

(iii) Monitoring and reviewing the institutions' documentation of their nonprofit status to ensure that all Program reimbursement funds are used solely for the conduct of the food service operation or to improve food service operations, principally for the benefit of children or adult participants.

(2) The financial management system standards for institutional recordkeeping and reporting must:

(i) Prohibit claiming reimbursement for meals provided by a child or an adult participant's family, except as authorized at §§ 226.18(e) and 226.20(b)(2), (g)(1)(ii), and (g)(2)(ii); and

(ii) Allow the cost of meals served to adults who perform necessary food service labor under the Program, except in day care homes.

(c) **Management evaluations and audits.** State agencies shall provide FNS with full opportunity to conduct management evaluations (including visits to institutions and facilities) of all operations of the State agency under the Program and shall provide OIG with full opportunity to conduct audits (including visits to institutions and facilities) of all operations of the State agency under the Program. Within 60 calendar days of receipt of each management evaluation report, the State agency shall submit to FNSRO a written plan for correcting serious deficiencies, including specific timeframes for accomplishing corrective actions and initiating follow-up efforts. If a State agency makes a showing of good cause, however, FNS may allow more than 60 days in which to submit a plan. Each State agency shall make available its records, including records of the receipt and expenditure of funds, upon request by FNS or OIG. OIG shall also have the right to make audits of the records and operation of any institution.

(d) **Reports.** Each State agency shall submit to FNS the final Report of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (FNS 44) for each month which shall be limited to claims submitted in accordance with § 226.10(e) and which shall be postmarked and/or submitted no later than 90 days following the last day of the month covered by the report. States shall not receive Program funds for any month for which the final report is not submitted within this time limit unless FNS grants an exception. Upward adjustments to a State agency's report shall not be made after 90 days from the month covered by the report unless authorized by FNS. Downward adjustments shall always be made, without FNS authorization, regardless of when it is determined that such adjustments are necessary. Adjustments shall be reported to FNS in accordance with procedures established by FNS. Each State agency shall also submit to FNS a quarterly Financial Status Report (FNS-777) on the use of Program funds. Such reports shall be postmarked and/or submitted no later than 30 days after the end of each fiscal year quarter. Obligations shall be reported only for the fiscal year in which they occur. A final Financial Status Report for each fiscal year shall be

postmarked and/or submitted to FNS within 120 days after the end of the fiscal year. FNS shall not be responsible for reimbursing unpaid Program obligations reported later than 120 days after the close of the fiscal year in which they were incurred.

- (e) **Annual plan.** Each State shall submit to the Secretary for approval by August 15 of each year an annual plan for the use of State administrative expense funds, including a staff formula for State personnel.
- (f) **Rate assignment.** Each State agency must require institutions (other than emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, and sponsoring organizations of emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, or day care homes) to submit, not less frequently than annually, information necessary to assign rates of reimbursement as outlined in § 226.9.
- (g) **Budget approval.** The State agency must review institution budgets and must limit allowable administrative claims by each sponsoring organization to the administrative costs approved in its budget, except as provided in this section. The budget must demonstrate the institution's ability to manage Program funds in accordance with this part, FNS Instruction 796-2, 2 CFR part 200, subpart D and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415, and applicable Office of Management and Budget circulars. Sponsoring organizations must submit an administrative budget to the State agency annually, and independent centers must submit budgets as frequently as required by the State agency. Budget levels may be adjusted to reflect changes in Program activities. If the institution does not intend to use non-CACFP funds to support any required CACFP functions, the institution's budget must identify a source of non-Program funds that could be used to pay overclaims or other unallowable costs. If the institution intends to use any non-Program resources to meet CACFP requirements, these non-Program funds should be accounted for in the institution's budget, and the institution's budget must identify a source of non-Program funds that could be used to pay overclaims or other unallowable costs.
 - (1) For sponsoring organizations of centers, the State agency is prohibited from approving the sponsoring organization's administrative budget, or any amendments to the budget, if the administrative budget shows the Program will be charged for administrative costs in excess of 15 percent of the meal reimbursements estimated to be earned during the budget year. However, the State agency may waive this limit if the sponsoring organization provides justification that it requires Program funds in excess of 15 percent to pay its administrative costs and if the State agency is convinced that the institution will have adequate funding to provide meals meeting the requirements of § 226.20. The State agency must document all waiver approvals and denials in writing and provide a copy of all such letters to the appropriate FNSRO.
 - (2) For sponsoring organizations of day care homes seeking to carry over administrative funds, as described in § 226.12(a)(3), the State agency must require the budget to include an estimate of the requested administrative fund carryover amount and a description of the purpose for which those funds would be obligated or expended by the end of the fiscal year following the fiscal year in which they were received. In approving a carryover request, State agencies must take into consideration whether the sponsoring organization has a financial management system that meets Program requirements and is capable of controlling the custody, documentation, and disbursement of carryover funds. As soon as possible after fiscal year close-out, the State agency must require sponsoring organizations carrying over administrative funds to submit an amended budget for State agency review and approval. The amended budget must identify the amount of administrative funds actually carried over and describe the purpose for which the carry-over funds have been or will be used.

- (h) **Start-up and expansion payments.** Each State agency shall establish procedures for evaluating requests for start-up and expansion payments, issuing these payments to eligible sponsoring organizations, and monitoring the use of these payments.
- (i) **Advance payments.** Each State agency shall establish procedures for issuing advance payments by the first day of each month and comparing these payments with earned reimbursement on a monthly basis. The State agency shall maintain on file a statement of the State's law and policy governing the use of interest earned on advanced funds by sponsors, institutions, child care facilities and adult day care facilities.
- (j) **Recovery of overpayments.** Each State agency must establish procedures to recover outstanding start-up, expansion, and advance payments from institutions which, in the opinion of the State agency, will not be able to earn these payments. In addition, each State agency must establish procedures to recover administrative funds from sponsoring organizations of day care homes that are not properly payable under FNS Instruction 796-2, administrative funds that are in excess of the 10 percent maximum carryover amount, and carryover amounts that are not expended or obligated by the end of the fiscal year following the fiscal year in which they were received.
- (k) **Claims processing.** Each State agency shall establish procedures for institutions to properly submit claims for reimbursement. Such procedures must include State agency edit checks, including but not limited to ensuring that payments are made only for approved meal types and that the number of meals for which reimbursement is provided does not exceed the product of the total enrollment times operating days times approved meal types. All valid claims shall be paid within 45 calendar days of receipt. Within 15 calendar days of receipt of any incomplete or incorrect claim which must be revised for payment, the State agency shall notify the institution as to why and how such claim must be revised. If the State agency disallows partial or full payment for a claim for reimbursement, it shall notify the institution which submitted the claim of its right to appeal under § 226.6(k). State agencies may permit disallowances to be appealed separately from claims for reimbursement.
- (l) **Participation controls.** The State agency may establish control procedures to ensure that payment is not made for meals served to participants attending in excess of the authorized capacity of each independent center, adult day care facility or child care facility.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982]

Editorial Note: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 226.7, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and at www.govinfo.gov.

§ 226.8 Audits.

- (a) Unless otherwise exempt, audits at the State and institution levels must be conducted in accordance with 2 CFR part 200, subpart F, Appendices X and XI, Data Collection Form and Compliance Supplement, respectively and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR parts 400, 415 and 416. State agencies must establish audit policy for for-profit institutions. However, the audit policy established by the State agency must not conflict with the authority of the State agency or the Department to perform, or cause to be performed, audits, reviews, agreed-upon procedures engagements, or other monitoring activities.

- (b) The funds provided to the State agency under § 226.4(j) may be made available to institutions to fund a portion of organization-wide audits made in accordance with 2 CFR part 200, subpart F and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415. The funds provided to an institution for an organization-wide audit must be determined in accordance with 2 CFR part 200, subpart F and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415.
- (c) Funds provided under § 226.4(j) may be used by the State agency to conduct program-specific audits of institutions not subject to organization-wide audits, or for which the State agency considers program specific audits to be needed. The State agency may use any funds remaining after all required program-specific audits have been performed to conduct administrative reviews or agreed-upon procedures engagements of institutions.
- (d) Funds provided under § 226.4(j) may only be obligated during the fiscal year for which those funds are allocated. If funds provided under § 226.4(i) are not sufficient to meet the requirements of this section, the State agency may then use available State administrative expense funds to conduct audits, provided that the State agency is arranging for the audits and has not passed the responsibility down to the institution.
- (e) **Full use of Federal funds.** States and State agencies must support the full use of Federal funds provided to State agencies under 226.4(j) of this part to support State audit activities, and exclude such funds from State budget restrictions or limitations, including hiring freezes, work furloughs, and travel restrictions.
- (f) In conducting management evaluations, reviews, or audits in a fiscal year, the State agency, FNS, or OIG may disregard an overpayment if the overpayment does not exceed \$600. A State agency may establish, through State law, regulation or procedure, an alternate disregard threshold that does not exceed \$600. This disregard may be made once per each management evaluation, review, or audit per Program within a fiscal year. However, no overpayment is to be disregarded where there is substantial evidence of violations of criminal law or civil fraud statutes.
- (g) While OIG shall rely to the fullest extent feasible upon State sponsored audits, OIG may, whenever it considers necessary:
 - (1) Make audits on a statewide basis;
 - (2) Perform on-site test audits;
 - (3) Review audit reports and related working papers of audits performed by or for State agencies.
- (h) State agencies are not required to provide a hearing to an institution for State actions taken on the basis of a Federal audit determination. If a State agency does not provide a hearing in such situations, FNS will provide a hearing, upon request, in accordance with procedures set forth in § 226.6(k).

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982, as amended at 50 FR 8580, Mar. 4, 1985; 51 FR 4295, Feb. 4, 1986; 52 FR 5526, Feb. 25, 1987; 53 FR 52590, Dec. 28, 1988; Amdt. 22, 55 FR 1378, Jan. 14, 1990; 67 FR 43490, June 27, 2002; 69 FR 53543, Sept. 1, 2004; 70 FR 43261, July 27, 2005; 71 FR 5, Jan. 3, 2006; 71 FR 30563, May 30, 2006; 72 FR 41607, July 31, 2007; 76 FR 37982, June 29, 2011; 81 FR 66493, Sept. 28, 2016]

Subpart D—Payment Provisions

§ 226.9 Assignment of rates of reimbursement for centers.

- (a) The State agency shall assign rates of reimbursement, not less frequently than annually, on the basis of family-size and income information reported by each institution. However, no rates should be assigned for emergency shelters and at-risk afterschool care centers. Assigned rates of reimbursement may be changed more frequently than annually if warranted by changes in family-size and income information. Assigned rates of reimbursement shall be adjusted annually to reflect changes in the national average payment rates.
- (b) Except for emergency shelters and at-risk afterschool care centers, the State agency must either:
 - (1) Require that institutions submit each month's figures for meals served daily to participants from families meeting the eligibility standards for free meals, to participants from families meeting the eligibility standards for reduced-price meals, and to participants from families not meeting such guidelines; or
 - (2) Establish claiming percentages, not less frequently than annually, for each institution on the basis of the number of enrolled participants eligible for free, reduced-price, and paid meals, except that children who only participate in emergency shelters or the at-risk afterschool care component of the Program must not be considered to be enrolled participants for the purpose of establishing claiming percentages; or
 - (3) Determine a blended per-meal rate of reimbursement, not less frequently than annually, by adding the products obtained by multiplying the applicable national average payment rate of reimbursement for each category (free, reduced-price, paid) by the claiming percentage for that category.
- (c) States have two methods of reimbursing institutions. The method chosen by the State agency must be applied to all institutions participating in the Program in that State. These methods are:
 - (1) Meals times rates payment, which involves reimbursing an institution for meals served at the assigned rate for each meal. This method entails no comparison to the costs incurred by the institution for the meal service; and,
 - (2) Meals times rates or actual costs, whichever is the lesser, which involves reimbursing an institution for meals served at the assigned rate for each meal or at the level of the costs actually incurred by the institution for the meal service. This method does entail a comparison of the costs incurred to the meal rates, with the costs being a limiting factor on the level of reimbursement an institution may receive.
- (d) In those States where the State agency has chosen the option to implement a meals times rates payment system State-wide, the State agency may elect to pay an institution's final claim for reimbursement for the fiscal year at higher reassigned rates of reimbursement for lunches and suppers; however, the reassigned rates may not exceed the applicable maximum rates of reimbursement established under § 210.11(b) of the National School Lunch Program regulations. In those States which use the method of comparing meals times rates or actual costs, whichever is lesser, the total payments made to an institution shall not exceed the total net costs incurred for the fiscal year.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982, as amended at 48 FR 21530, May 13, 1983; 53 FR 52590, Dec. 28, 1988; Amdt. 22, 55 FR 1378, Jan. 14, 1990; 71 FR 5, Jan. 3, 2006; 72 FR 41607, July 31, 2007; 75 FR 16327, Apr. 1, 2010]

§ 226.10 Program payment procedures.

- (a) If a State agency elects to issue advance payments to all or some of the participating institutions in the State, it must provide such advances no later than the first day of each month to those eligible institutions electing to receive advances in accordance with § 226.6 (f)(3)(iv)(F). Advance payments shall equal the full level of claims estimated by the State agency to be submitted in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section, considering prior reimbursement claims and other information such as fluctuations in enrollment. The institution may decline to receive all or any part of the advance.
- (b) For each fiscal year, the amount of payment made, including funds advanced to an institution, shall not exceed the amount of valid reimbursement claimed by that institution. To ensure that institutions do not receive excessive advance payments, the State agency shall observe the following procedures:
 - (1) After three advance payments have been made to an institution, the State agency shall ensure that no subsequent advance is made until the State agency has validated the institution's claim for reimbursement for the third month prior to the month for which the next advance is to be paid.
 - (2) If the State agency has audit or monitoring evidence of extensive program deficiencies or other reasons to believe that an institution will not be able to submit a valid claim for reimbursement, advance payments shall be withheld until the claim is received or the deficiencies are corrected.
 - (3) Each month the State agency shall compare incoming claims against advances to ensure that the level of funds authorized under paragraph (a) of this section does not exceed the claims for reimbursement received from the institution. Whenever this process indicates that excessive advances have been authorized, the State agency shall either demand full repayment or adjust subsequent payments, including advances.
 - (4) If, as a result of year end reconciliation as required by 2 CFR part 200, subpart D and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415, as applicable, the State agency determines that reimbursement earned by an institution during a fiscal year is less than the amount paid, including funds advanced to that institution, the State agency shall demand repayment of the outstanding balance or adjust subsequent payments.
- (c) Claims for Reimbursement must report information in accordance with the financial management system established by the State agency, and in sufficient detail to justify the reimbursement claimed and to enable the State agency to provide the final Report of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (FNS 44) required under § 226.7(d). In submitting a Claim for Reimbursement, each institution must certify that the claim is correct and that records are available to support that claim.
 - (1) Prior to submitting its consolidated monthly claim to the State agency, each sponsoring organization must perform edit checks on each facility's meal claim. At a minimum, the sponsoring organization's edit checks must:
 - (i) Verify that each facility has been approved to serve the types of meals claimed; and
 - (ii) Compare the number of children or eligible adult participants enrolled for care at each facility, multiplied by the number of days on which the facility is approved to serve meals, to the total number of meals claimed by the facility for that month. Discrepancies between the facility's meal claim and its enrollment must be subjected to more thorough review to determine if the claim is accurate.

- (2) Sponsoring organizations of unaffiliated centers must make available to the State agency an annual report detailing actual expenditures of Program funds and the amount of meal reimbursement funds retained from centers, if any, for administrative costs for the year to which the claims apply. The report must use the same cost categories as the approved annual budget submitted by the sponsoring organization.
 - (3) Sponsoring organizations of for-profit child care centers or for-profit outside-school-hours care centers must submit the number and percentage of children in care—enrolled or licensed capacity, whichever is less—that documents that at least 25 percent are eligible for free or reduced-price meals or are title XX beneficiaries. Sponsoring organizations must not submit a claim for any for-profit center in which less than 25 percent of the children in care—enrolled or licensed capacity, whichever is less—during the claim month were eligible for free or reduced-price meals or were title XX beneficiaries.
 - (4) For each month they claim reimbursement, independent for-profit child care centers and independent for-profit outside-school-hours care centers must submit the number and percentage of children in care—enrolled or licensed capacity, whichever is less—that documents at least 25 percent are eligible for free or reduced-price meals or are title XX beneficiaries. However, children who only receive at-risk afterschool meals or snacks must not be considered in determining this eligibility.
 - (5) For each month they claim reimbursement, independent for-profit adult day care centers must submit the percentages of enrolled adult participants receiving title XIX or title XX benefits for months in which not less than 25 percent of enrolled adult participants were title XIX or title XX beneficiaries. For the claim, sponsoring organizations of adult day care centers must submit the percentage of enrolled adult participants receiving title XIX or title XX benefits for each center. Sponsoring organizations must not submit claims for adult day care centers for months in which less than 25 percent of enrolled adult participants were title XIX or title XX beneficiaries.
- (d) All records to support the claim shall be retained for a period of three years after the date of submission of the final claim for the fiscal year to which they pertain, except that if audit findings have not been resolved, the records shall be retained beyond the end of the three year period as long as may be required for the resolution of the issues raised by the audit. All accounts and records pertaining to the Program shall be made available, upon request, to representatives of the State agency, of the Department, and of the U.S. Government Accountability Office for audit or review, at a reasonable time and place.
- (e) Unless otherwise approved by FNS, the Claim for Reimbursement for any month shall cover only Program operations for that month except if the first or last month of Program operations in any fiscal year contains 10 operating days or less, such month may be added to the Claim for Reimbursement for the appropriate adjacent month; however, Claims for Reimbursement may not combine operations occurring in two fiscal years. A final Claim for Reimbursement shall be postmarked and/or submitted to the State agency not later than 60 days following the last day of the full month covered by the claim. State agencies may establish shorter deadlines at their discretion. Claims not postmarked and/or submitted within 60 days shall not be paid with Program funds unless FNS determines that an exception should be granted. The State agency shall promptly take corrective action with respect to any Claim for Reimbursement as determined necessary through its claim review process or otherwise. In taking such corrective action, State agencies may make upward adjustments in Program funds claimed on claims filed within the 60 day deadline if such adjustments are completed within 90 days of the last day of the claim month and are reflected in the final Report of the Child and Adult Care Food Programs (FNS-44) for the claim month which is required under 226.7(d). Upward adjustments in Program funds claimed which are not reflected

in the final FNS-44 for the claim month shall not be made unless authorized by FNS. Downward adjustments in Program funds claimed shall always be made without FNS authorization regardless of when it is determined that such adjustments are necessary.

- (f) If, based on the results of audits, investigations, or other reviews, a State agency has reason to believe that an institution, child or adult care facility, or food service management company has engaged in unlawful acts with respect to Program operations, the evidence found in audits, investigations, or other reviews is a basis for non-payment of claims for reimbursement.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982, as amended by Amdt. 5, 49 FR 18988, May 4, 1984; 50 FR 26975, July 1, 1985; 53 FR 52590, Dec. 28, 1988; Amdt. 22, 55 FR 1378, Jan. 14, 1990; 62 FR 23618, May 1, 1997; 69 FR 53543, Sept. 1, 2004; 70 FR 43261, July 27, 2005; 71 FR 39519, July 13, 2006; 72 FR 41607, July 31, 2007; 75 FR 16327, Apr. 1, 2010; 76 FR 22798, Apr. 25, 2011; 76 FR 34571, June 13, 2011; 81 FR 66492, Sept. 28, 2016; 88 FR 57855, Aug. 23, 2023]

§ 226.11 Program payments for centers.

- (a) **Requirement for agreements.** Payments must be made only to institutions operating under an agreement with the State agency for the meal types specified in the agreement served at approved child care centers, at-risk afterschool care centers, adult day care centers, emergency shelters, and outside-school-hours care centers. A State agency may develop a policy under which centers are reimbursed for meals served in accordance with provisions of the Program in the calendar month preceding the calendar month in which the agreement is executed, or the State agency may develop a policy under which centers receive reimbursement only for meals served in approved centers on and after the effective date of the Program agreement. If the State agency's policy permits centers to earn reimbursement for meals served prior to the execution of a Program agreement, program reimbursement must not be received by the center until the agreement is executed.
- (b) **Institutions —**
 - (1) **Edit checks of sponsored centers.** Prior to submitting its consolidated monthly claim to the State agency, each sponsoring organization must conduct reasonable edit checks on the sponsored centers' meal claims, which at a minimum, must include those edit checks specified at § 226.10(c).
 - (2) **Child and adult care institutions.** Each child care institution and each adult day care institution must report each month to the State agency the total number of Program meals, by type (breakfasts, lunches, suppers, and snacks), served to children or adult participants, respectively, except as provided in paragraph (b)(3) of this section.
 - (3) **For-profit center exception.** For-profit child care centers, including for-profit at-risk afterschool care centers and outside-school-hours care centers, must provide the reports required in paragraph (b)(2) of this section only for calendar months during which at least 25 percent of the children in care (enrolled or licensed capacity, whichever is less) were eligible for free or reduced-price meals or were title XX beneficiaries. However, children who only receive at-risk afterschool snacks and/or at-risk afterschool meals must not be considered in determining this eligibility. For-profit adult day care centers must provide the reports required in paragraph (b)(2) of this section only for calendar months during which at least 25 percent of enrolled adult participants were beneficiaries of title XIX, title XX, or a combination of titles XIX and XX.
- (c) **Reimbursement —**

- (1) **Child and adult care institutions.** Each State agency must base reimbursement to each approved child care center and adult day care center on actual time of service meal counts of meals, by type, served to children or adult participants multiplied by the assigned rates of reimbursement, except as provided in paragraph (c)(4) of this section. In the case of a sponsoring organization of family day care homes, each State agency must base reimbursement to each approved family day care home on daily meal counts recorded by the provider.
- (2) **At-risk afterschool care institutions.** Except as provided in paragraph (c)(4) of this section, State agencies must base reimbursement to each at-risk afterschool care center on the number of at-risk afterschool snacks and/or at-risk afterschool meals that are served to children.
- (3) **Emergency shelters.** Each State agency must base reimbursement to each emergency shelter on the number of meals served to children multiplied by the free rates for meals and snacks.
- (4) **For-profit center exception.** For-profit child care centers, including for-profit at-risk and outside-school-hours care centers, must be reimbursed only for the calendar months during which at least 25 percent of the children in care (enrolled or licensed capacity, whichever is less) were eligible for free or reduced-price meals or were title XX beneficiaries. However, children who only receive at-risk afterschool snacks and/or at-risk afterschool meals must not be considered in determining this eligibility. For-profit adult day care centers must be reimbursed only for the calendar months during which at least 25 percent of enrolled adult participants were beneficiaries of title XIX, title XX, or a combination of titles XIX and XX.
- (5) **Computation of reimbursement.** Except for at-risk afterschool care centers and emergency shelters, the State agency must compute reimbursement by either:
 - (i) **Actual counts.** Base reimbursement to institutions on actual time of service counts of meals served, and multiply the number of meals, by type, served to participants that are eligible to receive free meals, participants eligible to receive reduced-price meals, and participants not eligible for free or reduced-price meals by the applicable national average payment rate; or
 - (ii) **Claiming percentages.** Apply the applicable claiming percentage or percentages to the total number of meals, by type, served to participants and multiply the product or products by the assigned rate of reimbursement for each meal type; or
 - (iii) **Blended rates.** Multiply the assigned blended per meal rate of reimbursement by the total number of meals, by type, served to participants.
- (d) **Limits on reimbursement.** If the State agency elects to reimburse its institutions according to the lesser of rates or actual costs, total Program payments to an institution during any fiscal year, including any cash payments in lieu of commodities, shall not exceed allowable Program operating and administrative costs, less income to the Program. The State agency may limit payments for administrative costs to the amount approved in the annual administrative budget of the institution. The State agency may prohibit an institution from using payments for operating costs to pay for administrative expenses.
- (e) **Institution recordkeeping.** Each institution shall maintain records as prescribed by the State agency's financial management system.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982, as amended at 48 FR 21530, May 13, 1983; 52 FR 36907, Oct. 2, 1987; 53 FR 52590, Dec. 28, 1988; 62 FR 23618, May 1, 1997; 69 FR 53543, Sept. 1, 2004; 70 FR 43262, July 27, 2005; 71 FR 5, Jan. 3, 2006; 72 FR 41607, July 31, 2007; 75 FR 16327, Apr. 1, 2010; 76 FR 34571, June 13, 2011]

§ 226.12 Administrative payments to sponsoring organizations for day care homes.

- (a) **General.** Sponsoring organizations of day care homes receive payments for administrative costs, subject to the following conditions:
- (1) Sponsoring organizations will receive reimbursement for the administrative costs of the sponsoring organization in an amount that is not less than the product obtained each month by multiplying:
 - (i) The number of day care homes of the sponsoring organization submitting a claim for reimbursement during the month, by
 - (ii) The appropriate administrative rates announced annually in the FEDERAL REGISTER.
 - (2) FNS determines administrative reimbursement by annually adjusting the following base administrative rates, as set forth in § 226.4(i):
 - (i) Initial 50 day care homes, 42 dollars;
 - (ii) Next 150 day care homes, 32 dollars;
 - (iii) Next 800 day care homes, 25 dollars;
 - (iv) Additional day care homes, 22 dollars.
 - (3) With State agency approval, a sponsoring organization may carry over a maximum of 10 percent of administrative funds received under paragraph (a)(1) of this section for use in the following fiscal year. If any carryover funds are not obligated or expended in the following fiscal year, they must be returned to the State agency, as described in § 226.7(j).
 - (4) State agencies must recover any administrative funds not properly payable, as described in FNS Instruction 796-2.
- (b) **Start-up and expansion payments.**
- (1) Prospective sponsoring organizations of day care homes, participating sponsoring organizations of child care centers or outside-school-hours care centers, independent centers, and participating sponsoring organizations of less than 50 homes which meet the criteria in paragraph (b)(2) of this section shall be entitled to receive start-up payments to develop or expand successful Program operations in day care homes. Participating sponsoring organizations of day care homes which meet the criteria in paragraph (b)(2) of this section shall be entitled to receive expansion payments to initiate or expand Program operations in day care homes in low-income or rural areas. The State agency shall approve start-up payments only once for any eligible sponsoring organization, but may approve expansion payments for any eligible sponsoring organization more than once, provided that: the request must be for expansion into an area(s) other than that specified in their initial or prior request; and 12 months has elapsed since the sponsoring organization has satisfied all obligations under its initial or prior expansion agreement. Eligible sponsoring organizations which have received start-up payments shall be eligible to apply for expansion payments at a date no earlier than 12 months after it has satisfied all its obligations under its start-up agreement with the State agency.
 - (2) Sponsoring organizations which apply for start-up or expansion payments shall evidence:
 - (i) Public status or tax exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;
 - (ii) An organizational history of managing funds and ongoing activities (i.e., administering public or private programs);

- (iii) An acceptable and realistic plan for recruiting day care homes to participate in the Program (such as the method of contacting providers), which may be based on estimates of the number of day care homes to be recruited and information supporting their existence, and in the case of sponsoring organizations applying for expansion payments, documentation that the day care homes to be recruited are located in low-income or rural areas; and
 - (iv) An acceptable preliminary sponsoring organization management plan including, but not limited to, plans for preoperational visits and training.
- (3) The State agency shall deny start-up and expansion payments to applicant sponsoring organizations which fail to meet the criteria of paragraph (b)(2) of this section or which have not been financially responsible in the operation of other programs funded by Federal, State, or local governments. The State agency shall notify the sponsoring organization of the reasons for denial and allow the sponsoring organization full opportunity to submit evidence on appeal as provided for in § 226.6(k). Any sponsoring organization applying for start-up or expansion funds shall be notified of approval or disapproval by the State agency in writing within 30 calendar days of filing a complete and correct application. If a sponsoring organization submits an incomplete application, the State agency shall notify the sponsoring organization within 15 calendar days of receipt of the application and shall provide technical assistance, if necessary, to the sponsoring organization for the purpose of completing its application.
- (4) Sponsoring organizations which apply for and meet the criteria for start-up or expansion payments shall enter into an agreement with the State agency. The agreement shall specify:
 - (i) Activities which the sponsoring organization will undertake to initiate or expand Program operations in day care homes;
 - (ii) The amount of start-up or expansion payments to be issued to the sponsoring organization, together with an administrative budget detailing the costs which the sponsoring organization shall incur, document, and claim;
 - (iii) The time allotted to the sponsoring organization for the initiation or expansion of Program operations in family day care homes;
 - (iv) The responsibility of the applicant sponsoring organization to repay, upon demand by the State agency, start-up or expansion payments not expended in accordance with the agreement.
- (5) Upon execution of the agreement, the State agency shall issue a start-up or expansion payment to the sponsoring organization in an amount equal to not less than one, but not more than two month's anticipated administrative reimbursement to the sponsoring organization as determined by the State agency. However, no sponsoring organization may receive start-up or expansion payments for more than 50 day care homes. Eligible sponsoring organizations with fewer than 50 homes under their jurisdiction at the time of application for start-up payments may receive such payments for up to 50 homes, less the number of homes under their jurisdiction. Eligible sponsoring organizations applying for expansion funds may receive at a maximum such payments for up to 50 homes at the currently assigned administrative payment for the first 50 homes. In determining the amount of start-up or expansion payments to be made to a sponsoring organization, the State agency shall consider the anticipated level of start-up or expansion costs to be incurred by the sponsoring organization and alternate sources of funds available to the sponsoring organization.

- (6) Upon expiration of the time allotted to the sponsoring organization for initiating or expanding Program operations in day care homes, the State agency shall obtain and review documentation of activities performed and costs incurred by the sponsoring organization under the terms of the start-up or expansion agreement. If the sponsoring organization has not made every reasonable effort to carry out the activities specified in the agreement, the State agency shall demand repayment of all or part of the payment. The sponsoring organization may retain start-up or expansion payments for all day care homes which initiate Program operations. However, no sponsoring organization may retain any start-up or expansion payments in excess of its actual costs for the expenditures specified in the agreement.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982; 47 FR 46072, Oct. 15, 1982, as amended at 53 FR 52590, Dec. 28, 1988; 63 FR 9728, Feb. 26, 1998; 67 FR 43490, June 27, 2002; 88 FR 57856, Aug. 23, 2023]

§ 226.13 Food service payments to sponsoring organizations for day care homes.

- (a) Payments will be made only to sponsoring organizations operating under an agreement with the State agency for the meal types specified in the agreement served to enrolled nonresident children and eligible enrolled children of day care home providers, at approved day care homes. Each State agency must base reimbursement to each approved day care home on daily meal counts recorded by the provider.
- (b) Each sponsoring organization shall report each month to the State agency the total number of meals, by type (breakfasts, lunches, suppers, and snacks) and by category (tier I and tier II), served to children enrolled in approved day care homes. Prior to submitting its consolidated monthly claim to the State agency, each sponsoring organization must conduct reasonable edit checks on the day care homes' meal claims which, at a minimum, include those edit checks specified at § 226.10(c).
- (c) Each sponsoring organization shall receive payment for meals served to children enrolled in approved day care homes at the tier I and tier II reimbursement rates, as applicable based on daily meal counts taken in the home, and as established by law and adjusted in accordance with § 226.4. However, the rates for lunches and suppers shall be reduced by the value of commodities established under § 226.5(b) for all sponsoring organizations for day care homes which have elected to receive commodities. For tier I day care homes, the full amount of food service payments shall be disbursed to each day care home on the basis of the number of meals served, by type, to enrolled children. For tier II day care homes, the full amount of food service payments shall be disbursed to each day care home on the basis of the number of meals served to enrolled children by type, and by category (tier I and tier II) as determined in accordance with paragraphs (d)(2) and (d)(3) of this section. However, the sponsoring organization may withhold from Program payments to each home an amount equal to costs incurred for the provision of Program foodstuffs or meals by the sponsoring organization on behalf of the home and with the home provider's written consent.
- (d) As applicable, each sponsoring organization for day care homes shall:
 - (1) Require that tier I day care homes submit the number of meals served, by type, to enrolled children.
 - (2) Require that tier II day care homes in which the provider elects not to have the sponsoring organization identify enrolled children who are eligible for free or reduced price meals submit the number of meals served, by type, to enrolled children.

- (3) Not more frequently than annually, select one of the methods described in paragraphs (d)(3) (i)-(iii) of this section for all tier II day care homes in which the provider elects to have the sponsoring organization identify enrolled children who are eligible for free or reduced price meals. In such homes, the sponsoring organization shall either:
- (i) Require that such day care homes submit the number and types of meals served each day to each enrolled child by name. The sponsoring organization shall use the information submitted by the homes to produce an actual count, by type and by category (tier I and tier II), of meals served in the homes; or
 - (ii) Establish claiming percentages, not less frequently than semiannually, for each such day care home on the basis of one month's data concerning the number of enrolled children determined eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Sponsoring organizations shall obtain one month's data by collecting either enrollment lists (which show the name of each enrolled child in the day care home), or attendance lists (which show, by days or meals, the rate of participation of each enrolled child in the day care home). The State agency may require a sponsoring organization to recalculate the claiming percentage for any of its day care homes before the required semiannual calculation if the State agency has reason to believe that a home's percentage of income-eligible children has changed significantly or was incorrectly established in the previous calculation. Under this system, day care homes shall be required to submit the number of meals served, by type, to enrolled children; or
 - (iii) Determine a blended per-meal rate of reimbursement, not less frequently than semiannually, for each such day care home by adding the products obtained by multiplying the applicable rates of reimbursement for each category (tier I and tier II) by the claiming percentage for that category, as established in accordance with paragraph (d)(3)(ii) of this section. The State agency may require a sponsoring organization to recalculate the blended rate for any of its day care homes before the required semiannual calculation if the State agency has reason to believe that a home's percentage of income-eligible children has changed significantly or was incorrectly established in the previous calculation. Under this system, day care homes shall be required to submit the number of meals served, by type, to enrolled children.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982, as amended at 62 FR 903, Jan. 7, 1997; 62 FR 5519, Feb. 6, 1997; 63 FR 9105, Feb. 24, 1998; 69 FR 53544, Sept. 1, 2004; 72 FR 41603, July 31, 2007; 88 FR 57856, Aug. 23, 2023]

§ 226.14 Claims against institutions.

- (a) State agencies shall disallow any portion of a claim for reimbursement and recover any payment to an institution not properly payable under this part. State agencies may consider claims for reimbursement not properly payable if an institution does not comply with the recordkeeping requirements contained in this part. The State agency may permit institutions to pay overclaims over a period of one or more years. However, the State agency must assess interest beginning with the date stipulated in the State agency's demand letter, or 30 days after the date of the demand letter, whichever date is later. Further, when an institution requests and is granted an administrative review of the State agency's overpayment demand, the State agency is prohibited from taking action to collect or offset the overpayment until the administrative review is concluded. The State agency must maintain searchable records of funds recovery activities. If the State agency determines that a sponsoring organization of centers has spent more than 15 percent of its meal reimbursements for a budget year for administrative costs (or more than any higher limit established pursuant to a waiver granted under § 226.7(g)), the State agency must take appropriate fiscal action. In addition, except with approval from the appropriate FNSRO, State agencies shall consider

claims for reimbursement not payable when an institution fails to comply with the recordkeeping requirements that pertain to records directly supporting claims for reimbursement. Records that directly support claims for reimbursement include, but are not limited to, daily meal counts, menu records, and enrollment and attendance records, as required by § 226.15(e). State agencies shall assert overclaims against any sponsoring organization of day care homes which misclassifies a day care home as a tier I day care home unless the misclassification is determined to be inadvertent under guidance issued by FNS. However, the State agency shall notify the institution of the reasons for any disallowance or demand for repayment, and allow the institution full opportunity to submit evidence on appeal as provided for in § 226.6(k). Minimum State agency collection procedures for unearned payments shall include:

- (1) Written demand to the institution for the return of improper payments;
 - (2) if, after 30 calendar days, the institution fails to remit full payment or agree to a satisfactory repayment schedule, a second written demand for the return of improper payments sent by certified mail return receipt requested; and
 - (3) if, after 60 calendar days, the institution fails to remit full payment or agree to a satisfactory repayment schedule, the State agency shall refer the claim against the institution to appropriate State or Federal authorities for pursuit of legal remedies.
- (b) In the event that the State agency finds that an institution which prepares its own meals is failing to meet the meal requirements of § 226.20, the State agency need not disallow payment or collect an overpayment arising out of such failure if the institution takes such other action as, in the opinion of the State agency, will have a corrective effect. However, the State agency shall not disregard any overpayments or waive collection action arising from the findings of Federal audits.
- (c) If FNS does not concur with the State agency's action in paying an institution or in failing to collect an overpayment, FNS shall notify the State agency of its intention to assert a claim against the State agency. In all such cases, the State agency shall have full opportunity to submit evidence concerning the action taken. The State agency shall be liable to FNS for failure to collect an overpayment, unless FNS determines that the State agency has conformed with this part in issuing the payment and has exerted reasonable efforts to recover the improper payment.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982; 47 FR 46072, Oct. 15, 1982, as amended at 50 FR 8580, Mar. 4, 1985; 53 FR 52590, Dec. 28, 1988; 62 FR 903, Jan. 7, 1997; 64 FR 72260, Dec. 27, 1999; 67 FR 43490, June 27, 2002; 69 FR 53544, Sept. 1, 2004; 76 FR 34571, June 13, 2011]

Subpart E—Operational Provisions

§ 226.15 Institution provisions.

- (a) **Tax exempt status.** Except for for-profit centers and sponsoring organizations of such centers, institutions must be public, or have tax exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.
- (b) **New applications and renewals.** Each new institution must submit to the State agency an application with all information required for its approval, as set forth in §§ 226.6(b)(1) and 226.6(f). This information must demonstrate that a new institution has the administrative and financial capability to operate the Program, as described in the performance standards set forth in § 226.6(b)(1)(xviii). Renewing institutions must annually certify that they are capable of operating the Program, as set forth in § 226.6(b)(2).
- (c) **Responsibility.** Each institution shall accept final administrative and financial responsibility for Program operations. No institution may contract out for management of the Program.

- (d) **Staffing.** Each institution shall provide adequate supervisory and operational personnel for management and monitoring of the Program.
- (e) **Recordkeeping.** Each institution shall establish procedures to collect and maintain all program records required under this part, as well as any records required by the State agency. Failure to maintain such records shall be grounds for the denial of reimbursement for meals served during the period covered by the records in question and for the denial of reimbursement for costs associated with such records. At a minimum, the following records shall be collected and maintained:
 - (1) Copies of all applications and supporting documents submitted to the State agency;
 - (2) Documentation of the enrollment of each participant at centers (except for outside-school-hours care centers, emergency shelters, and at-risk afterschool care centers). All types of centers, except for emergency shelters and at-risk afterschool care centers, must maintain information used to determine eligibility for free or reduced-price meals in accordance with § 226.23(e)(1). For child care centers, such documentation of enrollment must be updated annually, signed by a parent or legal guardian, and include information on each child's normal days and hours of care and the meals normally received while in care.
 - (3) Documentation of: The enrollment of each child at day care homes; information used to determine the eligibility of enrolled providers' children for free or reduced price meals; information used to classify day care homes as tier I day care homes, including official source documentation obtained from school officials when the classification is based on school data; and information used to determine the eligibility of enrolled children in tier II day care homes that have been identified as eligible for free or reduced price meals in accordance with § 226.23(e)(1). Such documentation of enrollment must be updated annually, signed by a parent or legal guardian, and include information on each child's normal days and hours of care and the meals normally received while in care.
 - (4) Daily records indicating the number of participants in attendance and the daily meal counts, by type (breakfast, lunch, supper, and snacks), served to family day care home participants, or the time of service meal counts, by type (breakfast, lunch, supper, and snacks), served to center participants. State agencies may require family day care homes to record meal counts at the time of meal service only in day care homes providing care for more than 12 children in a single day, or in day care homes that have been found seriously deficient due to problems with their meal counts and claims.
 - (5) Except at day care homes, daily records indicating the number of meals, by type, served to adults performing labor necessary to the food service;
 - (6) Copies of invoices, receipts, or other records required by the State agency financial management instruction to document:
 - (i) Administrative costs claimed by the institution;
 - (ii) Operating costs claimed by the institution except sponsoring organizations of day care homes; and
 - (iii) Income to the Program.
 - (7) Copies of all claims for reimbursement submitted to the State agency;
 - (8) Receipts for all Program payments received from the State agency;
 - (9) If applicable, information concerning the dates and amounts of disbursement to each child care facility or adult day care facility under its auspices;

- (10) Copies of menus, and any other food service records required by the State agency;
 - (11) If applicable, information concerning the location and dates of each child care or adult day care facility review, any problems noted, and the corrective action prescribed and effected;
 - (12) Information on training session date(s) and location(s), as well as topics presented and names of participants; and
 - (13) Documentation of nonprofit food service to ensure that all Program reimbursement funds are used:
 - (i) Solely for the conduct of the food service operation; or
 - (ii) to improve such food service operations, principally for the benefit of the enrolled participants.
 - (14) For sponsoring organizations, records documenting the attendance at annual training of each staff member with monitoring responsibilities. Training must include instruction, appropriate to the level of staff experience and duties, on the Program's meal patterns, meal counts, claims submission and claim review procedures, recordkeeping requirements, and an explanation of the Program's reimbursement system.
- (f) **Day care home classifications.** Each sponsoring organization of day care homes shall determine which of the day care homes under its sponsorship are eligible as tier I day care homes. A sponsoring organization may use current school or census data provided by the State agency or free and reduced price applications collected from day care home providers in making a determination for each day care home. When using school or census data for making tier I day care home determinations, a sponsoring organization shall first consult school data, except in cases in which busing or other bases of attendance, such as magnet or charter schools, result in school data not being representative of an attendance area's household income levels. In these cases, census data should generally be consulted instead of school data. A sponsoring organization may also use census data if, after reasonable efforts are made, as defined by the State agency, the sponsoring organization is unable to obtain local school attendance area information. A sponsoring organization may also consult census data after having consulted school data which fails to support a tier I day care home determination for rural areas with geographically large school attendance areas, for other areas in which a school's free and reduced price enrollment is above 40 percent, or in other cases with State agency approval. However, if a sponsoring organization believes that a segment of an otherwise eligible school attendance area is above the criteria for free or reduced price meals, then the sponsoring organization shall consult census data to determine whether the homes in that area qualify as tier I day care homes based on census data. If census data does not support a tier I classification, then the sponsoring organization shall reclassify homes in segments of such areas as tier II day care homes unless the individual providers can document tier I eligibility on the basis of their household income. When making tier I day care home determinations based on school data, a sponsoring organization shall use attendance area information that it has obtained, or verified with appropriate school officials to be current, within the last school year. Determinations of a day care home's eligibility as a tier I day care home shall be valid for one year if based on a provider's household income, five years if based on school data, or until more current data are available if based on census data. However, a sponsoring organization, State agency, or FNS may change the determination if information becomes available indicating that a home is no longer in a qualified area. The State agency shall not routinely require annual redeterminations of the tiering status of tier I day care homes based on updated school data.
- (g) **Area eligibility determinations for at-risk afterschool care centers.** Sponsoring organizations of at-risk afterschool care centers must provide information, as required by the State agency, which permits the State agency to determine whether the centers they sponsor are located in eligible areas. Such

information may include the most recent free and reduced-price school data available pursuant to § 226.6(f)(1)(ix) and attendance area information that it has obtained, or verified with the appropriate school officials to be current, within the last school year.

- (h) **Payment to employees.** No institution that is a sponsoring organization of family day care homes and that employs more than one person is permitted to base payment (including bonuses or gratuities) to its employees, contractors, or family day care home providers solely on the number of new family day care homes recruited for the sponsoring organization's Program.
- (i) **Claims submission.** Each institution shall submit claims for reimbursement to the State agency in accordance with § 226.10.
- (j) **Program agreement.** Each institution shall enter into a Program agreement with the State agency in accordance with § 226.6(b)(4).
- (k) **Commodities.** Each institution receiving commodities shall ensure proper commodity utilization.
- (l) **Special Milk Program.** No institution may participate in both the Child and Adult Care Food Program and the Special Milk Program at the same time.
- (m) **Elderly feeding programs.** Institutions which are school food authorities (as defined in part 210 of this chapter) may use facilities, equipment and personnel supported by funds provided under this part to support a nonprofit nutrition program for the elderly, including a program funded under the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.).
- (n) **Regulations and guidance.** Each institution must comply with all regulations issued by FNS and the Department, all instructions and handbooks issued by FNS and the Department to clarify or explain existing regulations, and all regulations, instructions and handbooks issued by the State agency that are consistent with the provisions established in Program regulations.
- (o) **Information on WIC.** Each institution (other than outside-school-hours care centers, at-risk afterschool care centers, emergency shelters, and adult day care centers) must ensure that parents of enrolled children are provided with current information on the benefits and importance of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and the eligibility requirements for WIC participation.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982]

Editorial Note: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 226.15, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and at www.govinfo.gov.

§ 226.16 Sponsoring organization provisions.

- (a) Each sponsoring organization shall comply with all provisions of § 226.15.
- (b) Each sponsoring organization must submit to the State agency with its application all information required for its approval, and the approval of the facilities under its jurisdiction, as set forth in §§ 226.6(b) and 226.6(f). The application must demonstrate that the institution has the administrative and financial capability to operate the Program in accordance with the Program regulations. In addition to the information required in §§ 226.6(b) and 226.6(f), the application must include:

- (1) A sponsoring organization management plan and administrative budget, in accordance with §§ 226.6(b)(1)(iv), 226.6(b)(1)(v), 226.6(b)(2)(i), 226.6(f)(2)(i), and 226.7(g), which includes information sufficient to document the sponsoring organization's compliance with the performance standards set forth at § 226.6(b)(1)(xviii) and 226.6(b)(2)(vii). As part of its management plan, a sponsoring organization of day care homes must document that, to perform monitoring, it will employ the equivalent of one full-time staff person for each 50 to 150 day care homes it sponsors. As part of its management plan, a sponsoring organization of centers must document that, to perform monitoring, it will employ the equivalent of one full-time staff person for each 25 to 150 centers it sponsors. It is the State agency's responsibility to determine the appropriate level of staffing for monitoring for each sponsoring organization, consistent with these specified ranges and factors that the State agency will use to determine the appropriate level of monitoring staff for each sponsor. The monitoring staff equivalent may include the employee's time spent on scheduling, travel time, review time, follow-up activity, report writing, and activities related to the annual updating of children's enrollment forms. Sponsoring organizations that were participating in the Program on July 29, 2002, were to have submitted, no later than July 29, 2003, a management plan or plan amendment that meets the monitoring staffing requirement. For sponsoring organizations of centers, the portion of the administrative costs to be charged to the Program may not exceed 15 percent of the meal reimbursements estimated or actually earned during the budget year, unless the State agency grants a waiver in accordance with § 226.7(g). A sponsoring organization of centers must include in the administrative budget all administrative costs, whether incurred by the sponsoring organization or its sponsored centers. If at any point a sponsoring organization determines that the meal reimbursements estimated to be earned during the budget year will be lower than that estimated in its administrative budget, the sponsoring organization must amend its administrative budget to stay within the 15 percent limitation (or any higher limit established pursuant to a waiver granted under § 226.7(g)) or seek a waiver. Failure to do so will result in appropriate fiscal action in accordance with § 226.14(a).
- (2) An application for participation, or renewal materials, for each facility accompanied by all necessary supporting documentation;
- (3) Timely information concerning the eligibility status of facilities (such as licensing/approval actions);
- (4) For sponsoring organizations applying for initial participation, if required by State law, regulation, or policy, a bond in the form prescribed by such law, regulation, or policy;
- (5) A copy of the sponsoring organization's notice to parents, in a form and, to the maximum extent practicable, language easily understandable by the participant's parents or guardians. The notice must inform them of their facility's participation in CACFP, the Program's benefits, the name and telephone number of the sponsoring organization, and the name and telephone number of the State agency responsible for administration of CACFP;
- (6) If the sponsoring organization chooses to establish procedures for determining a day care home seriously deficient that supplement the procedures in paragraph (l) of this section, a copy of those supplemental procedures. If the State agency has made the sponsoring organization responsible for the administrative review of a proposed termination of a day care home's agreement for cause, pursuant to § 226.6(l)(1), a copy of the sponsoring organization's administrative review procedures. The sponsoring organization's supplemental serious deficiency and administrative review procedures must comply with paragraph (l) of this section and § 226.6(l);

- (7) A copy of their outside employment policy. The policy must restrict other employment by employees that interferes with an employee's performance of Program-related duties and responsibilities, including outside employment that constitutes a real or apparent conflict of interest;
- (8) For sponsoring organizations of day care homes, the name, mailing address, and date of birth of each provider; and
- (9) For sponsoring organizations of unaffiliated centers, the name and mailing address of each center.
- (c) Each sponsoring organization shall accept final administrative and financial responsibility for food service operations in all facilities under its jurisdiction.
- (d) Each sponsoring organization must provide adequate supervisory and operational personnel for the effective management and monitoring of the program at all facilities it sponsors. Each sponsoring organization must employ monitoring staff sufficient to meet the requirements of paragraph (b)(1) of this section. At a minimum, Program assistance must include:
 - (1) Pre-approval visits to each facility for which application is made to discuss Program benefits and verify that the proposed food service does not exceed the capability of the child care facility;
 - (2) Training on Program duties and responsibilities to key staff from all sponsored facilities prior to the beginning of Program operations. At a minimum, such training must include instruction, appropriate to the level of staff experience and duties, on the Program's meal patterns, meal counts, claims submission and review procedures, recordkeeping requirements, and reimbursement system. Attendance by key staff, as defined by the State agency, is mandatory;
 - (3) Additional mandatory training sessions, as defined by the State agency, for key staff from all sponsored facilities not less frequently than annually. At a minimum, this training must include instruction, appropriate to the level of staff experience and duties, on the Program's meal patterns, meal counts, claims submission and review procedures, recordkeeping requirements, and reimbursement system.
 - (4)
 - (i) **Review elements.** Reviews that assess whether the facility has corrected problems noted on the previous review(s), a reconciliation of the facility's meal counts with enrollment and attendance records for a five-day period, as specified in paragraph (d)(4)(ii) of this section, and an assessment of the facility's compliance with the Program requirements pertaining to:
 - (A) The meal pattern;
 - (B) Licensing or approval;
 - (C) Attendance at training;
 - (D) Meal counts;
 - (E) Menu and meal records; and
 - (F) The annual updating and content of enrollment forms (if the facility is required to have enrollment forms on file, as specified in §§ 226.15(e)(2) and 226.15(e)(3)).
 - (ii) **Reconciliation of meal counts.** Reviews must examine the meal counts recorded by the facility for five consecutive days during the current and/or prior claiming period. For each day examined, reviewers must use enrollment and attendance records (except in those outside-

school-hours care centers, at-risk afterschool care centers, and emergency shelters where enrollment records are not required) to determine the number of participants in care during each meal service and attempt to reconcile those numbers to the numbers of breakfasts, lunches, suppers, and/or snacks recorded in the facility's meal count for that day. Based on that comparison, reviewers must determine whether the meal counts were accurate. If there is a discrepancy between the number of participants enrolled or in attendance on the day of review and prior meal counting patterns, the reviewer must attempt to reconcile the difference and determine whether the establishment of an overclaim is necessary.

- (iii) ***Frequency and type of required facility reviews.*** Sponsoring organizations must review each facility three times each year, except as described in paragraph (d)(4)(iv) of this section. In addition:
 - (A) At least two of the three reviews must be unannounced;
 - (B) At least one unannounced review must include observation of a meal service;
 - (C) At least one review must be made during each new facility's first four weeks of Program operations; and
 - (D) Not more than six months may elapse between reviews.
 - (E) The timing of unannounced reviews must be varied so that they are unpredictable to the facility; and
 - (F) All types of meal service must be subject to review and sponsoring organizations must vary the meal service reviewed.
- (iv) ***Averaging of required reviews.*** If a sponsoring organization conducts one unannounced review of a facility in a year and finds no serious deficiencies (as described in paragraph (l)(2) of this section, regardless of the type of facility), the sponsoring organization may choose not to conduct a third review of the facility that year, and may make its second review announced, provided that the sponsoring organization conducts an average of three reviews of all of its facilities that year, and that it conducts an average of two unannounced reviews of all of its facilities that year. When the sponsoring organization uses this averaging provision, and a specific facility receives two reviews in one review year, its first review in the next review year must occur no more than nine months after the previous review.
- (v) ***Follow-up reviews.*** If, in conducting a facility review, a sponsoring organization detects one or more serious deficiency, the next review of that facility must be unannounced. Serious deficiencies are those described at paragraph (l)(2) of this section, regardless of the type of facility.
- (vi) ***Notification of unannounced reviews.*** Sponsoring organizations of centers must provide each center with written notification of the right of the sponsoring organization, the State agency, the Department, and other State and Federal officials to make announced or unannounced reviews of its operations during the center's normal hours of operation, and must also notify sponsored centers that anyone making such reviews must show photo identification that demonstrates that they are employees of one of these entities. For sponsored centers participating on July 29, 2002, the sponsoring organization was to have provided this notice no later than August 29, 2002. For sponsored centers that are approved after July 29, 2002, the sponsoring organization

must provide the notice before meal service under the Program begins. Sponsoring organizations must provide day care homes notification of unannounced visits in accordance with § 226.18(b)(1).

(vii) ***Other requirements pertaining to unannounced reviews.*** Unannounced reviews must be made only during the facility's normal hours of operation, and monitors making such reviews must show photo identification that demonstrates that they are employees of the sponsoring organization, the State agency, the Department, or other State and Federal agencies authorized to audit or investigate Program operations.

(viii) ***Imminent threat to health or safety.*** Sponsoring organizations that discover in a facility conduct or conditions that pose an imminent threat to the health or safety of participating children or the public, must immediately notify the appropriate State or local licensing or health authorities and take action that is consistent with the recommendations and requirements of those authorities.

(5) For sponsoring organizations, as part of their monitoring of facilities, compliance with the household contact requirements established pursuant to § 226.6(m)(5) of this part.

(e) Each sponsoring organization shall comply with the recordkeeping requirements established in §§ 226.10(d) and 226.15(e) and any recordkeeping requirements established by the State agency in order to justify the administrative payments made in accordance with § 226.12(a). Failure to maintain such records shall be grounds for the denial of reimbursement.

(f) The State agency may require a sponsoring organization to enter into separate agreements for the administration of separate types of facilities (child care centers, day care homes, adult day care centers, emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, and outside-school-hours care centers).

(g) Each sponsoring organization electing to receive advance payments of program funds for day care homes shall disburse the full amount of such payments within five working days of receipt from the State agency. If the sponsor requests the full operating advance to which it is entitled, the advances to day care homes shall be the full amount which the sponsor expects the home to earn based on the number of meals projected to be served to enrolled children during the period covered by the advance multiplied by the applicable payment rate as specified in § 226.13(c). If a sponsor elects to receive only a part of the operating advance to which it is entitled, or if the full operating advance is insufficient to provide a full advance to each home, the advance shall be disbursed to its homes in a manner and an amount the sponsor deems appropriate. Each sponsor shall disburse any reimbursement payments for food service due to each day care home within five working days of receipt from the State agency. Such payment shall be based on the number of meals served to enrolled children at each day care home, less any payments advanced to such home. However, the sponsoring organization may withhold from Program payments to each home an amount equal to food service operating costs incurred by the sponsoring organization in behalf of the home and with the home provider's written consent. If payments from the State agency are not sufficient to provide all day care homes under the sponsoring organization's jurisdiction with advance payments and reimbursement payments, available monies shall be used to provide all due reimbursement payments before advances are disbursed.

(h) Sponsoring organizations shall make payments of program funds to child care centers, adult day care centers, emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, or outside-school-hours care centers within five working days of receipt from the State agency, on the basis of the management plan approved by the State agency, and may not exceed the Program costs documented at each facility during any fiscal year;

except in those States where the State agency has chosen the option to implement a meals times rates payment system. In those States which implement this optional method of reimbursement, such disbursements may not exceed the rates times the number of meals documented at each facility during any fiscal year.

- (i) Disbursements of advance payments may be withheld from facilities which fail to submit reports required by § 226.15(e).
- (j) A for-profit organization shall be eligible to serve as a sponsoring organization for for-profit centers which have the same legal identity as the organization, but shall not be eligible to sponsor for-profit centers which are legally distinct from the organization, day care homes, or public or private nonprofit centers.
- (k) Before sponsoring organizations expend administrative funds to assist family day care homes in becoming licensed, they shall obtain the following information from each such home: a completed free and reduced price application which documents that the provider meets the Program's income standards; evidence of its application for licensing and official documentation of the defects that are impeding its licensing approval; and a completed CACFP application. These funding requests are limited to \$300 per home and are only available to each home once.

(l) ***Termination of agreements for cause*** —

- (1) ***General.*** The sponsoring organization must initiate action to terminate the agreement of a day care home for cause if the sponsoring organization determines the day care home has committed one or more serious deficiency listed in paragraph (l)(2) of this section.
- (2) ***List of serious deficiencies for day care homes.*** Serious deficiencies for day care homes are:
 - (i) Submission of false information on the application;
 - (ii) Submission of false claims for reimbursement;
 - (iii) Simultaneous participation under more than one sponsoring organization;
 - (iv) Non-compliance with the Program meal pattern;
 - (v) Failure to keep required records;
 - (vi) Conduct or conditions that threaten the health or safety of a child(ren) in care, or the public health or safety;
 - (vii) A determination that the day care home has been convicted of any activity that occurred during the past seven years and that indicated a lack of business integrity. A lack of business integrity includes fraud, antitrust violations, embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, receiving stolen property, making false claims, obstruction of justice, or any other activity indicating a lack of business integrity as defined by the State agency, or the concealment of such a conviction;
 - (viii) Failure to participate in training; or
 - (ix) Any other circumstance related to non-performance under the sponsoring organization-day care home agreement, as specified by the sponsoring organization or the State agency.
- (3) ***Serious deficiency notification procedures.*** If the sponsoring organization determines that a day care home has committed one or more serious deficiency listed in paragraph (l)(2) of this section, the sponsoring organization must use the following procedures to provide the day care home notice of

the serious deficiency(ies) and offer it an opportunity to take corrective action. However, if the serious deficiency(ies) constitutes an imminent threat to the health or safety of participants, or the day care home has engaged in activities that threaten the public health or safety, the sponsoring organization must follow the procedures in paragraph (l)(4) of this section instead of those in this paragraph (l)(3).

- (i) **Notice of serious deficiency.** The sponsoring organization must notify the day care home that it has been found to be seriously deficient. The sponsoring organization must provide a copy of the serious deficiency notice to the State agency. The notice must specify:
 - (A) The serious deficiency(ies);
 - (B) The actions to be taken by the day care home to correct the serious deficiency(ies);
 - (C) The time allotted to correct the serious deficiency(ies) (as soon as possible, but not to exceed 30 days);
 - (D) That the serious deficiency determination is not subject to administrative review.
 - (E) That failure to fully and permanently correct the serious deficiency(ies) within the allotted time will result in the sponsoring organization proposed termination of the day care home's agreement and the proposed disqualification of the day care home and its principals; and
 - (F) That the day care home's voluntary termination of its agreement with the sponsoring organization after having been notified that it is seriously deficient will still result in the day care home's formal termination by the sponsoring organization and placement of the day care home and its principals on the National disqualified list.
- (ii) **Successful corrective action.** If the day care home corrects the serious deficiency(ies) within the allotted time and to the sponsoring organization's satisfaction, the sponsoring organization must notify the day care home that it has temporarily defer its determination of serious deficiency. The sponsoring organization must also provide a copy of the notice to the State agency. However, if the sponsoring organization accepts the provider's corrective action, but later determines that the corrective action was not permanent or complete, the sponsoring organization must then propose to terminate the provider's Program agreement and disqualify the provider, as set forth in paragraph (l)(3)(iii) of this section.
- (iii) **Proposed termination of agreement and proposed disqualification.** If timely corrective action is not taken to fully and permanently correct the serious deficiency(ies) cited, the sponsoring organization must issue a notice proposing to terminate the day care home's agreement for cause. The notice must explain the day care home's opportunity for an administrative review of the proposed termination in accordance with § 226.6(l). The sponsoring organization must provide a copy of the notice to the State agency. The notice must:
 - (A) Inform the day care home that it may continue to participate and receive Program reimbursement for eligible meals served until its administrative review is concluded;
 - (B) Inform the day care home that termination of the day care home's agreement will result in the day care home's termination for cause and disqualification; and

- (C) State that if the day care home seeks to voluntarily terminate its agreement after receiving the notice of intent to terminate, the day care home will still be placed on the National disqualified list.
 - (iv) **Program payments.** The sponsoring organization must continue to pay any claims for reimbursement for eligible meals served until the serious deficiency(ies) is corrected or the day care home's agreement is terminated, including the period of any administrative review.
 - (v) **Agreement termination and disqualification.** The sponsoring organization must immediately terminate the day care home's agreement and disqualify the day care home when the administrative review official upholds the sponsoring organization's proposed termination and proposed disqualification, or when the day care home's opportunity to request an administrative review expires. At the same time the notice is issued, the sponsoring organization must provide a copy of the termination and disqualification letter to the State agency.
- (4) **Suspension of participation for day care homes.**
 - (i) **General.** If State or local health or licensing officials have cited a day care home for serious health or safety violations, the sponsoring organization must immediately suspend the home's CACFP participation prior to any formal action to revoke the home's licensure or approval. If the sponsoring organization determines that there is an imminent threat to the health or safety of participants at a day care home, or that the day care home has engaged in activities that threaten the public health or safety, and the licensing agency cannot make an immediate onsite visit, the sponsoring organization must immediately notify the appropriate State or local licensing and health authorities and take action that is consistent with the recommendations and requirements of those authorities. An imminent threat to the health or safety of participants and engaging in activities that threaten the public health or safety constitute serious deficiencies; however, the sponsoring organization must use the procedures in this paragraph (l)(4) (and not the procedures in paragraph (l)(3) of this section) to provide the day care home notice of the suspension of participation, serious deficiency, and proposed termination of the day care home's agreement.
 - (ii) **Notice of suspension, serious deficiency, and proposed termination.** The sponsoring organization must notify the day care home that its participation has been suspended, that the day care home has been determined seriously deficient, and that the sponsoring organization proposes to terminate the day care home's agreement for cause, and must provide a copy of the notice to the State agency. The notice must:
 - (A) Specify the serious deficiency(ies) found and the day care home's opportunity for an administrative review of the proposed termination in accordance with § 226.6(l);
 - (B) State that participation (including all Program payments) will remain suspended until the administrative review is concluded;
 - (C) Inform the day care home that if the administrative review official overturns the suspension, the day care home may claim reimbursement for eligible meals served during the suspension;
 - (D) Inform the day care home that termination of the day care home's agreement will result in the placement of the day care home on the National disqualified list; and

(E) State that if the day care home seeks to voluntarily terminate its agreement after receiving the notice of proposed termination, the day care home will still be terminated for cause and disqualified.

(iii) **Agreement termination and disqualification.** The sponsoring organization must immediately terminate the day care home's agreement and disqualify the day care home when the administrative review official upholds the sponsoring organization's proposed termination, or when the day care home's opportunity to request an administrative review expires.

(iv) **Program payments.** A sponsoring organization is prohibited from making any Program payments to a day care home that has been suspended until any administrative review of the proposed termination is completed. If the suspended day care home prevails in the administrative review of the proposed termination, the sponsoring organization must reimburse the day care home for eligible meals served during the suspension period.

(m) Sponsoring organizations of day care homes or unaffiliated centers must not make payments to employees or contractors solely on the basis of the number of homes or centers recruited. However, employees or contractors may be paid or evaluated on the basis of recruitment activities accomplished.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982; 47 FR 46072, Oct. 15, 1982, as amended at 48 FR 21530, May 13, 1983; 50 FR 8580, Mar. 4, 1985; 50 FR 26975, July 1, 1985; 53 FR 52591, Dec. 28, 1988; 63 FR 9729, Feb. 26, 1998; 64 FR 72260, Dec. 27, 1999; 67 FR 43490, June 27, 2002; 69 FR 53544, Sept. 1, 2004; 71 FR 5, Jan. 3, 2006; 72 FR 41608, July 31, 2007; 76 FR 34571, June 13, 2011; 78 FR 13451, Feb. 28, 2013; 88 FR 57856, Aug. 23, 2023]

§ 226.17 Child care center provisions.

(a) Child care centers may participate in the Program either as independent centers or under the auspices of a sponsoring organization; provided, however, that public and private nonprofit centers shall not be eligible to participate in the Program under the auspices of a for-profit sponsoring organization. Child care centers participating as independent centers shall comply with the provisions of § 226.15.

(b) All child care centers, independent or sponsored, shall meet the following requirements

(1) Child care centers must have Federal, State, or local licensing or approval to provide day care services to children. Child care centers, which are complying with applicable procedures to renew licensing or approval, may participate in the Program during the renewal process, unless the State agency has information that indicates that renewal will be denied. If licensing or approval is not available, a child care center may participate if it demonstrates compliance with the CACFP child care standards or any applicable State or local child care standards to the State agency.

(2) Except for for-profit centers, child care centers shall be public, or have tax exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(3) Each child care center participating in the Program must serve one or more of the following meal types—breakfast; lunch; supper; and snack. Reimbursement must not be claimed for more than two meals and one snack or one meal and two snacks provided daily to each child.

(4) Each child care center participating in the Program shall claim only the meal types specified in its approved application in accordance with the meal pattern requirements specified in § 226.20. For-profit child care centers may not claim reimbursement for meals served to children in any month in which less than 25 percent of the children in care (enrolled or licensed capacity, whichever is less) were eligible for free or reduced price meals or were title XX beneficiaries. However, children who

only receive at-risk afterschool snacks and/or at-risk afterschool meals must not be included in this percentage. Menus and any other nutritional records required by the State agency shall be maintained to document compliance with such requirements.

- (5) A child care center with preschool children may also be approved to serve a breakfast, snack, and supper to school-age children participating in an outside-school-hours care program meeting the criteria of § 226.19(b) that is distinct from its day care program for preschool-age children. The State agency may authorize the service of lunch to such participating children who attend a school that does not offer a lunch program, provided that the limit of two meals and one snack, or one meal and two snacks, per child per day is not exceeded.
- (6) A child care center with preschool children may also be approved to serve a snack to school age children participating in an afterschool care program meeting the requirements of § 226.17a that is distinct from its day care program for preschool children, provided that the limit of two meals, and one snack, or one meal and two snacks, per child per day is not exceeded.
- (7) A child care center may utilize existing school food service facilities or obtain meals from a school food service facility, and the pertinent requirements of this part shall be embodied in a written agreement between the child care center and school. The center shall maintain responsibility for all Program requirements set forth in this part.
- (8) Child care centers shall collect and maintain documentation of the enrollment of each child, including information used to determine eligibility for free and reduced price meals in accordance with § 226.23(e)(1). In addition, Head Start participants need only have a Head Start statement of income eligibility, or a statement of Head Start enrollment from an authorized Head Start representative, to be eligible for free meal benefits under the CACFP. Such documentation of enrollment must be updated annually, signed by a parent or legal guardian, and include information on each child's normal days and hours of care and the meals normally received while in care.
- (9) Each child care center must maintain daily records of time of service meal counts by type (breakfast, lunch, supper, and snacks) served to enrolled children, and to adults performing labor necessary to the food service.
- (10) Each child care center must require key staff, as defined by the State agency, to attend Program training prior to the center's participation in the Program, and at least annually thereafter, on content areas established by the State agency.
- (c) Each child care center shall comply with the recordkeeping requirements established in § 226.10(d), in paragraph (b) of this section and, if applicable, in § 226.15(e). Failure to maintain such records shall be grounds for the denial of reimbursement.
- (d) If so instructed by its sponsoring organization, a sponsored center must distribute to parents a copy of the sponsoring organization's notice to parents.
- (e) Unaffiliated sponsored child care centers must enter into a written permanent agreement with the sponsoring organization. The agreement must specify the rights and responsibilities of both parties. At a minimum, the agreement must include the provisions set forth in paragraph (b) of this section.
- (f) Independent child care centers must enter into a written permanent agreement with the State agency. The agreement must specify the rights and responsibilities of both parties as required by § 226.6(b)(4). At a minimum, the agreement must include the provisions set forth in paragraph (b) of this section.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982, as amended at 52 FR 36907, Oct. 2, 1987; 53 FR 52591, Dec. 28, 1988; 54 FR 26724, June 26, 1989; Amdt. 22, 55 FR 1378, Jan. 14, 1990; 61 FR 25554, May 22, 1996; 62 FR 23619, May 1, 1997; 63 FR 9729, Feb. 26, 1998; 64 FR 72261, Dec. 27, 1999; 67 FR 43493, June 27, 2002; 69 FR 53546, Sept. 1, 2004; 70 FR 43262, July 27, 2005; 72 FR 41608, July 31, 2007; 75 FR 16328, Apr. 1, 2010; 78 FR 13451, Feb. 28, 2013; 88 FR 57856, Aug. 23, 2023]

§ 226.17a At-risk afterschool care center provisions.

(a) Organizations eligible to receive reimbursement for at-risk afterschool snacks and at-risk afterschool meals

- (1) **Eligible organizations.** To receive reimbursement for at-risk afterschool snacks, organizations must meet the criteria in paragraphs (a)(1)(i) through (a)(1)(iv) of this section. To receive reimbursement for at-risk afterschool meals, organizations must meet the criteria in paragraphs (a)(1)(i) through (a)(1)(v) of this section.
- (i) Organizations must meet the definition of an *At-risk afterschool care center* in § 226.2. An organization may participate in the Program either as an independent center or as a child care facility under the auspices of a sponsoring organization. Public and private nonprofit centers may not participate under the auspices of a for-profit sponsoring organization.
 - (ii) Organizations must operate an eligible afterschool care program, as described in paragraph (b) of this section.
 - (iii) Organizations must meet the licensing/approval requirements in § 226.6(d)(1).
 - (iv) Except for for-profit centers, at-risk afterschool care centers must be public, or have tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or be currently participating in another Federal program requiring nonprofit status.
 - (v) Organizations eligible to be reimbursed for at-risk afterschool meals must be located in one of the eligible States designated by law or selected by the Secretary as directed by law.
- (2) **Limitations.**
- (i) To be reimbursed for at-risk afterschool snacks and/or at-risk afterschool meals, all organizations must:
 - (A) Serve the at-risk afterschool snacks and/or at-risk afterschool meals to children who are participating in an approved afterschool care program; and
 - (B) Not exceed the authorized capacity of the at-risk afterschool care center.
 - (ii) In any calendar month, a for-profit center must be eligible to participate in the Program as described in the definition of For-profit center in § 226.2. However, children who only receive at-risk afterschool snacks and/or at-risk afterschool meals must not be considered in determining this eligibility.

(b) Eligible at-risk afterschool care programs —

- (1) **Eligible programs.** To be eligible for reimbursement, an afterschool care program must:
- (i) Be organized primarily to provide care for children after school or on weekends, holidays, or school vacations during the regular school year (an at-risk afterschool care center may not claim snacks during summer vacation, unless it is located in the attendance area of a school operating on a year-round calendar);

- (ii) Have organized, regularly scheduled activities (i.e., in a structured and supervised environment);
- (iii) Include education or enrichment activities; and
- (iv) Except for *Emergency shelters* as defined in § 226.2, be located in an eligible area, as described in paragraph (i) of this section.

(2) **Eligibility limitation.** Organized athletic programs engaged in interscholastic or community level competitive sports are not eligible afterschool care programs.

(c) **Eligibility requirements for children.** At-risk afterschool snacks and/or at-risk afterschool meals are reimbursable only if served to children who are participating in an approved afterschool care program and who either are age 18 or under at the start of the school year or meet the definition of *Persons with disabilities* in § 226.2.

(d) **Licensing requirements for at-risk afterschool care centers.** In accordance with § 226.6(d)(1), if Federal, State or local licensing or approval is not otherwise required, at-risk afterschool care centers must meet State or local health and safety standards. When State or local health and safety standards have not been established, State agencies are encouraged to work with appropriate State and local officials to create such standards. Meeting these standards will remain a precondition for any afterschool center's eligibility for CACFP nutrition benefits. In cases where Federal, State or local licensing or approval is required, at-risk afterschool care centers that are complying with applicable procedures to renew licensing or approval may participate in the Program during the renewal process, unless the State agency has information that indicates the renewal will be denied.

(e) **Application procedures –**

(1) **Application.** An official of the organization must make written application to the State agency for any afterschool care program that it wants to operate as an at-risk afterschool care center.

(2) **Required information.** At a minimum, an organization must submit:

- (i) An indication that the applicant organization meets the eligibility criteria for organizations as specified in paragraph (a) of this section;
- (ii) A description of how the afterschool care program(s) meets the eligibility criteria in paragraph (b) of this section;
- (iii) In the case of a sponsoring organization, a list of all applicant afterschool care centers;
- (iv) Documentation that permits the State agency to confirm that all applicant afterschool care centers are located in an eligible area, as described in paragraph (i) of this section; and
- (v) Other information required as a condition of eligibility in the CACFP must be submitted with an application for participation in accordance with § 226.6(b)(1).

(f) **State agency action on applications –**

(1) **State agency approval.** The State agency must determine the eligibility of the afterschool care program for each sponsored afterschool care center based on the information submitted by the sponsoring organization in accordance with §§ 226.6(b)(1) and 226.15(g) and the requirements of this section. The State agency must determine the eligibility of the afterschool care programs of independent afterschool care centers based on the information submitted by the independent center in accordance with § 226.6(b)(1) and the requirements of this section. The State agency must

determine the area eligibility of independent at-risk afterschool care centers in accordance with the requirements of § 226.6(f)(1)(ix)(B). An approved organization must enter into an agreement with the State agency as described in paragraph (f)(2) of this section.

- (2) **Agreements.** The State agency must enter into a permanent agreement with an institution approved to operate one or more at-risk afterschool care centers, as described in § 226.6(b)(4). The agreement must describe the approved afterschool care programs and list the approved centers. The agreement must also require the institution to comply with the applicable requirements of this part 226.
 - (i) Unaffiliated sponsored afterschool care centers must enter into a written permanent agreement with the sponsoring organization. The agreement must specify the rights and responsibilities of both parties. At a minimum, the agreement must include the applicable provisions set forth in this section.
 - (ii) Independent afterschool care centers must enter into a written permanent agreement with the State agency. The agreement must specify the rights and responsibilities of both parties as required by § 226.6(b)(4). At a minimum, the agreement must include the applicable provisions set forth in this section.
- (g) **Application process in subsequent years.** To continue participating in the Program, independent at-risk afterschool care centers must comply with the annual information submission requirements, as described in §§ 226.6(b)(2)(i) and (f)(3)(ii). Sponsoring organizations of at-risk afterschool care centers must comply with the annual information submission requirements, as described in § 226.6(b)(2)(ii), and provide area eligibility data, as described in § 226.15(g).
- (h) **Changes to participating centers.** Independent at-risk afterschool care centers or sponsors of at-risk afterschool care centers must advise the State agency of any substantive changes to the afterschool care program. Sponsoring organizations that want to add new at-risk afterschool care centers must provide the State agency with the information sufficient to demonstrate that the new centers meet the requirements of this section.
- (i) **Area eligibility.** Except for emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers must be located in an area described in paragraph (a) of the *Eligible area* definition in § 226.2 and in paragraph (i)(1) of this section.
 - (1) **Definition.** An at-risk afterschool care center is in an eligible area if it is located in the attendance area of a school in which at least 50 percent of the enrolled children are certified eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.
 - (2) **Data used.** Area eligibility determinations must be based on the total number of children approved for free and reduced-price school meals for the preceding October, or another month designated by the State agency that administers the National School Lunch Program (the NSLP State agency). If the NSLP State agency chooses a month other than October, it must do so for the entire State.
 - (3) **Frequency of area eligibility determinations.** Area eligibility determinations are valid for five years. The State agency may determine the date in the fifth year in which the next five-year cycle of area eligibility will begin. The State agency must not routinely require redeterminations of area eligibility based on updated school data during the five-year period, except in cases where the State agency has determined it is most efficient to incorporate area eligibility decisions into the three-year application cycle. However, a sponsoring organization, the State agency, or FNS may change the determination of area eligibility if information becomes available indicating that an at-risk afterschool care center is no longer area eligible.

- (j) **Cost of at-risk afterschool snacks and meals.** All at-risk afterschool snacks and at-risk afterschool meals served under this section must be provided at no charge to participating children.
- (k) **Limit on daily reimbursements.** Only one at-risk afterschool snack and, in eligible States, one at-risk afterschool meal per child per day may be claimed for reimbursement. An at-risk afterschool care center that provides care to a child under another component of the Program during the same day may not claim reimbursement for more than two meals and one snack, or one meal and two snacks, per child per day, including the at-risk afterschool snack and the at-risk afterschool meal. All meals and snacks must be claimed in accordance with the requirements for the applicable component of the Program.
- (l) **Meal pattern requirements for at-risk afterschool snacks and at-risk afterschool meals.** At-risk afterschool snacks must meet the meal pattern requirements for snacks in § 226.20(b)(6) and/or (c)(4); at-risk afterschool meals must meet the meal pattern requirements for meals in § 226.20(b)(6) and/or (c)(1), (c)(2), or (c)(3).
- (m) **Time periods for snack and meal services —**
 - (1) **At-risk afterschool snacks.** When school is in session, the snack must be served after the child's school day. With State agency approval, the snack may be served at any time on weekends and vacations during the regular school year. Afterschool snacks may not be claimed during summer vacation, unless an at-risk afterschool care center is located in the attendance area of a school operating on a year-round calendar.
 - (2) **At-risk afterschool meals.** When school is in session, the meal must be served after the child's school day. With State agency approval, any one meal may be served (breakfast, lunch, or supper) per day on weekends and vacations during the regular school year. Afterschool meals may not be claimed during summer vacation, unless an at-risk afterschool care center is located in the attendance area of a school operating on a year-round calendar.
- (n) **Reimbursement rates.** At-risk afterschool snacks are reimbursed at the free rate for snacks. At-risk afterschool meals are reimbursed at the respective free rates for breakfast, lunch, or supper
- (o) **Recordkeeping requirements.** In addition to the other records required by this part, at-risk afterschool care centers must maintain:
 - (1) Daily attendance rosters, sign-in sheets or, with State agency approval, other methods which result in accurate recording of daily attendance;
 - (2) The number of at-risk afterschool snacks prepared or delivered for each snack service and/or, in eligible States, the number of at-risk afterschool meals prepared or delivered for each meal service;
 - (3) The number of at-risk afterschool snacks served to participating children for each snack service and/or, in eligible States, the number of at-risk afterschool meals served to participating children for each meal service; and
 - (4) Menus for each at-risk afterschool snack service and each at-risk afterschool meal service.
- (p) **Reporting requirements.** In addition to other reporting requirements under this part, at-risk afterschool care centers must report the total number of at-risk afterschool snacks and/or (in eligible States) the total number of at-risk afterschool meals served to eligible children based on daily attendance rosters or sign-in sheets.

- (q) **Monitoring requirements.** State agencies must monitor independent centers in accordance with § 226.6(m). Sponsoring organizations of at-risk afterschool care centers must monitor their centers in accordance with § 226.16(d)(4).

[72 FR 41608, July 31, 2007, as amended at 75 FR 16328, Apr. 1, 2010; 78 FR 13451, Feb. 28, 2013; 88 FR 57856, Aug. 23, 2023]

§ 226.18 Day care home provisions.

- (a) Day care homes shall have current Federal, State or local licensing or approval to provide day care services to children. Day care homes which cannot obtain their license because they lack the funding to comply with licensing standards may request a total limit per home of \$300 in administrative funds from a sponsoring organization to assist them in obtaining their license. Day care homes that, at the option of their sponsoring organization, receive administrative funds for licensing-related expenses must complete documentation requested by their sponsor as described in § 226.16(k) prior to receiving any funds. The agreement must be signed by the sponsoring organization and the provider and must include the provider's full name, mailing address, and date of birth. Day care homes which are complying with applicable procedures to renew licensing or approval may participate in the Program during the renewal process, unless the State agency has information which indicates that renewal will be denied. If licensing or approval is not available, a day care home may participate in the Program if:
- (1) It receives title XX funds for providing child care; or
 - (2) It demonstrates compliance with CACFP child care standards or applicable State or local child care standards to the State agency.
- (b) Day care homes participating in the program shall operate under the auspices of a public or private nonprofit sponsoring organization. Sponsoring organizations shall enter into a written permanent agreement with each sponsored day care home which specifies the rights and responsibilities of both parties. Nothing in the preceding sentence shall be construed to limit the ability of the sponsoring organization to suspend or terminate the permanent agreement in accordance with § 226.16(l). This agreement shall be developed by the State agency, unless the State agency elects, at the request of the sponsor, to approve an agreement developed by the sponsor. At a minimum, the agreement shall embody:
- (1) The right of the sponsoring organization, the State agency, the Department, and other State and Federal officials to make announced or unannounced reviews of the day care home's operations and to have access to its meal service and records during normal hours of operation.
 - (2) The responsibility of the sponsoring organization to require key staff, as defined by the State agency, to receive Program training prior to the day care home's participation in the Program, and at least annually thereafter, on content areas established by the State agency, and the responsibility of the day care home to participate in that training;
 - (3) The responsibility of the day care home to prepare and serve meals which meet the meal patterns specified in § 226.20;
 - (4) The responsibility of the day care home to maintain records of menus, and of the number of meals, by type, served to enrolled children;
 - (5) The responsibility of the day care home to promptly inform the sponsoring organization about any change in the number of children enrolled for care or in its licensing or approval status;
 - (6) The meal types approved for reimbursement to the day care home by the State agency;

- (7) The right of the day care home to receive in a timely manner the full food service rate for each meal served to enrolled children for which the sponsoring organization has received payment from the State agency. However, if, with the home provider's consent, the sponsoring organization will incur costs for the provision of program foodstuffs or meals in behalf of the home, and subtract such costs from Program payments to the home, the particulars of this arrangement shall be specified in the agreement. The sponsoring organization must not withhold Program payments to any family day care home for any other reason, except that the sponsoring organization may withhold from the provider any amounts that the sponsoring organization has reason to believe are invalid, due to the provider having submitted a false or erroneous meal count;
- (8) The right of the sponsoring organization or the day care home to terminate the agreement for cause or, subject to stipulations by the State agency, convenience;
- (9) A prohibition of any sponsoring organization fee to the day care home for its Program administrative services;
- (10) If the State agency has approved a time limit for submission of meal records by day care homes, that time limit shall be stated in the agreement;
- (11) The responsibility of the sponsoring organization to inform tier II day care homes of all of their options for receiving reimbursement for meals served to enrolled children. These options include:
 - (i) Receiving tier I rates for the meals served to eligible enrolled children, by electing to have the sponsoring organization identify all income-eligible children through the collection of free and reduced-price applications and the sponsoring organization or day care home's possession of other proof of a child or household's participation in a categorically eligible program;
 - (ii) Receiving tier I rates for the meals served to eligible enrolled children, by electing to have the sponsoring organization identify only those children for whom the sponsoring organization or day care home possess documentation of the child or household's participation in a categorically eligible program, under the expanded categorical eligibility provision, as described in § 226.23(e)(1); or
 - (iii) Receiving tier II rates of reimbursement for all meals served to enrolled children;
- (12) The responsibility of the sponsoring organization, upon the request of a tier II day care home, to collect applications and determine the eligibility of enrolled children for free or reduced price meals;
- (13) The right of the tier II day care home to assist in collecting applications from households and transmitting the applications to the sponsoring organization. However, a tier II day care home may not review the collected applications. The sponsoring organizations may prohibit a tier II day care home from assisting in collection and transmittal of applications if the day care home does not comply with the process, as described in § 226.23(e)(2)(viii);
- (14) The State agency's policy to restrict transfers of day care homes between sponsoring organizations;
- (15) The responsibility of the day care home to notify their sponsoring organization in advance whenever they are planning to be out of their home during the meal service period. The agreement must also state that, if this procedure is not followed and an unannounced review is conducted when the children are not present in the day care home, claims for meals that would have been served during the unannounced review will be disallowed;

- (16) The day care home's opportunity to request an administrative review if a sponsoring organization issues a notice of proposed termination of the day care home's Program agreement, or if a sponsoring organization suspends participation due to health and safety concerns, in accordance with § 226.6(1)(2); and
- (17) If so instructed by its sponsoring organization, the day care home's responsibility to distribute to parents a copy of the sponsoring organization's notice to parents.
- (c) Each day care home must serve one or more of the following meal types—breakfast, lunch, supper, and snack. Reimbursement may not be claimed for more than two meals and one snack, or one meal and two snacks, provided daily to each child.
- (d) Each day care home participating in the program shall serve the meal types specified in its approved application in accordance with the meal pattern requirements specified in § 226.20. Menu records shall be maintained to document compliance with these requirements. Meals shall be served at no separate charge to enrolled children;
- (e) Each day care home must maintain on file documentation of each child's enrollment and must maintain daily records of the number of children in attendance and the number of meals, by type, served to enrolled children. Such documentation of enrollment must be updated annually, signed by a parent or legal guardian, and include information on each child's normal days and hours of care and the meals normally received while in care. Each tier II day care home in which the provider elects to have the sponsoring organization identify enrolled children who are eligible for free or reduced price meals, and in which the sponsoring organization employs a meal counting and claiming system in accordance with § 226.13(d)(3)(i), shall maintain and submit each month to the sponsoring organization daily records of the number and types of meals served to each enrolled child by name. Payment may be made for meals served to the provider's own children only when
 - (1) such children are enrolled and participating in the child care program during the time of the meal service,
 - (2) enrolled nonresident children are present and participating in the child care program and
 - (3) providers' children are eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals. Reimbursement may not be claimed for meals served to children who are not enrolled, or for meals served at any one time to children in excess of the home's authorized capacity or for meals served to providers' children who are not eligible for free or reduced-price meals.
- (f) The State agency may not require a day care home or sponsoring organization to maintain documentation of home operating costs.
- (g) Each day care home shall comply with the recordkeeping requirements established in § 226.10(d) and in this section. Failure to maintain such records shall be grounds for the denial of reimbursement.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982]

Editorial Note: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 226.18, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and at www.govinfo.gov.

§ 226.19 Outside-school-hours care center provisions.

- (a) Outside-school-hours care centers may participate in the Program either as independent centers or under the auspices of a sponsoring organization; *Provided, however,* That public and private nonprofit centers shall not be eligible to participate in the Program under the auspices of a for-profit sponsoring organization. Outside-school-hours care centers participating as independent centers shall comply with the provisions of § 226.15.
- (b) All outside-school-hours care centers, independent or sponsored, shall meet the following requirements:
 - (1) In accordance with § 226.6(d)(1), if Federal, State or local licensing or approval is not otherwise required, outside-school-hours care centers must meet State or local health and safety standards. When State or local health and safety standards have not been established, State agencies are encouraged to work with appropriate State and local officials to create such standards. Meeting these standards will remain a precondition for any outside-school-hours care center's eligibility for CACFP nutrition benefits. In cases where Federal, State or local licensing or approval is required, outside-school-hours care centers that are complying with applicable procedures to renew licensing or approval may participate in the Program during the renewal process, unless the State agency has information that indicates the renewal will be denied.
 - (2) Except for for-profit centers, outside-school-hours care centers shall be public, or have tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.
 - (3) Nonresidential public or private nonprofit schools which provide organized child care programs for school children may participate in the Program as outside-school-hours care centers if:
 - (i) Children participate in a regularly scheduled program that meets the criteria of paragraph (b)(1) of this section. The program is organized for the purpose of providing services to children and is distinct from any extracurricular programs organized primarily for scholastic, cultural, or athletic purposes; and
 - (ii) Separate Program records are maintained.
 - (4) Outside-school-hours care centers shall be eligible to serve one or more of the following meal types: breakfasts, snacks and suppers. In addition, outside-school-hours care centers shall be eligible to serve lunches to enrolled children during periods of school vacation, including weekends and holidays, and to children attending schools which do not offer a lunch program. Notwithstanding the eligibility of outside-school-hours care centers to serve Program meals to children on school vacation, including holidays and weekends, such centers shall not operate under the Program on weekends only.
 - (5) Each outside-school-hours care center participating in the Program shall claim only the meal types specified in its approved application and served in compliance with the meal pattern requirements of § 226.20. Reimbursement may not be claimed for more than two meals and one snack provided daily to each child or for meals served to children at any one time in excess of authorized capacity. For-profit centers may not claim reimbursement for meals served to children in any month in which less than 25 percent of the children in care (enrolled or licensed capacity, whichever is less) were eligible for free or reduced price meals or were title XX beneficiaries.

- (6) Each outside-school-hours care center must require key operational staff, as defined by the State agency, to attend Program training prior to the center's participation in the Program, and at least annually thereafter, on content areas established by the State agency. Each meal service must be supervised by an adequate number of operational personnel who have been trained in Program requirements as outlined in this section. Operational personnel must ensure that:
 - (i) Meals are served only to children and to adults who perform necessary food service labor;
 - (ii) Meals served to children meet the meal pattern requirements specified in § 226.20;
 - (iii) Meals served are consumed on the premises of the centers;
 - (iv) Accurate records are maintained; and
 - (v) The number of meals prepared or ordered is promptly adjusted on the basis of participation trends.
- (7) Each outside-school-hours care center shall accurately maintain the following records:
 - (i) Information used to determine eligibility for free or reduced price meals in accordance with § 226.23(e)(1);
 - (ii) Number of meals prepared or delivered for each meal service;
 - (iii) Daily menu records for each meal service;
 - (iv) Number of meals served to children at each meal service;
 - (v) Number of children in attendance during each meal service;
 - (vi) Number of meals served to adults performing necessary food service labor for each meal service; and
 - (vii) All other records required by the State agency financial management system.
- (8) An outside-school-hours care center may utilize existing school food service facilities or obtain meals from a school food service facility, and the pertinent requirements of this part shall be embodied in a written agreement between the outside-school-hours care center and the school. The center shall maintain responsibility for all Program requirements set forth in this part.
- (c) Each outside-school-hours care center shall comply with the recordkeeping requirements established in § 226.10(d), in paragraph (b) of this section and, if applicable, in § 226.15(e). Failure to maintain such records shall be grounds for the denial of reimbursement.
- (d) Unaffiliated sponsored outside-school-hours-care centers must enter into a written permanent agreement with the sponsoring organization. The agreement must specify the rights and responsibilities of both parties. At a minimum, the agreement must include the provisions set forth in paragraph (b) of this section.
- (e) Independent outside-school-hours care centers must enter into a written permanent agreement with the State agency. The agreement must specify the rights and responsibilities of both parties as required by § 226.6(b)(4). At a minimum, the agreement must include the provisions described in paragraph (b) of this section.

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§ 226.19a Adult day care center provisions.

- (a) Adult day care centers may participate in the Program either as independent centers or under the auspices of a sponsoring organization; provided, however, that public and private nonprofit centers shall not be eligible to participate in the Program under the auspices of a for-profit sponsoring organization. Adult day care centers participating as independent centers shall comply with the provisions of § 226.15.
- (b) All adult day care centers, independent or sponsored, shall meet the following requirements:
 - (1) Adult day care centers shall provide a community-based group program designed to meet the needs of functionally impaired adults through an individual plan of care. Such a program shall be a structured, comprehensive program that provides a variety of health, social and related support services to enrolled adult participants.
 - (2) Adult day care centers shall provide care and services directly or under arrangements made by the agency or organization whereby the agency or organization maintains professional management responsibility for all such services.
 - (3) Adult day care centers shall have Federal, State or local licensing or approval to provide day care services to functionally impaired adults (as defined in § 226.2) or individuals 60 years of age or older in a group setting outside their home or a group living arrangement on a less than 24-hour basis. Adult day care centers which are complying with applicable procedures to renew licensing or approval may participate in the Program during the renewal process, unless the State agency has information which indicates that renewal will be denied.
 - (4) Except for for-profit centers, adult day care centers shall be public, or have tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.
 - (5) Each adult day care center participating in the Program must serve one or more of the following meal types—breakfast, lunch, supper, and snack. Reimbursement may not be claimed for more than two meals and one snack, or one snack and two meals, provided daily to each adult participant.
 - (6) Each adult day care center participating in the Program shall claim only the meal types specified in its approved application in accordance with the meal pattern requirements specified in § 226.20. Participating centers may not claim CACFP reimbursement for meals claimed under part C of title III of the Older Americans Act of 1965. Reimbursement may not be claimed for meals served to persons who are not enrolled, or for meals served to participants at any one time in excess of the center's authorized capacity, or for any meal served at a for-profit center during a calendar month when less than 25 percent of enrolled participants were title XIX or title XX beneficiaries. Menus and any other nutritional records required by the State agency shall be maintained to document compliance with such requirements.
 - (7) An adult day care center may obtain meals from a school food service facility, and the pertinent requirements of this part shall be embodied in a written agreement between the center and school. The center shall maintain responsibility for all Program requirements set forth in this part.

- (8) Adult day care centers shall collect and maintain documentation of the enrollment of each adult participant including information used to determine eligibility for free and reduced price meals in accordance with § 226.23(e)(1).
- (9) Each adult day care center must maintain daily records of time of service meal counts by type (breakfast, lunch, supper, and snacks) served to enrolled participants, and to adults performing labor necessary to the food service.
- (10) Each adult day care center shall maintain records on the age of each enrolled person. In addition, each adult day care center shall maintain records which demonstrate that each enrolled person under the age of 60 meets the functional impairment eligibility requirements established under the definition of “functionally impaired adult” contained in this part. Finally, each adult day care center shall maintain records which document that qualified adult day care participants reside in their own homes (whether alone or with spouses, children or guardians) or in group living arrangements as defined in § 226.2.
- (11) Each adult day care center must require key operational staff, as defined by the State agency, to attend Program training prior to the facility's participation in the Program, and at least annually thereafter, on content areas established by the State agency. Each meal service must be supervised by an adequate number of operational personnel who have been trained in Program requirements as outlined in this section.
- (c) Each adult day care center shall comply with the recordkeeping requirements established in § 226.10(d), in paragraph (b) of this section and, if applicable, in § 226.15(e). Failure to maintain such records shall be grounds for the denial of reimbursement.
- (d) Unaffiliated sponsored adult day care centers must enter into a written permanent agreement with the sponsoring organization. The agreement must specify the rights and responsibilities of both parties. At a minimum, the agreement must address the provisions set forth in paragraph (b) this section.
- (e) Independent adult day care centers must enter into a written permanent agreement with the State agency. The agreement must specify the rights and responsibilities of both parties as required by § 226.6(b)(4). At a minimum, the agreement must include the provisions described in paragraph (b) of this section.

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§ 226.20 Requirements for meals.

- (a) **Meal components.** Except as otherwise provided in this section, each meal served in the Program must contain, at a minimum, the indicated components:
 - (1) **Fluid milk.** Fluid milk must be served as a beverage or on cereal, or a combination of both. Lactose-free and reduced-lactose milk that meet the fat content and flavor specifications for each age group may also be offered.
 - (i) **Children 1 year old.** Unflavored whole milk must be served.
 - (ii) **Children 2 through 5 years old.** Either unflavored low-fat (1 percent) or unflavored fat-free (skim) milk must be served.

- (iii) **Children 6 years old and older.** Low-fat (1 percent fat or less) or fat-free (skim) milk must be served. Milk may be unflavored or flavored.
- (iv) **Adults.** Low-fat (1 percent fat or less) or fat-free (skim) milk must be served. Milk may be unflavored or flavored. Six ounces (weight) or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (volume) of yogurt may be used to fulfill the equivalent of 8 ounces of fluid milk once per day. Yogurt may be counted as either a fluid milk substitute or as a meat alternate, but not as both in the same meal.
- (2) **Vegetables.** A serving may contain fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables, dry beans, peas, and lentils, or vegetable juice. All vegetables are credited based on their volume as served, except that 1 cup of leafy greens counts as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables.
 - (i) Pasteurized, full-strength vegetable juice may be used to fulfill the entire requirement. Vegetable juice or fruit juice may only be served at one meal, including snack, per day.
 - (ii) Cooked dry beans, peas, and lentils may be counted as either a vegetable or as a meat alternate, but not as both in the same dish.
- (3) **Fruits.** A serving may contain fresh, frozen, canned, dried fruits, or fruit juice. All fruits are based on their volume as served, except that $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of dried fruit counts as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit.
 - (i) Pasteurized, full-strength fruit juice may be used to fulfill the entire requirement. Fruit juice or vegetable juice may only be served at one meal, including snack, per day.
 - (ii) A vegetable may be used to meet the entire fruit requirement at lunch and supper. When two vegetables are served at lunch or supper, two different kinds of vegetables must be served.
- (4) **Grains —**
 - (i) **Enriched and whole grains.** All grains must be made with enriched or whole grain meal or flour.
 - (A) At least one serving per day, across all eating occasions of bread, cereals, and grains, must be whole grain-rich, as defined in § 226.2. Whole grain-rich is the term designated by FNS to indicate that the grain content of a product is between 50 and 100 percent whole grain with any remaining grains being enriched.
 - (B) A serving may contain whole grain-rich or enriched bread, cornbread, biscuits, rolls, muffins, and other bread products; or whole grain-rich, enriched, or fortified cereal grain, cooked pasta or noodle products, or breakfast cereal; or any combination of these foods.
 - (ii) **Breakfast cereals.** Breakfast cereals are those as defined by the Food and Drug Administration in 21 CFR 170.3(n)(4) for ready-to-eat and instant and regular hot cereals. Through September 30, 2025, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of total sugars per dry ounce. By October 1, 2025, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce.
 - (iii) **Desserts.** Grain-based desserts do not count toward meeting the grains requirement.
- (5) **Meats/meat alternates —**
 - (i) **Serving meats/meat alternates.** Meats/meat alternates must be served in a main dish, or in a main dish and one other menu item. The creditable quantity of meats/meat alternates must be the edible portion as served of:
 - (A) Lean meat, poultry, or fish;

- (B) Alternate protein products;
 - (C) Cheese, or an egg;
 - (D) Cooked dry beans, peas, and lentils;
 - (E) Peanut butter; or
 - (F) Any combination of these foods.
- (ii) **Nuts and seeds.** Nuts and seeds and their butters are allowed as meat alternates. Information on crediting nuts and seeds may be found in FNS guidance.
- (A) Nut and seed meals or flours may credit only if they meet the requirements for alternate protein products established in appendix A of this part.
 - (B) Acorns, chestnuts, and coconuts do not credit as meat alternates because of their low protein and iron content.
- (iii) **Yogurt.** Four ounces (weight) or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (volume) of yogurt equals one ounce of the meats/meat alternates component. Yogurt may be used to meet all or part of the meats/meat alternates component as follows:
- (A) Yogurt may be plain or flavored, unsweetened, or sweetened;
 - (B) Through September 30, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces. By October 1, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce);
 - (C) Noncommercial or commercial standardized yogurt products, such as frozen yogurt, drinkable yogurt products, homemade yogurt, yogurt flavored products, yogurt bars, yogurt covered fruits or nuts, or similar products are not creditable; and
 - (D) For adults, yogurt may only be used as a meat alternate when it is not also being used as a fluid milk substitute in the same meal.
- (iv) **Tofu and soy products.** Commercial tofu and soy products may be used to meet all or part of the meats/meat alternates component in accordance with FNS guidance and appendix A of this part. Non-commercial and non-standardized tofu and soy products cannot be used.
- (v) **Beans, peas, and lentils.** Cooked dry beans, peas, and lentils may be used to meet all or part of the meats/meat alternates component. Beans, peas, and lentils include black beans, garbanzo beans, lentils, kidney beans, mature lima beans, navy beans, pinto beans, and split peas. Beans, peas, and lentils may be counted as either a meat/meat alternate or as a vegetable, but not as both in the same dish.
- (vi) **Other meat alternates.** Other meat alternates, such as cheese, eggs, and nut butters may be used to meet all or part of the meats/meat alternates component.

(b) **Infant meals –**

- (1) **Feeding infants.** Foods in reimbursable meals served to infants ages birth through 11 months must be of a texture and a consistency that are appropriate for the age and development of the infant being fed. Foods must also be served during a span of time consistent with the infant's eating habits.

- (2) **Breastmilk and iron-fortified formula.** Breastmilk or iron-fortified infant formula, or portions of both, must be served to infants birth through 11 months of age. An institution or facility must offer at least one type of iron-fortified infant formula. Meals containing breastmilk or iron-fortified infant formula supplied by the institution or facility, or by the parent or guardian, are eligible for reimbursement.
 - (i) **Parent or guardian provided breastmilk or iron-fortified formula.** A parent or guardian may choose to accept the offered formula, or decline the offered formula and supply expressed breastmilk or an iron-fortified infant formula instead. Meals in which a mother directly breastfeeds her child at the child care institution or facility are also eligible for reimbursement. When a parent or guardian chooses to provide breastmilk or iron-fortified infant formula and the infant is consuming solid foods, the institution or facility must supply all other required meal components in order for the meal to be reimbursable.
 - (ii) **Breastfed infants.** For some breastfed infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breastmilk per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount of breastmilk may be offered. In these situations, additional breastmilk must be offered at a later time if the infant will consume more.
- (3) **Solid foods.** The gradual introduction of solid foods may begin at six months of age, or before or after six months of age if it is developmentally appropriate for the infant and in accordance with FNS guidance.
- (4) **Infant meal pattern.** Infant meals must have, at a minimum, each of the food components indicated, in the amount that is appropriate for the infant's age.
 - (i) **Birth through 5 months –**
 - (A) **Breakfast.** Four to 6 fluid ounces of breastmilk or iron-fortified infant formula, or portions of both.
 - (B) **Lunch or supper.** Four to 6 fluid ounces of breastmilk or iron-fortified infant formula, or portions of both.
 - (C) **Snack.** Four to 6 fluid ounces of breastmilk or iron-fortified infant formula, or portions of both.
 - (ii) **6 through 11 months.** Breastmilk or iron-fortified formula, or portions of both, is required. Meals are reimbursable when institutions and facilities provide all the components in the meal pattern that the infant is developmentally ready to accept.
 - (A) **Breakfast, lunch, or supper.** Six to 8 fluid ounces of breastmilk or iron-fortified infant formula, or portions of both; and 0 to $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce equivalent of iron-fortified dry infant cereal; or 0-4 tablespoons meat, fish, poultry, whole egg, cooked dry beans, peas, and lentils; or 0 to 2 ounces (weight) of cheese; or 0 to 4 ounces (volume) of cottage cheese; or 0 to 4 ounces of yogurt; and 0 to 2 tablespoons of vegetable, fruit, or portions of both. Fruit juices and vegetable juices must not be served.
 - (B) **Snack.** Two to 4 fluid ounces of breastmilk or iron-fortified infant formula; and 0 to $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce equivalent bread; or 0- $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce equivalent crackers; or 0- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce equivalent infant cereal or ready-to-eat cereals; and 0 to 2 tablespoons of vegetable or fruit, or portions of both. Fruit juices and vegetable juices must not be served. A serving of grains must be whole grain-rich, enriched meal, or enriched flour.

- (5) **Infant meal pattern table.** The minimum amounts of meal components to serve to infants, as described in paragraph (b)(4) of this section, are:

TABLE 1 TO PARAGRAPH (b)(5)—INFANT MEAL PATTERNS

Infants	Birth through 5 months	6 through 11 months
Breakfast, Lunch, or Supper	4-6 fluid ounces breast milk ¹ or formula ²	6-8 fluid ounces breast milk ¹ or formula; ² and 0- ¹ / ₂ ounce equivalent infant cereal; ^{2 3} or 0-4 tablespoons meat, fish, poultry, whole egg, cooked dry beans, peas, and lentils; or 0-2 ounces of cheese; or 0-4 ounces (volume) of cottage cheese; or 0-4 ounces or ¹ / ₂ cup of yogurt; ⁴ or a combination of the above; ⁵ and 0-2 tablespoons vegetable or fruit, or a combination of both. ^{5 6}
Snack	4-6 fluid ounces breast milk ¹ or formula ²	2-4 fluid ounces breast milk ¹ or formula; ² and 0- ¹ / ₂ ounce equivalent bread; ^{3 7} or 0- ¹ / ₄ ounce equivalent crackers; ^{3 7} or 0- ¹ / ₂ ounce equivalent infant cereal; ^{2 3} or 0- ¹ / ₄ ounce equivalent ready-to-eat breakfast cereal; ^{3 5 7 8} and 0-2 tablespoons vegetable or fruit, or a combination

¹ Breast milk or formula, or portions of both, must be served; however, it is recommended that breast milk be served from birth through 11 months. For some breastfed infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breast milk per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount of breast milk may be offered, with additional breast milk offered at a later time if the infant will consume more.

² Infant formula and dry infant cereal must be iron-fortified.

³ Information on crediting grain items may be found in FNS guidance.

⁴ Through September 30, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces. By October 1, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce).

⁵ A serving of this component is required when the infant is developmentally ready to accept it.

⁶ Fruit and vegetable juices must not be served.

⁷ A serving of grains must be whole grain-rich, enriched meal, enriched flour, bran, or germ.

⁸ Through September 30, 2025, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of total sugars per dry ounce. By October 1, 2025, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce.

Infants	Birth through 5 months	6 through 11 months
		of both. ^{5 6}

¹ Breast milk or formula, or portions of both, must be served; however, it is recommended that breast milk be served from birth through 11 months. For some breastfed infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breast milk per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount of breast milk may be offered, with additional breast milk offered at a later time if the infant will consume more.

² Infant formula and dry infant cereal must be iron-fortified.

³ Information on crediting grain items may be found in FNS guidance.

⁴ Through September 30, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces. By October 1, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce).

⁵ A serving of this component is required when the infant is developmentally ready to accept it.

⁶ Fruit and vegetable juices must not be served.

⁷ A serving of grains must be whole grain-rich, enriched meal, enriched flour, bran, or germ.

⁸ Through September 30, 2025, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of total sugars per dry ounce. By October 1, 2025, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce.

- (c) **Meal patterns for children age 1 through 18 and adult participants.** Institutions and facilities must serve the meal components and quantities specified in the following meal patterns for children and adult participants in order to qualify for reimbursement.

- (1) **Breakfast.** Fluid milk, vegetables or fruit, or portions of both, and grains are required components of the breakfast meal. Meats/meat alternates may be offered to meet the entire grains requirement a maximum of three times per week. The minimum amounts of meal components to be served at breakfast are as follows:

**TABLE 2 TO PARAGRAPH (c)(1)—CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM
BREAKFAST
[SELECT THE APPROPRIATE COMPONENTS FOR A REIMBURSABLE MEAL]**

Meal components and food items ¹	Minimum quantities				
	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²	Adult participants
Fluid Milk	4 fluid ounces ³	6 fluid ounces ⁴	8 fluid ounces ⁵	8 fluid ounces ⁵	8 fluid ounces. ⁶
Vegetables, fruits, or portions of both ⁷	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup.
Grains ⁸	$\frac{1}{2}$ ounce	$\frac{1}{2}$ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce	2 ounce

¹ Must serve all three components for a reimbursable meal. Offer versus serve is an option for at-risk afterschool care and adult day care centers.

² At-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters may need to serve larger portions to children ages 13 through 18 to meet their nutritional needs.

³ Must serve unflavored whole milk to children age 1.

⁴ Must serve unflavored milk to children 2 through 5 years old. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁵ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to children ages 6 and older. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁶ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to adults. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less. Yogurt may be offered in the place of milk once per day for adults. Yogurt may count as either a fluid milk substitute or as a meat alternate, but not both, in the same meal. Six ounces (by weight) or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (by volume) of yogurt is the equivalent of 8 ounces of fluid milk. Through September 30, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces. By October 1, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce).

⁷ Juice must be pasteurized. Full-strength juice may only be offered to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal or snack, per day.

⁸ Must serve at least one whole grain-rich serving, across all eating occasions, per day. Grain-based desserts may not be used to meet the grains requirement. Meats/meat alternates may be offered in place of the entire grains requirement, up to 3 times per week at breakfast. One ounce equivalent of meats/meat alternates credits equal to one ounce equivalent of grains. Through September 30, 2025, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of total sugars per dry ounce. By October 1, 2025, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce. Information on crediting grain items and meats/meat alternates may be found in FNS guidance.

Meal components and food items ¹	Minimum quantities				
	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²	Adult participants
	equivalent	equivalent	equivalent	equivalent	equivalents.

¹ Must serve all three components for a reimbursable meal. Offer versus serve is an option for at-risk afterschool care and adult day care centers.

² At-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters may need to serve larger portions to children ages 13 through 18 to meet their nutritional needs.

³ Must serve unflavored whole milk to children age 1.

⁴ Must serve unflavored milk to children 2 through 5 years old. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁵ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to children ages 6 and older. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁶ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to adults. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less. Yogurt may be offered in the place of milk once per day for adults. Yogurt may count as either a fluid milk substitute or as a meat alternate, but not both, in the same meal. Six ounces (by weight) or ³/₄ cup (by volume) of yogurt is the equivalent of 8 ounces of fluid milk. Through September 30, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces. By October 1, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce).

⁷ Juice must be pasteurized. Full-strength juice may only be offered to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal or snack, per day.

⁸ Must serve at least one whole grain-rich serving, across all eating occasions, per day. Grain-based desserts may not be used to meet the grains requirement. Meats/meat alternates may be offered in place of the entire grains requirement, up to 3 times per week at breakfast. One ounce equivalent of meats/meat alternates credits equal to one ounce equivalent of grains. Through September 30, 2025, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of total sugars per dry ounce. By October 1, 2025, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce. Information on crediting grain items and meats/meat alternates may be found in FNS guidance.

- (2) **Lunch and supper.** Fluid milk, meats/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains are required components in the lunch and supper meals. The minimum amounts of meal components to be served at lunch and supper are as follows:

TABLE 3 TO PARAGRAPH (c)(2)—CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM LUNCH AND SUPPER
[SELECT THE APPROPRIATE COMPONENTS FOR A REIMBURSABLE MEAL]

Meal components and food items ¹	Minimum quantities				
	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²	Adult participants
Fluid milk	4 fluid ounces ³	6 fluid ounces ⁴	8 fluid ounces ⁵	8 fluid ounces ⁵	8 fluid ounces. ⁶
Meats/meat alternates ⁷	1 ounce equivalent	1 ¹ / ₂ ounce equivalents	2 ounce equivalents	2 ounce equivalents	2 ounce equivalents.

¹ Must serve all five components for a reimbursable meal. Offer versus serve is an option for at-risk afterschool care and adult day care centers.

² At-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters may need to serve larger portions to children ages 13 through 18 to meet their nutritional needs.

³ Must serve unflavored whole milk to children age 1.

⁴ Must serve unflavored milk to children 2 through 5 years old. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁵ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to children ages 6 and older. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁶ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to adults. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less. Yogurt may be offered in place of milk once per day for adults. Yogurt may count as either a fluid milk substitute or as a meat alternate, but not both, in the same meal. Six ounces (by weight) or ³/₄ cup (by volume) of yogurt is the equivalent of 8 ounces of fluid milk. A serving of fluid milk is optional for suppers served to adult participants.

⁷ Alternate protein products must meet the requirements in appendix A to this part. Through September 30, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces. By October 1, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce). Information on crediting meats/meat alternates may be found in FNS guidance.

⁸ Juice must be pasteurized. Full-strength juice may only be offered to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal or snack, per day. A vegetable may be offered to meet the entire fruit requirement. When two vegetables are served at lunch or supper, two different kinds of vegetables must be served.

⁹ Must serve at least one whole grain-rich serving, across all eating occasions, per day. Grain-based desserts may not be used to meet the grains requirement. Through September 30, 2025, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of total sugars per dry ounce. By October 1, 2025, breakfast cereal must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce. Information on crediting grain items may be found in FNS guidance.

Meal components and food items ¹	Minimum quantities				
	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²	Adult participants
Vegetables ⁸	1/8 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup.
Fruits ⁸	1/8 cup	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup.
Grains ⁹	1/2 ounce	1/2 ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce	2 ounce

¹ Must serve all five components for a reimbursable meal. Offer versus serve is an option for at-risk afterschool care and adult day care centers.

² At-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters may need to serve larger portions to children ages 13 through 18 to meet their nutritional needs.

³ Must serve unflavored whole milk to children age 1.

⁴ Must serve unflavored milk to children 2 through 5 years old. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁵ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to children ages 6 and older. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁶ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to adults. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less. Yogurt may be offered in place of milk once per day for adults. Yogurt may count as either a fluid milk substitute or as a meat alternate, but not both, in the same meal. Six ounces (by weight) or 3/4 cup (by volume) of yogurt is the equivalent of 8 ounces of fluid milk. A serving of fluid milk is optional for suppers served to adult participants.

⁷ Alternate protein products must meet the requirements in appendix A to this part. Through September 30, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces. By October 1, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce). Information on crediting meats/meat alternates may be found in FNS guidance.

⁸ Juice must be pasteurized. Full-strength juice may only be offered to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal or snack, per day. A vegetable may be offered to meet the entire fruit requirement. When two vegetables are served at lunch or supper, two different kinds of vegetables must be served.

⁹ Must serve at least one whole grain-rich serving, across all eating occasions, per day. Grain-based desserts may not be used to meet the grains requirement. Through September 30, 2025, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of total sugars per dry ounce. By October 1, 2025, breakfast cereal must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce. Information on crediting grain items may be found in FNS guidance.

Meal components and food items ¹	Minimum quantities				
	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²	Adult participants
	equivalent	equivalent	equivalent	equivalent	equivalents.

¹ Must serve all five components for a reimbursable meal. Offer versus serve is an option for at-risk afterschool care and adult day care centers.

² At-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters may need to serve larger portions to children ages 13 through 18 to meet their nutritional needs.

³ Must serve unflavored whole milk to children age 1.

⁴ Must serve unflavored milk to children 2 through 5 years old. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁵ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to children ages 6 and older. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁶ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to adults. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less. Yogurt may be offered in place of milk once per day for adults. Yogurt may count as either a fluid milk substitute or as a meat alternate, but not both, in the same meal. Six ounces (by weight) or ³/₄ cup (by volume) of yogurt is the equivalent of 8 ounces of fluid milk. A serving of fluid milk is optional for suppers served to adult participants.

⁷ Alternate protein products must meet the requirements in appendix A to this part. Through September 30, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces. By October 1, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce). Information on crediting meats/meat alternates may be found in FNS guidance.

⁸ Juice must be pasteurized. Full-strength juice may only be offered to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal or snack, per day. A vegetable may be offered to meet the entire fruit requirement. When two vegetables are served at lunch or supper, two different kinds of vegetables must be served.

⁹ Must serve at least one whole grain-rich serving, across all eating occasions, per day. Grain-based desserts may not be used to meet the grains requirement. Through September 30, 2025, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of total sugars per dry ounce. By October 1, 2025, breakfast cereal must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce. Information on crediting grain items may be found in FNS guidance.

- (3) **Snack.** Serve two of the following five components: Fluid milk, meats/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains. Fruit juice, vegetable juice, and milk may comprise only one component of the snack. The minimum amounts of meal components to be served at snacks are as follows:

**TABLE 4 TO PARAGRAPH (c)(3)—CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM SNACK
[SELECT TWO OF THE FIVE COMPONENTS FOR A REIMBURSABLE SNACK]**

Meal components and food items ¹	Minimum quantities				
	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²	Adult participants
Fluid milk	4 fluid ounces ³	4 fluid ounces ⁴	8 fluid ounces ⁵	8 fluid ounces ⁵	8 fluid ounces. ⁶
Meats/meat alternates ⁷	1/2 ounce equivalent	1/2 ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent.
Vegetables ⁸	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	3/4 cup	1/2 cup.
Fruits ⁸	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	3/4 cup	1/2 cup.
Grains ⁹	1/2 ounce	1/2 ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce

¹ Must serve two of the five components for a reimbursable snack. Milk and juice may not be served as the only two items in a reimbursable snack.

² At-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters may need to serve larger portions to children ages 13 through 18 to meet their nutritional needs.

³ Must serve unflavored whole milk to children age 1.

⁴ Must serve unflavored milk to children 2 through 5 years old. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁵ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to children ages 6 and older. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁶ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to adults. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less. Yogurt may be offered in place of milk, once per day for adults. Yogurt may count as either a fluid milk substitute or as a meat alternate, but not both, in the same meal. Six ounces (by weight) or 3/4 cup (by volume) of yogurt is the equivalent of 8 ounces of fluid milk.

⁷ Alternate protein products must meet the requirements in appendix A to this part. Through September 30, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces. By October 1, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce). Information on crediting meats/meat alternates may be found in FNS guidance.

⁸ Juice must be pasteurized. Full-strength juice may only be offered to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal or snack, per day.

⁹ Must serve at least one whole grain-rich serving, across all eating occasions, per day. Grain-based desserts may not be used to meet the grains requirement. Through September 30, 2025, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of total sugars per dry ounce. By October 1, 2025, breakfast cereal must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugar per dry ounce. Information on crediting grain items may be found in FNS guidance.

Meal components and food items ¹	Minimum quantities				
	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²	Adult participants
	equivalent	equivalent	equivalent	equivalent	equivalent.

¹ Must serve two of the five components for a reimbursable snack. Milk and juice may not be served as the only two items in a reimbursable snack.

² At-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters may need to serve larger portions to children ages 13 through 18 to meet their nutritional needs.

³ Must serve unflavored whole milk to children age 1.

⁴ Must serve unflavored milk to children 2 through 5 years old. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁵ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to children ages 6 and older. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁶ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to adults. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less. Yogurt may be offered in place of milk, once per day for adults. Yogurt may count as either a fluid milk substitute or as a meat alternate, but not both, in the same meal. Six ounces (by weight) or ³/₄ cup (by volume) of yogurt is the equivalent of 8 ounces of fluid milk.

⁷ Alternate protein products must meet the requirements in appendix A to this part. Through September 30, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces. By October 1, 2025, yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce). Information on crediting meats/meat alternates may be found in FNS guidance.

⁸ Juice must be pasteurized. Full-strength juice may only be offered to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal or snack, per day.

⁹ Must serve at least one whole grain-rich serving, across all eating occasions, per day. Grain-based desserts may not be used to meet the grains requirement. Through September 30, 2025, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of total sugars per dry ounce. By October 1, 2025, breakfast cereal must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugar per dry ounce. Information on crediting grain items may be found in FNS guidance.

(d) **Food preparation.** Deep-fat fried foods that are prepared on-site cannot be part of the reimbursable meal. For this purpose, deep-fat frying means cooking by submerging food in hot oil or other fat. Foods that are pre-fried, flash-fried, or par-fried by a commercial manufacturer may be served, but must be reheated by a method other than frying.

(e) **Unavailability of fluid milk —**

(1) **Temporary.** When emergency conditions prevent an institution or facility normally having a supply of milk from temporarily obtaining milk deliveries, the State agency may approve the service of breakfast, lunches, or suppers without milk during the emergency period.

(2) **Continuing.** When an institution or facility is unable to obtain a supply of milk on a continuing basis, the State agency may approve service of meals without milk, provided an equivalent amount of canned, whole dry or fat-free dry milk is used in the preparation of the components of the meal set forth in paragraph (a) of this section.

- (f) **Grain substitutions.** In American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, and in institutions or facilities in any State that serve primarily American Indian or Alaska Native participants, any vegetable, including vegetables such as breadfruit, prairie turnips, plantains, sweet potatoes, and yams, may be served to meet the grains requirement.
- (g) **Modifications and variations in reimbursable meals and snacks as described in paragraphs (a) through (c) of this section –**
 - (1) **Modifications for disability reasons.** Institutions and facilities must make meal modifications including substitutions in meals and snacks described in this section for participants with a disability and whose disability restricts their diet. The modification requested must be related to the disability and must be offered at no additional cost to the child or adult participant.
 - (i) In order to receive Federal reimbursement when a modified meal does not meet the meal pattern requirements specified in this section, the institution or facility must obtain from the household a written medical statement signed by a State licensed healthcare professional. By October 1, 2025, institutions and facilities must also accept a medical statement signed by a registered dietitian. The medical statement must provide sufficient information about the child or adult participant's dietary restrictions, such as foods to be omitted and recommended alternatives, if appropriate. Modified meals that meet the meal pattern requirements in this section are reimbursable with or without a medical statement.
 - (ii) Institutions and facilities must ensure that parents and guardians, and their children when age-appropriate at institution or facility discretion; adult participants; and persons on behalf of adult participants have notice of the procedure for requesting meal modifications for disabilities and the process for procedural safeguards related to meal modifications for disabilities. See §§ 15b.6(b) and 15b.25 of this title.
 - (iii) Expenses incurred when making meal modifications that exceed Program reimbursement rates must be paid by the institution or facility; costs may be paid from the institution or facility's nonprofit food service account.
 - (iv) A parent, guardian, adult participant, or a person on behalf of an adult participant may supply one or more components of the reimbursable meal as long as the institution or facility provides at least one required meal component.
 - (2) **Variations for non-disability reasons.**
 - (i) Institutions and facilities should consider participants' dietary preferences when planning and preparing meals and snacks. Any variations must be consistent with the meal pattern requirements specified in this section.
 - (ii) Expenses incurred from variations that exceed program reimbursement rates must be paid by the institution or facility; costs may be paid from the institution or facility's nonprofit food service account.
 - (iii) A parent, guardian, adult participant, or a person on behalf of an adult participant may supply one component of the reimbursable meal as long as the component meets the requirements described in this section and the institution or facility provides the remaining components.
 - (3) **Fluid milk substitutes for non-disability reasons.**

- (i) An institution or facility may offer fluid milk substitutes based on a written request from a child's parent or guardian, an adult participant, a person on behalf of an adult participant, a State licensed healthcare professional, or registered dietitian for participants with dietary needs that are not disabilities that identifies the reason for the substitute. An institution or facility choosing to offer fluid milk substitutes for a non-disability reason is not required to offer the specific fluid milk substitutes requested but may offer the fluid milk substitutes of its choice, provided the fluid milk substitutes offered meet the requirements of paragraph (g)(3)(ii) of this section. For disability-related meal modifications, see paragraph (g)(1) of this section.
- (ii) If an institution or facility chooses to offer one or more fluid milk substitutes for non-disability reasons, the fluid milk substitutes must provide, at a minimum, the nutrients listed in the following table. Fluid milk substitutes must be fortified in accordance with fortification guidelines issued by the Food and Drug Administration.

TABLE 5 TO PARAGRAPH (g)(3)(ii)—NUTRIENT REQUIREMENTS FOR FLUID MILK SUBSTITUTES

Nutrient	Per cup (8 fl. oz.)
Calcium	276 mg.
Protein	8 g.
Vitamin A	150 mcg. retinol activity equivalents (RAE).
Vitamin D	2.5 mcg.
Magnesium	24 mg.
Phosphorus	222 mg.
Potassium	349 mg.
Riboflavin	0.44 mg.
Vitamin B-12	1.1 mcg.

- (iii) Expenses incurred when providing fluid milk substitutes that exceed Program reimbursements must be paid by the participating institution or facility; costs may be paid from the institution or facility's nonprofit food service account.
- (h) **Special variations.** FNS may approve variations in the meal components of the meals on an experimental or continuing basis in any institution or facility where there is evidence that such variations are nutritionally sound and are necessary to meet ethnic, religious, economic, or physical needs.
- (i) **Meals prepared in schools.** The State agency must allow institutions and facilities which serve meals to children 5 years old and older and are prepared in schools participating in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs to substitute the meal pattern requirements of the regulations governing those Programs (parts 210 and 220 of this chapter, respectively) for the meal pattern requirements contained in this section.

- (j) **Meal planning.** Institutions and facilities must plan for and order meals on the basis of current participant trends, with the objective of providing only one meal per participant at each meal service. Records of participation and of ordering or preparing meals must be maintained to demonstrate positive action toward this objective. In recognition of the fluctuation in participation levels which makes it difficult to estimate precisely the number of meals needed and to reduce the resultant waste, any excess meals that are ordered may be served to participants and may be claimed for reimbursement, unless the State agency determines that the institution or facility has failed to plan and prepare or order meals with the objective of providing only one meal per participant at each meal service.
- (k) **Time of meal service.** State agencies may require any institution or facility to allow a specific amount of time to elapse between meal services or require that meal services not exceed a specified duration.
- (l) **Sanitation.** Institutions and facilities must ensure that in storing, preparing, and serving food proper sanitation and health standards are met which conform with all applicable State and local laws and regulations. Institutions and facilities must ensure that adequate facilities are available to store food or hold meals.
- (m) **Donated commodities.** Institutions and facilities must efficiently use in the Program any foods donated by the Department and accepted by the institution or facility.
- (n) **Family style meal service.** Family style is a type of meal service which allows children and adults to serve themselves from common platters of food with the assistance of supervising adults. Institutions and facilities choosing to exercise this option must be in compliance with the following practices:
 - (1) A sufficient amount of prepared food must be placed on each table to provide the full required portions of each of the components, as outlined in paragraphs (c)(1) and (2) of this section, for all children or adults at the table and to accommodate supervising adults if they wish to eat with the children and adults.
 - (2) Children and adults must be allowed to serve the meal components themselves, with the exception of fluids (such as milk). During the course of the meal, it is the responsibility of the supervising adults to actively encourage each child and adult to serve themselves the full required portion of each meal component of the meal pattern. Supervising adults who choose to serve the fluids directly to the children or adults must serve the required minimum quantity to each child or adult.
 - (3) Institutions and facilities which use family style meal service may not claim second meals for reimbursement.
- (o) **Offer versus Serve.**
 - (1) Each adult day care center and at-risk afterschool program must offer its participants all of the required food servings as set forth in paragraphs (c)(1) and (2) of this section. However, at the discretion of the adult day care center or at-risk afterschool program, participants may be permitted to decline:
 - (i) **For adults –**
 - (A) **One of the four food** items required at breakfast (one serving of fluid milk; one serving of vegetable or fruit, or a combination of both; and two servings of grains, or meat or meat alternates);
 - (B) **Two of the five** meal components required at lunch (fluid milk; vegetables; fruit; grain; and meat or meat alternate); and

(C) *One of the four* meal components required at supper (vegetables; fruit; grain; and meat or meat alternate).

(ii) *For children. Two of the five* meal components required at supper (fluid milk; vegetables; fruit; grain; and meat or meat alternate).

(2) In pricing programs, the price of the reimbursable meal must not be affected if a participant declines a food item.

(p) *Prohibition on using foods and beverages as punishments or rewards.* Meals served under this part must contribute to the development and socialization of children. Institutions and facilities must not use foods and beverages as punishments or rewards.

(q) *Severability.* If any provision of this section is held to be invalid or unenforceable by its terms, or as applied to any person or circumstances, it shall be severable from this section and not affect the remainder thereof. In the event of such holding of invalidity or unenforceability of a provision, the meal pattern requirements covered by that provision reverts to the version that immediately preceded the invalidated provision.

[81 FR 24377, Apr. 25, 2016, as amended at 81 FR 75677, Nov. 1, 2016; 83 FR 56716, Nov. 30, 2017; 84 FR 50292, Sept. 25, 2019; 85 FR 7855, Feb. 12, 2020; 85 FR 74850, Nov. 24, 2020; 86 FR 57547, Oct. 18, 2021; 87 FR 4127, Jan. 27, 2022; 87 FR 7007, Feb. 7, 2022; 89 FR 32088, Apr. 25, 2024]

§ 226.21 Food service management companies.

(a) Any institution may contract with a food service management company. An institution which contracts with a food service management company must remain responsible for ensuring that the food service operation conforms to its agreement with the State agency. All procurements of meals from food service management companies must adhere to the procurement standards set forth in § 226.22 and comply with the following procedures intended to prevent fraud, waste, and Program abuse:

(1) All proposed contracts shall be publicly announced at least once 14 calendar days prior to the opening of bids. The announcement shall include the time and place of the bid opening;

(2) The institution shall notify the State agency at least 14 calendar days prior to the opening of the bids of the time and place of the bid opening;

(3) The invitation to bid shall not provide for loans or any other monetary benefit or terms or conditions to be made to institutions by food service management companies;

(4) Nonfood items shall be excluded from the invitation to bid, except where such items are essential to the conduct of the food service;

(5) The invitation to bid shall not specify special meal requirements to meet ethnic or religious needs unless special requirements are necessary to meet the needs of the participants to be served;

(6) The bid shall be publicly opened;

(7) All bids totaling \$50,000 or more shall be submitted to the State agency for approval before acceptance. All bids shall be submitted to the State agency for approval before accepting a bid which exceeds the lowest bid. State agencies shall respond to any request for approval within 10 working days of receipt;

- (8) The institutions shall inform the State agency of the reason for selecting the food service management company chosen. State agencies may require institutions to submit copies of all bids submitted under this section.
- (b) The institution and the food service management company shall enter into a standard contract as required by § 226.6(i). However, public institutions may, with the approval of the State agency, use their customary form of contract if it incorporates the provisions of § 226.6(i).
- (c) A copy of the contract between each institution and food service management company shall be submitted to the State agency prior to the beginning of Program operations under the subject contract.
- (d) Each proposed additional provision to the standard form of contract shall be submitted to the State agency for approval.
- (e) A food service management company may not subcontract for the total meal, with or without milk, or for the assembly of the meal.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982, as amended at 53 FR 52594, Dec. 28, 1988; 83 FR 63791, Dec. 12, 2018; 88 FR 57857, Aug. 23, 2023]

§ 226.22 Procurement standards.

- (a) **General.** This section establishes standards and guidelines for the procurement of foods, supplies, equipment, and other goods and services. These standards are furnished to ensure that goods and services are obtained efficiently and economically and in compliance with the provisions of applicable Federal law and Executive orders.
- (b) **Compliance.** Institutions may use their own procedures for procurement with Program funds to the extent that:
 - (1) Procurements by public institutions comply with applicable State or local laws and standards set forth in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR parts 400 and 415; and
 - (2) Procurements by private nonprofit institutions comply with standards set forth in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR parts 400 and 415.
- (c) **Geographic preference.**
 - (1) Institutions participating in the Program may apply a geographic preference when procuring unprocessed locally grown or locally raised agricultural products, including the use of “locally grown”, “locally raised”, or “locally caught” as procurement specifications or selection criteria for unprocessed or minimally processed food items. When utilizing the geographic preference to procure such products, the institution making the purchase has the discretion to determine the local area to which the geographic preference option will be applied so long as there are an appropriate number of qualified firms able to compete;
 - (2) For the purpose of applying the optional geographic preference in paragraph (c)(1) of this section, “unprocessed locally grown or locally raised agricultural products” means only those agricultural products that retain their inherent character. The effects of the following food handling and preservation techniques will not be considered as changing an agricultural product into a product of a different kind or character: Cooling; refrigerating; freezing; size adjustment made by peeling, slicing, dicing, cutting, chopping, shucking, and grinding; forming ground products into patties without any additives or fillers; drying/dehydration; washing; packaging (such as placing eggs in cartons), vacuum packing and bagging (such as placing vegetables in bags or combining two or

more types of vegetables or fruits in a single package); addition of ascorbic acid or other preservatives to prevent oxidation of produce; butchering livestock and poultry; cleaning fish; and the pasteurization of milk.

[88 FR 57857, Aug. 23, 2023, as amended at 89 FR 32092, Apr. 25, 2024]

§ 226.23 Free and reduced-price meals.

- (a) The State agency must not enter into a Program agreement with a new institution until the institution has submitted, and the State agency has approved, a written policy statement concerning free and reduced-price meals to be used in all child and adult day care facilities under its jurisdiction, as described in paragraph (b) of this section. The State agency must not require an institution to revise its free and reduced-price policy statement or its nondiscrimination statement unless the institution makes a substantive change to either policy. Pending approval of a revision to these statements, the existing policy must remain in effect.
- (b) Institutions that may not serve meals at a separate charge to children (including emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, and sponsoring organizations of emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, and day care homes) and other institutions that elect to serve meals at no separate charge must develop a policy statement consisting of an assurance to the State agency that all participants are served the same meals at no separate charge, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability and that there is no discrimination in the course of the food service. This statement shall also contain an assurance that there will be no identification of children in day care homes in which meals are reimbursed at both the tier I and tier II reimbursement rates, and that the sponsoring organization will not make any free and reduced price eligibility information concerning individual households available to day care homes and will otherwise limit the use of such information to persons directly connected with the administration and enforcement of the Program.
- (c) Independent centers and sponsoring organizations of centers which charge separately for meals shall develop a policy statement for determining eligibility for free and reduced-price meals which shall include the following:
 - (1) The specific criteria to be used in determining eligibility for free and reduced-price meals. The institution's standards of eligibility shall conform to the Secretary's income standards;
 - (2) A description of the method or methods to be used in accepting applications from families for free and reduced-price meals. These methods will ensure that applications are accepted from households on behalf of a foster child and children who receive SNAP, FDPIR, or TANF assistance, or for adult participants who receive SNAP, FDPIR, SSI, or Medicaid assistance;
 - (3) A description of the method or methods to be used to collect payments from those participants paying the full or reduced price of the meal which will protect the anonymity of the participants receiving a free or reduced-price meal;
 - (4) An assurance which provides that the institution will establish a hearing procedure for use when benefits are denied or terminated as a result of verification:
 - (i) A simple, publicly announced method for a family to make an oral or written request for a hearing;
 - (ii) An opportunity for the family to be assisted or represented by an attorney or other person in presenting its appeal;

- (iii) An opportunity to examine, prior to and during the hearing, the documents and records presented to support the decision under appeal;
 - (iv) That the hearing shall be held with reasonable promptness and convenience to the family and that adequate notice shall be given to the family as to the time and place of the hearing;
 - (v) An opportunity for the family to present oral or documentary evidence and arguments supporting its position;
 - (vi) An opportunity for the family to question or refute any testimony or other evidence and to confront and cross-examine any adverse witnesses;
 - (vii) That the hearing shall be conducted and the determination made by a hearing official who did not participate in making the initial decision;
 - (viii) The determination of the hearing official shall be based on the oral and documentary evidence presented at the hearing and made a part of that hearing record;
 - (ix) That the family and any designated representatives shall be notified in writing of the decision of the hearing official;
 - (x) That a written record shall be prepared with respect to each hearing, which shall include the decision under appeal, any documentary evidence and a summary of any oral testimony presented at the hearing, the decision of the hearing official, including the reasons therefor, and a copy of the notification to the family of the decision of the hearing official; and
 - (xi) That such written record of each hearing shall be preserved for a period of three years and shall be available for examination by the family or its representatives at any reasonable time and place during such period;
- (5) An assurance that there will be no overt identification of free and reduced-price meal recipients and no discrimination against any participant on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or handicap;
- (6) An assurance that the charges for a reduced-price lunch or supper will not exceed 40 cents, that the charge for a reduced-price breakfast will not exceed 30 cents, and that the charge for a reduced-price snack will not exceed 15 cents.

- (d) Each institution shall annually provide the information media serving the area from which the institution draws its attendance with a public release, unless the State agency has issued a Statewide media release on behalf of all institutions. All media releases issued by institutions other than emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, and sponsoring organizations of emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, or day care homes must include the Secretary's Income Eligibility Guidelines for Free and Reduced-Price Meals. The release issued by all emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, and sponsoring organizations of emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, or day care homes, and by other institutions which elect not to charge separately for meals, must announce the availability of meals at no separate charge. The release issued by child care institutions which charge separately for meals shall announce the availability of free and reduced-price meals to children meeting the approved eligibility criteria. The release issued by child care institutions shall also announce that a foster child, or a child who is a member of a household receiving SNAP, FDPIR, or TANF assistance, or a Head Start participant is automatically eligible to receive free meal benefits. The release issued by adult day care centers which charge separately for meals shall announce the availability of free and reduced-price meals to participants meeting the approved eligibility criteria. The release issued by adult day care centers shall

also announce that adult participants who are members of SNAP or FDPIR households or who are SSI or Medicaid participants are automatically eligible to receive free meal benefits. All releases shall state that meals are available to all participants without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

(e)

(1) *Application for free and reduced-price meals.*

- (i) For the purpose of determining eligibility for free and reduced price meals, institutions (other than emergency shelters and at-risk afterschool care centers) shall distribute applications for free and reduced price meals to the families of participants enrolled in the institution. Sponsoring organizations of day care homes shall distribute applications for free and reduced price meals to day care home providers who wish to enroll their own eligible children in the Program. At the request of a provider in a tier II day care home, sponsoring organizations of day care homes shall distribute applications for free and reduced price meals to the households of all children enrolled in the home, except that applications need not be distributed to the households of enrolled children that the sponsoring organization determines eligible for free and reduced price meals under the circumstances described in paragraph (e)(1)(vi) of this section. These applications, and any other descriptive material distributed to such persons, shall contain only the family-size income levels for reduced price meal eligibility with an explanation that households with incomes less than or equal to these levels are eligible for free or reduced price meals. Such forms and descriptive materials may not contain the income standards for free meals. However, such forms and materials distributed by child care institutions other than sponsoring organizations of day care homes shall state that, if a child is a member of a SNAP or FDPIR household or is a TANF recipient, the child is automatically eligible to receive free Program meal benefits, subject to the completion of the application as described in paragraph (e)(1)(ii) of this section; such forms and materials distributed by sponsoring organizations of day care homes shall state that, if a child or a child's parent is participating in or subsidized under a Federally or State supported child care or other benefit program with an income eligibility limit that does not exceed the eligibility standard for free or reduced price meals, meals served to the child are automatically eligible for tier I reimbursement, subject to the completion of the application as described in paragraph (e)(1)(ii) of this section, and shall list any programs identified by the State agency as meeting this standard; such forms and materials distributed by adult day care centers shall state that, if an adult participant is a member of a SNAP or FDPIR household or is a SSI or Medicaid participant, the adult participant is automatically eligible to receive free Program meal benefits, subject to the completion of the application as described in paragraph (e)(1)(iii) of this section. Sponsoring organizations of day care homes shall not make free and reduced price eligibility information concerning individual households available to day care homes and shall otherwise limit the use of such information to persons directly connected with the administration and enforcement of the Program. However, sponsoring organizations may inform tier II day care homes of the number of identified income-eligible enrolled children. If a State agency distributes, or chooses to permit its sponsoring organizations to distribute, applications to the households of children enrolled in tier II day care homes which include household confidentiality waiver statements, such applications shall include a statement informing households that their participation in the program is not dependent upon signing the waivers. Furthermore, such forms and materials distributed by child care institutions shall state that a foster child is automatically eligible to receive free Program meal benefits, and a child who is a

Head Start participant is automatically eligible to receive free Program meal benefits, subject to submission by Head Start officials of a Head Start statement of income eligibility or income eligibility documentation.

- (ii) Except as provided in paragraph (e)(1)(iv) of this section, the application for children shall contain a request for the following information:
 - (A) The names of all children for whom application is made;
 - (B) The names of all other household members;
 - (C) The last four digits of the social security number of the adult household member who signs the application, or an indication that the adult does not possess a social security number.
 - (D) The income received by each household member identified by source of income (such as earnings, wages, welfare, pensions, support payments, unemployment compensation, social security, and other cash income received or withdrawn from any other source, including savings, investments, trust accounts, and other resources);
 - (E) A statement which includes substantially the following information:
 - (1) "The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires the information on this application. You do not have to give the information, but if you do not, we cannot approve the participant for free or reduced-price meals. You must include the last four digits of the Social Security Number of the adult household member who signs the application. The last four digits of the Social Security Number are not required when you apply on behalf of a foster child or you list a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) case number for the participant or other (FDPIR) identifier or when you indicate that the adult household member signing the application does not have a Social Security Number. We will use your information to determine if the participant is eligible for free or reduced-price meals, and for administration and enforcement of the Program."
 - (2) When either the State agency or the child care institution plans to use or disclose children's eligibility information for non-program purposes, additional information, as specified in paragraph (k) of this section, must be added to this statement; and
 - (F) The signature of an adult member of the household which appears immediately below a statement that the person signing the application certifies that all information furnished is true and correct; that the application is being made in connection with the receipt of Federal funds; that Program officials may verify the information on the application; and that the deliberate misrepresentation of any of the information on the application may subject the applicant to prosecution under applicable State and Federal criminal statutes.
- (iii) Except as provided in paragraph (e)(1)(v) of this section, the application for adults shall contain a request for the following information:
 - (A) The names of all adults for whom application is made;
 - (B) The names of all other household members;

- (C) The last four digits of the social security number of the adult household member who signs the application, or an indication that the adult does not possess a social security number.
 - (D) The income received by source of income (such as earnings, wages, welfare, pensions, support payments, unemployment compensation, social security, and other cash income received or withdrawn from any other source, including savings, investments, trust accounts and other resources);
 - (E) A statement which includes substantially the following information: "The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires the information on this meal benefit form. You do not have to give the information, but if you do not, we cannot approve the participant for free or reduced-price meals. You must include the last four digits of the social security number of the adult household member who signs the meal benefit form. The last four digits of the social security number are not required when you list a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) or other FDPIR identifier, SSI or Medicaid case number for the participant receiving meal benefits or when you indicate that the adult household member signing the application does not have a social security number. We will use your information to determine if the participant is eligible for free or reduced-price meals, and for administration and enforcement of the CACFP;" and
 - (F) The signature of an adult member of the household which appears immediately below a statement that the person signing the application certifies that all information furnished is true and correct; that the application is being made in connection with the receipt of Federal funds; that Program officials may verify the information on the application; and that the deliberate misrepresentation of any of the information on the application may subject the applicant to prosecution under applicable State and Federal criminal statutes.
- (iv) If they so desire, households applying on behalf of children who are members of SNAP or FDPIR households who are TANF recipients may apply under this paragraph rather than under the procedures described in paragraph (e)(1)(ii) of this section. In addition, households of children enrolled in tier II day care homes who are participating in a Federally or State supported child care or other benefit program with an income eligibility limit that does not exceed the eligibility standard for free and reduced price meals may apply under this paragraph rather than under the procedures described in paragraph (e)(1)(ii) of this section. Households applying on behalf of children who are members of SNAP or FDPIR households; children who are TANF recipients; or for children enrolled in tier II day care homes, other qualifying Federal or State program, shall be required to provide:
- (A) For the child(ren) for whom automatic free meal eligibility is claimed, their names and SNAP, FDPIR, or TANF case number; or for the households of children enrolled in tier II day care homes, their names and other program case numbers (if the program utilizes case numbers); and
 - (B) The signature of an adult member of the household as provided for in paragraph (e)(1)(ii)(G) of this section. In accordance with paragraph (e)(1)(ii)(F) of this section, if a case number is provided, it may be used to verify the current certification for the child(ren) for whom free meal benefits are claimed. Whenever households apply for children not

receiving SNAP, FDPIR, or TANF benefits; or for tier II homes, other qualifying Federal or State program benefits, they must apply in accordance with the requirements set forth in paragraph (e)(1)(ii) of this section.

- (v) If they so desire, households applying on behalf of adults who are members of SNAP or FDPIR households or SSI or Medicaid participants may apply for free meal benefits under this paragraph rather than under the procedures described in paragraph (e)(1)(iii) of this section. Households applying on behalf of adults who are members of SNAP or FDPIR households or SSI or Medicaid participants shall be required to provide:
 - (A) The names and SNAP or FDPIR case numbers or SSI or Medicaid assistance identification numbers of the adults for whom automatic free meal eligibility is claimed; and
 - (B) The signature of an adult member of the household as provided in paragraph (e)(1)(iii)(F) of this section. In accordance with paragraph (e)(1)(iii)(G) of this section, if a SNAP or FDPIR case number or SSI or Medicaid assistance identification number is provided, it may be used to verify the current SNAP, FDPIR, SSI, or Medicaid certification for the adult(s) for whom free meal benefits are being claimed. Whenever households apply for benefits for adults not receiving SNAP, FDPIR, SSI, or Medicaid benefits, they must apply in accordance with the requirements set forth in paragraph (e)(1)(iii) of this section.
- (vi) A sponsoring organization of day care homes may identify enrolled children eligible for free and reduced price meals (i.e., tier I rates), without distributing free and reduced price applications, by documenting the child's or household's participation in or receipt of benefits under a Federally or State supported child care or other benefit program with an income eligibility limit that does not exceed the eligibility standard for free and reduced price meals. Documentation shall consist of official evidence, available to the tier II day care home or sponsoring organization, and in the possession of the sponsoring organization, of the household's participation in the qualifying program.
- (vii) If a tier II day care home elects to assist in collecting and transmitting the applications to the sponsoring organization, it is the responsibility of the sponsoring organization to establish procedures to ensure the provider does not review or alter the application. The household consent form must explain that:
 - (A) The household is not required to complete the income eligibility form in order for their children to participate in CACFP;
 - (B) The household may return the application to either the sponsoring organization or the day care home provider;
 - (C) By signing the letter and giving it to the day care home provider, the household has given the day care home provider written consent to collect and transmit the household's application to the sponsoring organization; and
 - (D) The application will not be reviewed by the day care home provider.
- (2) **Letter to households.** Institutions shall distribute a letter to households or guardians of enrolled participants in order to inform them of the procedures regarding eligibility for free and reduced-price meals. The letter shall accompany the application required under paragraph (e)(1) of this section and shall contain:

- (i) The income standards for reduced-price meals, with an explanation that households with incomes less than or equal to the reduced-price standards would be eligible for free or reduced-price meals (the income standards for free meals shall *not* be included in letters or notices to such applicants);
 - (ii) How a participant's household may make application for free or reduced-price meals;
 - (iii) An explanation that an application for free or reduced price benefits cannot be approved unless it contains complete "documentation" as defined in § 226.2.
 - (iv) The statement: "In the operation of child feeding programs, no person will be discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability";
 - (v) A statement to the effect that participants having family members who become unemployed are eligible for free or reduced-price meals during the period of unemployment, provided that the loss of income causes the family income during the period of unemployment to be within the eligibility standards for those meals;
 - (vi) An explanation that households receiving free and reduced-price meals must notify appropriate institution officials during the year of any decreases in household size or increases in income of over \$50 per month or \$600 per year or—
 - (A) In the case of households of enrolled children that provide a SNAP, FDPIR or TANF case number to establish a child's eligibility for free meals, any termination in the child's certification to participate in the SNAP, FDPIR or TANF Programs, or
 - (B) In the case of households of adult participants that provide a food stamp or FDPIR case number or an SSI or Medicaid assistance identification number to establish an adult's eligibility for free meals, any termination in the adult's certification to participate in the SNAP, FDPIR, SSI or Medicaid Programs.
- (3) In addition to the information listed in paragraph (e)(2) of this section pricing institutions must include in their letter to household an explanation that indicates that:
- (i) The information in the application may be verified at any time during the year; and
 - (ii) how a family may appeal a decision of the institution to deny, reduce, or terminate benefits as described under the hearing procedure set forth in paragraph (c)(4) of this section.
- (4) **Determination of eligibility.** The institution shall take the income information provided by the household on the application and calculate the household's total current income. When a completed application furnished by a family indicates that the family meets the eligibility criteria for free or reduced-price meals, the participants from that family shall be determined eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Institutions that are pricing programs shall promptly provide written notice to each family informing them of the results of the eligibility determinations. When the information furnished by the family is not complete or does not meet the eligibility criteria for free or reduced-price meals, institution officials must consider the participants from that family as not eligible for free or reduced-price meals, and must consider the participants as eligible for "paid" meals. When information furnished by the family of participants enrolled in a pricing program does not meet the eligibility criteria for free or reduced-price meals, pricing program officials shall provide written notice to each family denied free or reduced-price benefits. At a minimum, this notice shall include:

- (i) The reason for the denial of benefits, e.g., income in excess of allowable limits or incomplete application;
- (ii) Notification of the right to appeal;
- (iii) Instructions on how to appeal; and
- (iv) A statement reminding the household that they may reapply for free or reduced-price benefits at any time during the year,

The reasons for ineligibility shall be properly documented and retained on file at the institution.

- (5) **Appeals of denied benefits.** A family that wishes to appeal the denial of an application in a pricing program shall do so under the hearing procedures established under paragraph (c)(4) of this section. However, prior to initiating the hearing procedures, the household may request a conference to provide all affected parties the opportunity to discuss the situation, present information and obtain an explanation of the data submitted on the application or the decision rendered. The request for a conference shall not in any way prejudice or diminish the right to a fair hearing. The institution shall promptly schedule a fair hearing, if requested.
- (f) Free, reduced-price and paid meal eligibility figures must be reported by institutions to State agencies at least once each year and shall be based on current family-size and income information of enrolled participants. Such information shall be no more than 12 months old.
- (g) Sponsoring organizations for family day care homes shall ensure that no separate charge for food service is imposed on families of children enrolled in participating family day care homes.
- (h) **Verification of eligibility.** State agencies shall conduct verification of eligibility for free and reduced-price meals on an annual basis, in accordance with the verification procedures outlined in paragraphs (h) (1) and (2) of this section. Verification may be conducted in accordance with Program assistance requirements of § 226.6(m); however, the performance of verification for individual institutions shall occur no less frequently than once every three years. Any State may, with the written approval of FNSRO, use alternative approaches in the conduct of verification, provided that the results achieved meet the requirements of this part. If the verification process discloses deficiencies with the determination of eligibility and/or application procedures which exceed maximum levels established by FNS, State agencies shall conduct follow-up reviews for the purpose of determining that corrective action has been taken by the institution. These reviews shall be conducted within one year of the date the verification process was completed. The verification effort shall be applied without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. State agencies shall maintain on file for review a description of the annual verification to be accomplished in order to demonstrate compliance with paragraphs (h) (1) and (2) of this section.
- (1) **Verification procedures for nonpricing programs.** Except for sponsoring organizations of family day care homes, State agency verification procedures for nonpricing programs shall consist of a review of all approved free and reduced price applications on file. For sponsoring organizations of family day care homes, State agency verification procedures shall consist of a review only of the approved free and reduced price applications (or other documentation, if vouchers or other documentation are used in lieu of free and reduced price applications) on file for those day care homes that are required to be reviewed when the sponsoring organization is reviewed, in accordance with the review requirements set forth in § 226.6(m). However, the State agency shall ensure that the day care homes selected for review are representative of the proportion of tier I, tier II, and tier II day care

homes with a mix of income-eligible and non-income-eligible children in the sponsorship, and shall ensure that at least 10 percent of all free and reduced price applications (or other documentation, if applicable) on file for the sponsorship are verified. The review of applications shall ensure that:

- (i) The application has been correctly and completely executed by the household;
- (ii) The institution has correctly determined and classified the eligibility of enrolled participants for free or reduced price meals or, for family day care homes, for tier I or tier II reimbursement, based on the information included on the application submitted by the household;
- (iii) The institution has accurately reported to the State agency the number of enrolled participants meeting the criteria for free or reduced price meal eligibility or, for day care homes, the number of participants meeting the criteria for tier I reimbursement, and the number of enrolled participants that do not meet the eligibility criteria for those meals; and
- (iv) In addition, the State agency may conduct further verification of the information provided by the household on the approved application for program meal eligibility. If this effort is undertaken, the State agency shall conduct this further verification for nonpricing programs in accordance with the procedures described in paragraph (h)(2) of this section.

(2) ***Verification procedures for pricing programs.***

- (i) For pricing programs, in addition to the verification procedures described in paragraph (h)(1) of this section, State agencies shall also conduct verification of the income information provided on the approved application for free and reduced price meals and, at State agency discretion, verification may also include confirmation of other information required on the application. However,
 - (A) If a SNAP, FDPIR or TANF case number is provided for a child, verification for such child shall include only confirmation that the child is included in a currently certified SNAP or FDPIR household or is a TANF recipient; or
 - (B) If a SNAP or FDPIR case number or SSI or Medicaid assistance identification number is provided for an adult, verification for such adult shall include only confirmation that the adult is included in a currently certified SNAP or FDPIR household or is currently certified to receive SSI or Medicaid benefits.
- (ii) State agencies shall perform verification on a random sample of no less than 3 percent of the approved free and reduced price applications in an institution which is a pricing program.
- (iii) Households shall be informed in writing that they have been selected for verification and they are required to submit the requested verification information to confirm their eligibility for free or reduced-price benefits by such date as determined by the State agency. Those households shall be informed of the type or types of information and/or documents acceptable to the State agency and the name and phone number of an official who can answer questions and assist the household in the verification effort.
- (iv) Households of enrolled children selected for verification shall also be informed that if they are currently certified to participate in SNAP, FDPIR or TANF they may submit proof of that certification in lieu of income information. In those cases, such proof shall consist of a current "Notice of Eligibility" for SNAP, FDPIR or TANF benefits or equivalent official documentation issued by a SNAP, Indian Tribal Organization, or welfare office which shows that the children are members of households or assistance units currently certified to participate in SNAP, FDPIR or

TANF. An identification card for any of these programs is not acceptable as verification unless it contains an expiration date. Households of enrolled adults selected for verification shall also be informed that if they are currently certified to participate in SNAP or FDPIR or SSI or Medicaid Programs, they may submit proof of that certification in lieu of income information. In those cases, such proof shall consist of:

- (A) A current "Notice of Eligibility" for SNAP or FDPIR benefits or equivalent official documentation issued by a SNAP, Indian Tribal Organization, or welfare office which shows that the adult participant is a member of a household currently certified to participate in the SNAP Program or FDPIR. An identification card is not acceptable as verification unless it contains an expiration date; or
 - (B) Official documentation issued by an appropriate SSI or Medicaid office which shows that the adult participant currently receives SSI or Medicaid assistance. An identification card is not acceptable as verification unless it contains an expiration date. All households selected for verification shall be advised that failure to cooperate with verification efforts will result in a termination of benefits.
- (v) Sources of information for verification may include written evidence, collateral contacts, and/or systems of records.
- (A) **Written evidence** shall be used as the primary source of information for verification. Written evidence includes written confirmation of a household's circumstances, such as wage stubs, award letters, letters from employers, and, for enrolled children, current certification to participate in the SNAP, FDPIR or TANF Programs, or, for adult participants, current certification to participate in the SNAP, FDPIR, SSI or Medicaid Programs. Whenever written evidence is insufficient to confirm eligibility, the State agency may use collateral contacts.
 - (B) **Collateral contact** is a verbal confirmation of a household's circumstances by a person outside of the household. The collateral contact may be made in person or by phone and shall be authorized by the household. The verifying official may select a collateral contact if the household fails to designate one or designates one which is unacceptable to the verifying official. If the verifying official designates a collateral contact, the contact shall not be made without providing written or oral notice to the household. At the time of this notice, the household shall be informed that it may consent to the contact or provide acceptable verification in another form. The household shall be informed that its eligibility for free or reduced price meals shall be terminated if it refuses to choose one of these options. Termination shall be made in accordance with paragraph (h)(2)(vii) of this section. Collateral contacts could include employers, social service agencies, and migrant agencies.
 - (C) **Systems of records** to which the State agency may have routine access are not considered collateral contacts. Information concerning income, family size, or SNAP/FDPIR/TANF certification for enrolled children, or SNAP/FDPIR/SSI/Medicaid certification for enrolled adults, which is maintained by other government agencies and to which a State agency can legally gain access may be used to confirm a household's eligibility for Program meal benefits. One possible source could be wage and benefit information maintained by the State unemployment agency, if that information is available. The use of any information derived from other agencies must be used with applicable safeguards concerning disclosure.

- (vi) Verification by State agencies of receipt of SNAP, FDPIR, TANF, SSI or Medicaid benefits shall be limited to a review to determine that the period of eligibility is current. If the benefit period is found to have expired, or if the household's certification has been terminated, the household shall be required to document their income eligibility.
- (vii) The State agency may work with the institution to verify the documentation submitted by the household on the application; however, the responsibility to complete the verification process may not be delegated to the institution.
- (viii) If a household refuses to cooperate with efforts to verify, or the verification of income indicates that the household is ineligible to receive benefits or is eligible to receive reduced benefits, the State agency shall require the pricing program institution to terminate or adjust eligibility in accordance with the following procedures. Institution officials shall immediately notify families of the denial of benefits in accordance with paragraphs (e)(4) and (e)(5) of this section. Advance notification shall be provided to families which receive a reduction or termination of benefits 10 calendar days prior to the actual reduction or termination. The 10-day period shall begin the day the notice is transmitted to the family. The notice shall advise the household of:
 - (A) The change;
 - (B) the reasons for the change;
 - (C) notification of the right to appeal the action and the date by which the appeal must be requested in order to avoid a reduction or termination of benefits;
 - (D) instructions on how to appeal; and
 - (E) the right to reapply at any time during the year. The reasons for ineligibility shall be properly documented and retained on file at the institution.
- (ix) When a household disagrees with an adverse action which affects its benefits and requests a fair hearing, benefits shall be continued as follows while the household awaits the hearing:
 - (A) Households which have been approved for benefits and which are subject to a reduction or termination of benefits later in the same year shall receive continued benefits if they appeal the adverse action within the 10-day advance notice period; and
 - (B) Households which are denied benefits upon application shall not received benefits.
- (3) State agencies shall inform institution officials of the results of the verification effort and the action which will be taken in response to the verification findings. This notification shall be made in accordance with the procedures outlined in § 226.14(a).
- (4) If the verification results disclose that an institution has inaccurately classified or reported the number of participants eligible for free, reduced-price or paid meals, the State agency shall adjust institution rates of reimbursement retroactive to the month in which the incorrect eligibility figures were reported by the institution to the State agency.
- (5) If the verification results disclose that a household has not reported accurate documentation on the application which would support continued eligibility for free or reduced-price meals, the State agency shall immediately adjust institution rates of reimbursement. However, this rate adjustment shall not become effective until the affected households have been notified in accordance with the procedures of paragraph (h)(2)(vi) of this section and any ensuing appeals have been heard as specified in paragraph (h)(2)(viii) of this section.

(6) **Verification procedures for sponsoring organizations of day care homes.** Prior to approving an application for a day care home that qualifies as tier I day care home on the basis of the provider's household income, sponsoring organizations of day care homes shall conduct verification of such income in accordance with the procedures contained in paragraph (h)(2)(i) of this section. Sponsoring organizations of day care homes may verify the information on applications submitted by households of children enrolled in day care homes in accordance with the procedures contained in paragraph (h)(2)(i) of this section.

(i) **Disclosure of children's free and reduced price meal eligibility information to certain programs and individuals without parental consent.** The State agency or child care institution, as appropriate, may disclose aggregate information about children eligible for free and reduced price meals to any party without parental notification and consent when children cannot be identified through release of the aggregate data or by means of deduction. Additionally, the State agency or institution may disclose information that identifies children eligible for free and reduced price meals to the programs and the individuals specified in this paragraph (i) without parental/guardian consent. The State agency or child care institution that makes the free and reduced price meal eligibility determination is responsible for deciding whether to disclose program eligibility information.

(1) **Persons authorized to receive eligibility information.** Only persons directly connected with the administration or enforcement of a program or activity listed in paragraphs (i)(2) or (i)(3) of this section may have access to children's free milk eligibility information, without parental consent. Persons considered directly connected with administration or enforcement of a program or activity listed in paragraphs (i)(2) or (i)(3) of this section are Federal, State, or local program operators responsible for the ongoing operation of the program or activity or persons responsible for program compliance. Program operators may include persons responsible for carrying out program requirements and monitoring, reviewing, auditing, or investigating the program. Program operators may include contractors, to the extent those persons have a need to know the information for program administration or enforcement. Contractors may include evaluators, auditors, and others with whom Federal or State agencies and program operators contract with to assist in the administration or enforcement of their program in their behalf.

(2) **Disclosure of children's names and free or reduced price meal eligibility status.** The State agency or child care institution, as appropriate, may disclose, without parental consent, only children's names and eligibility status (whether they are eligible for free meals or reduced price meals) to persons directly connected with the administration or enforcement of:

(i) A Federal education program;

(ii) A State health program or State education program administered by the State or local education agency;

(iii) A Federal, State, or local means-tested nutrition program with eligibility standards comparable to the National School Lunch Program (i.e., food assistance programs for households with incomes at or below 185 percent of the Federal poverty level); or

(iv) A third party contractor assisting in verification of eligibility efforts by contacting households who fail to respond to requests for verification of their eligibility.

(3) **Disclosure of all eligibility information.** In addition to children's names and eligibility status, the State agency or child care institution, as appropriate, may disclose, without parental/guardian consent, all eligibility information obtained through the free and reduced price meal eligibility process (including all information on the application or obtained through direct certification) to:

- (i) Persons directly connected with the administration or enforcement of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966. This means that all eligibility information obtained for the Child and Adult Care Food Program may be disclosed to persons directly connected with administering or enforcing regulations under the National School Lunch Program, Special Milk Program, School Breakfast Program, Summer Food Service Program, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) (Parts 210, 215, 220, 225 and 246, respectively, of this chapter);
- (ii) The Comptroller General of the United States for purposes of audit and examination; and
- (iii) Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials for the purpose of investigating any alleged violation of the programs listed in paragraphs (i)(2) and (i)(3) of this section.

(4) ***Use of free and reduced price meals eligibility information by programs other than Medicaid or the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).*** State agencies and child care institutions may use children's free milk eligibility information for administering or enforcing the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Additionally, any other Federal, State, or local agency charged with administering or enforcing the Child and Adult Care Food Program may use the information for that purpose. Individuals and programs to which children's free or reduced price meal eligibility information has been disclosed under this section may use the information only in the administration or enforcement of the receiving program. No further disclosure of the information may be made.

(j) ***Disclosure of children's free or reduced price meal eligibility information to Medicaid and/or SCHIP, unless parents decline.*** Children's free or reduced price meal eligibility information only may be disclosed to Medicaid or SCHIP when both the State agency and the child care institution so elect, the parent/guardian does not decline to have their eligibility information disclosed and the other provisions described in paragraph (j)(1) of this section are met. The State agency or child care institution, as appropriate, may disclose children's names, eligibility status (whether they are eligible for free or reduced price meals), and any other eligibility information obtained through the free and reduced price meal application or obtained through direct certification to persons directly connected with the administration of Medicaid or SCHIP. Persons directly connected to the administration of Medicaid and SCHIP are State employees and persons authorized under Federal and State Medicaid and SCHIP requirements to carry out initial processing of Medicaid or SCHIP applications or to make eligibility determinations for Medicaid or SCHIP.

(1) The State agency must ensure that:

- (i) The child care institution and health insurance program officials have a written agreement that requires the health insurance program agency to use the eligibility information to seek to enroll children in Medicaid and SCHIP; and
- (ii) Parents/guardians are notified that their eligibility information may be disclosed to Medicaid or SCHIP and given an opportunity to decline to have their children's eligibility information disclosed, prior to any disclosure.

(2) ***Use of children's free and reduced price meal eligibility information by Medicaid/SCHIP.*** Medicaid and SCHIP agencies and health insurance program operators receiving children's free and reduced price meal eligibility information must use the information to seek to enroll children in Medicaid or SCHIP. The Medicaid and SCHIP enrollment process may include targeting and identifying children from low-income households who are potentially eligible for Medicaid or SCHIP for the purpose of seeking to enroll them in Medicaid or SCHIP. No further disclosure of the information may be made.

Medicaid and SCHIP agencies and health insurance program operators also may verify children's eligibility in a program under the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 or the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act.

- (k) **Notifying households of potential uses and disclosures of children's free and reduced price meal eligibility information.** Households must be informed that the information they provide on the free and reduced price meal application will be used to determine eligibility for free or reduced price meals and that their eligibility information may be disclosed to other programs.
- (1) For disclosures to programs, other than Medicaid or SCHIP, that are permitted access to children's eligibility information, without parent/guardian consent, the State agency or child care institution, as appropriate, must notify parents/guardians at the time of application that their children's free or reduced price meal eligibility information may be disclosed. The State agency or child care institution, as appropriate, must add substantially the following statement to the statement required under paragraph (e)(1)(ii)(F) of this section, "We may share your eligibility information with education, health, and nutrition programs to help them evaluate, fund, or determine benefits for their programs; auditors for program reviews; and law enforcement officials to help them look into violations of program rules." For children determined eligible for free meals through direct certification, the notice of potential disclosure may be included in the document informing parents/guardians of their children's eligibility for free meals through direct certification.
- (2) For disclosure to Medicaid or SCHIP, the State agency or child care institution, as appropriate, must notify parents/guardians that their children's free or reduced price meal eligibility information will be disclosed to Medicaid and/or SCHIP unless the parent/guardian elects not to have their information disclosed and notifies the State agency or child care institution, as appropriate, by a date specified by the State agency or child care institution, as appropriate. Only the parent or guardian who is a member of the household or family for purposes of the free and reduced price meal application may decline the disclosure of eligibility information to Medicaid or SCHIP. The notification must inform parents/guardians that they are not required to consent to the disclosure, that the information, if disclosed, will be used to identify eligible children and seek to enroll them in Medicaid or SCHIP, and that their decision will not affect their children's eligibility for free or reduced price meals. The notification may be included in the letter/notice to parents/guardians that accompanies the free and reduced price meal application, on the application itself or in a separate notice provided to parents/guardians. The notice must give parents/guardians adequate time to respond if they do not want their information disclosed. The State agency or child care institution, as appropriate, must add substantially the following statement to the statement required under paragraph (e)(1)(ii)(F) of this section, "We may share your information with Medicaid or the State Children's Health Insurance Program, unless you tell us not to. The information, if disclosed, will be used to identify eligible children and seek to enroll them in Medicaid or SCHIP." For children determined eligible for free meals through direct certification, the notice of potential disclosure and opportunity to decline the disclosure may be included in the document informing parents/guardians of their children's eligibility for free meals through direct certification process.
- (l) **Other disclosures.** State agencies and child care institutions that plan to use or disclose information about children eligible for free and reduced price meals in ways not specified in this section must obtain written consent from children's parents or guardians prior to the use or disclosure.
- (1) The consent must identify the information that will be shared and how the information will be used.

- (2) There must be a statement informing parents and guardians that failing to sign the consent will not affect the child's eligibility for free or reduced price meals and that the individuals or programs receiving the information will not share the information with any other entity or program.
- (3) Parents/guardians must be permitted to limit the consent only to those programs with which they wish to share information.
- (4) The consent statement must be signed and dated by the child's parent or guardian who is a member of the household for purposes of the free and reduced price meal application.

(m) ***Agreements with programs/individuals receiving children's free or reduced price meal eligibility information.*** Agreements or Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) are recommended or required as follows:

- (1) The State agency or child care institution, as appropriate, should have a written agreement or MOU with programs or individuals receiving eligibility information, prior to disclosing children's free and reduced price meal eligibility information. The agreement or MOU should include information similar to that required for disclosures to Medicaid and SCHIP specified in paragraph (m)(2) of this section.
- (2) For disclosures to Medicaid or SCHIP, the State agency or child care institution, as appropriate, must have a written agreement with the State or local agency or agencies administering Medicaid or SCHIP prior to disclosing children's free or reduced price meal eligibility information to those agencies. At a minimum, the agreement must:
 - (i) Identify the health insurance program or health agency receiving children's eligibility information;
 - (ii) Describe the information that will be disclosed;
 - (iii) Require that the Medicaid or SCHIP agency use the information obtained and specify that the information must be used to seek to enroll children in Medicaid or SCHIP;
 - (iv) Require that the Medicaid or SCHIP agency describe how they will use the information obtained;
 - (v) Describe how the information will be protected from unauthorized uses and disclosures;
 - (vi) Describe the penalties for unauthorized disclosure; and
 - (vii) Be signed by both the Medicaid or SCHIP program or agency and the State agency or child care institution, as appropriate.

(n) ***Penalties for unauthorized disclosure or misuse of children's free and reduced price meal eligibility information.*** In accordance with section 9(b)(6)(C) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1758(b)(6)(C)), any individual who publishes, divulges, discloses or makes known in any manner, or to any extent not authorized by statute or this section, any information obtained under this section will be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned for up to 1 year, or both.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982]

Editorial Note: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 226.23, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and at www.govinfo.gov.

Subpart F—Food Service Equipment Provisions

§ 226.24 Property management requirements.

Institutions and administering agencies shall follow the policies and procedures governing title, use, and disposition of equipment obtained by purchase, whose cost was acquired in whole or part with food service equipment assistance funds in accordance with 2 CFR part 200, subpart D and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415, as applicable.

[48 FR 41142, Sept. 14, 1983, as amended at 71 FR 39519, July 13, 2006; 81 FR 66492, Sept. 28, 2016]

Subpart G—Other Provisions

§ 226.25 Other provisions.

- (a) **Grant closeout procedures.** Grant closeout procedures for the Program shall be in accordance with 2 CFR part 200, subpart D and USDA implementing regulations 2 CFR part 400 and part 415, as applicable.
- (b) **State requirements.** Nothing contained in this part shall prevent a State agency from imposing additional requirements for participation in the Program which are not inconsistent with the provisions of this part; however, any additional requirements shall be approved by FNSRO and may not deny the Program to an eligible institution.
- (c) **Value of assistance.** The value of assistance to participants under the Program shall not be considered to be income or resources for any purposes under any Federal or State laws, including, but not limited to laws relating to taxation, welfare, and public assistance programs.
- (d) **Maintenance of effort.** Expenditure of funds from State and local sources for the maintenance of food programs for children shall not be diminished as a result of funds received under the Act.
- (e) **Fraud penalty.** Whoever embezzles, willfully misapplies, steals, or obtains by fraud any funds, assets, or property that are the subject of a grant or other form of assistance under this part, whether received directly or indirectly from the Department or whoever receives, conceals, or retains such funds, assets, or property to his use or gain, knowing such funds, assets, or property have been embezzled, willfully misapplied, stolen, or obtained by fraud shall, if such funds, assets, or property are of the value of \$100 or more, be fined not more than \$10,000 or imprisoned not more than five years, or both, or, if such funds, assets, or property are of value of less than \$100, shall be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both.
- (f) **Claims adjustment authority.** The Secretary shall have the authority to determine the amount of, to settle, and to adjust any claim arising under the Program, and to compromise or deny such claim or any part thereof. The Secretary shall also have the authority to waive such claims if the Secretary determines that to do so would serve the purposes of the program. This provision shall not diminish the authority of the Attorney General of the United States under section 516 of title 28, U.S. Code, to conduct litigation on behalf of the United States.
- (g) **Data collection related to organizations.**
 - (1) Each State agency must collect data related to institutions that have an agreement with the State agency to participate in the program for each of Federal fiscal years 2006 through 2009, including those institutions that participated only for part of the fiscal year. Such data shall include:
 - (i) The name of each institution;
 - (ii) The city in which each participating institution was headquartered and the name of the state;

- (iii) The amount of funds provided to the participating organization, i.e., the sum of the amount of federal funds reimbursed for operating and, where applicable, administrative costs; and
- (iv) The type of participating organization, e.g., government agency, educational institution, for-profit organization, non-profit organization/secular, non-profit organization/faith-based, and "other."

(2) On or before August 31, 2007, and each subsequent year through 2010, State agencies must report to FNS data as specified in paragraph (g)(1) of this section for the prior Federal fiscal year. State agencies must submit this data in a format designated by FNS.

(h) **Program evaluations.** States, State agencies, institutions, facilities and contractors must cooperate in studies and evaluations conducted by or on behalf of the Department, related to programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966.

(i) **Drinking water.** A child care institution or facility must offer and make potable drinking water available to children throughout the day.

(j) **Fines.**

(1) An institution that is a school food authority may be subject to fines. The State agency may establish an assessment when it has determined that the institution or its facility has:

- (i) Failed to correct severe mismanagement of the Program;
- (ii) Disregarded a Program requirement of which the institution or its facility had been informed; or
- (iii) Failed to correct repeated violations of Program requirements.

(2) FNS may direct the State agency to establish a fine against any institution when it has determined that the institution or its facility has committed one or more acts under paragraph (j)(1) of this section.

(3) Funds used to pay a fine established under this paragraph must be derived from non-Federal sources. In calculating an assessment, the State agency must calculate the fine based on the amount of Program reimbursement earned by the institution or its facility for the most recent fiscal year for which full year data is available, provided that the fine does not exceed the equivalent of:

- (i) For the first fine, 1 percent of the amount of meal reimbursement earned for the fiscal year;
- (ii) For the second fine, 5 percent of the amount of meal reimbursement earned for the fiscal year; and
- (iii) For the third or subsequent fine, 10 percent of the amount of meal reimbursement earned for the fiscal year.

(4) The State agency must inform FNS at least 30 days prior to establishing the fine under this paragraph. The State agency must send the institution written notification of the fine established under this paragraph and provide a copy of the notification to FNS. The notification must:

- (i) Specify the violations or actions which constitute the basis for the fine and indicate the amount of the fine;
- (ii) Inform the institution that it may appeal the fine and advise the institution of the appeal procedures established under § 226.6(k);

- (iii) Indicate the effective date and payment procedures should the institution not exercise its right to appeal within the specified timeframe.
- (5) Any institution subject to a fine under paragraph (j)(1) of this section may appeal the State agency's determination. In appealing a fine, the institution must submit to the State agency any pertinent information, explanation, or evidence addressing the Program violations identified by the State agency. Any institution seeking to appeal the State agency determination must follow State agency appeal procedures.
- (6) The decision of the State agency review official is final and not subject to further administrative or judicial review. Failure to pay a fine established under this paragraph may be grounds for suspension or termination.
- (7) Money received by the State agency as a result of a fine established under this paragraph against an institution and any interest charged in the collection of these fines must be remitted to FNS, and then remitted to the United States Treasury.

[47 FR 36527, Aug. 20, 1982, as amended at 53 FR 52597, Dec. 28, 1988; 54 FR 13049, Mar. 30, 1989; 69 FR 53547, Sept. 1, 2004; 71 FR 39519, July 13, 2006; 72 FR 24183, May 2, 2007; 76 FR 37982, June 29, 2011; 81 FR 24383, Apr. 25, 2016; 81 FR 66492, Sept. 28, 2016; 88 FR 57858, Aug. 23, 2023]

§ 226.26 Program information.

Persons seeking information about this Program should contact their State administering agency or the appropriate FNSRO. The FNS website has contact information for State agencies at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-contacts> and FNSROs at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-regional-offices>.

[88 FR 57858, Aug. 23, 2023]

§ 226.27 Information collection/recordkeeping—OMB assigned control numbers.

7 CFR section where requirements are described	Current OMB control number
226.3-226.4	0584-0055
226.6-226.10	0584-0055
226.14-226.16	0584-0055
226.23-226.24	0584-0055

[50 FR 53258, Dec. 31, 1985]

Appendix A to Part 226—Alternate Foods for Meals

Alternate Protein Products

A. What are the criteria for alternate protein products used in the Child and Adult Care Food Program?

1. An alternate protein product used in meals planned under the provisions in § 226.20 must meet all of the criteria in this section.
2. An alternate protein product whether used alone or in combination with meat or meat alternate must meet the following criteria:
 - a. The alternate protein product must be processed so that some portion of the non-protein constituents of the food is removed. These alternate protein products must be safe and suitable edible products produced from plant or animal sources.
 - b. The biological quality of the protein in the alternate protein product must be at least 80 percent that of casein, determined by performing a Protein Digestibility Corrected Amino Acid Score (PDCAAS).
 - c. The alternate protein product must contain at least 18 percent protein by weight when fully hydrated or formulated. ("When hydrated or formulated" refers to a dry alternate protein product and the amount of water, fat, oil, colors, flavors or any other substances which have been added).
 - d. Manufacturers supplying an alternate protein product to participating schools or institutions must provide documentation that the product meets the criteria in paragraphs A.2. through c of this appendix.
 - e. Manufacturers should provide information on the percent protein contained in the dry alternate protein product and on an as prepared basis.
 - f. For an alternate protein product mix, manufacturers should provide information on:
 - (1) The amount by weight of dry alternate protein product in the package;
 - (2) Hydration instructions; and
 - (3) Instructions on how to combine the mix with meat or other meat alternates.

B. How are alternate protein products used in the Child and Adult Care Food Program?

1. Schools, institutions, and service institutions may use alternate protein products to fulfill all or part of the meat/meat alternate component discussed in § 226.20.
2. The following terms and conditions apply:
 - a. The alternate protein product may be used alone or in combination with other food ingredients. Examples of combination items are beef patties, beef crumbles, pizza topping, meat loaf, meat sauce, taco filling, burritos, and tuna salad.
 - b. Alternate protein products may be used in the dry form (nonhydrated), partially hydrated or fully hydrated form. The moisture content of the fully hydrated alternate protein product (if prepared from a dry concentrated form) must be such that the mixture will have a minimum of 18 percent protein by weight or equivalent amount for the dry or partially hydrated form (based on the level that would be provided if the product were fully hydrated).

C. How are commercially prepared products used in the Child and Adult Care Food Program?

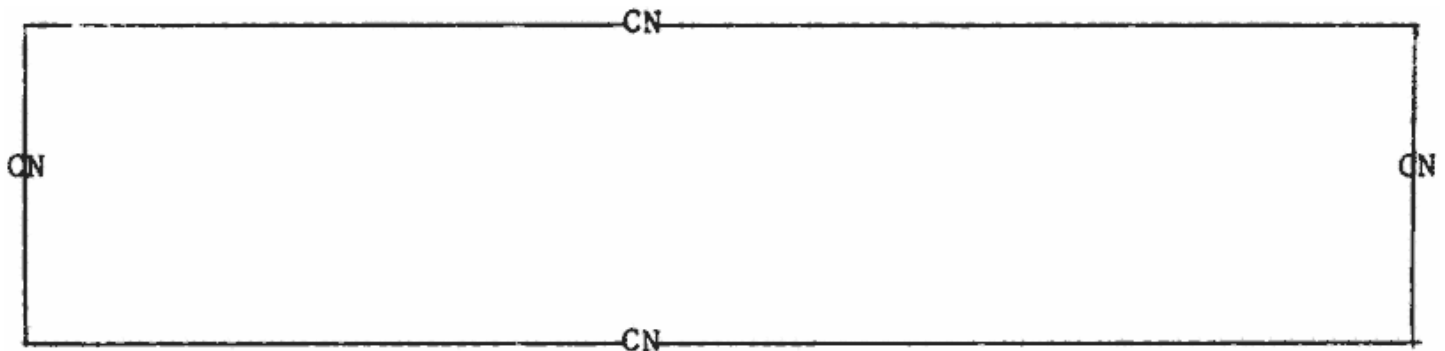
Schools, institutions, and service institutions may use a commercially prepared meat or meat alternate product combined with alternate protein products or use a commercially prepared product that contains only alternate protein products.

[65 FR 12442, Mar. 9, 2000]

Appendix B to Part 226 [Reserved]

Appendix C to Part 226—Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program

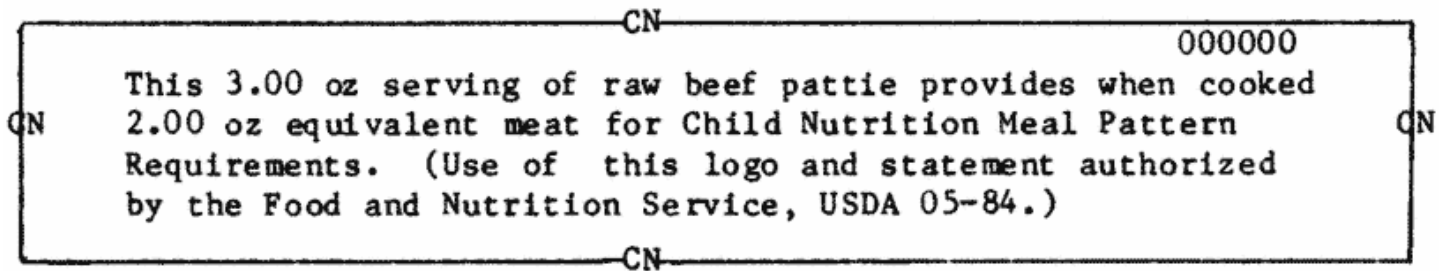
1. The Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program is a voluntary technical assistance program administered by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) in conjunction with the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), and Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and National Marine Fisheries Service of the U.S. Department of Commerce (USDC) for the Child Nutrition Programs. This program essentially involves the review of a manufacturer's recipe or product formulation to determine the contribution a serving of a commercially prepared product makes toward meal pattern requirements and a review of the CN label statement to ensure its accuracy. CN labeled products must be produced in accordance with all requirements set forth in this rule.
2. Products eligible for CN labels are as follows:
 - (a) Commercially prepared food products that contribute significantly to the meat/meat alternate component of meal pattern requirements of 7 CFR 210.10, 225.21, and 226.20 and are served in the main dish.
 - (b) Juice drinks and juice drink products that contain a minimum of 50 percent full-strength juice by volume.
3. For the purpose of this appendix the following definitions apply:
 - (a) **CN label** is a food product label that contains a CN label statement and CN logo as defined in paragraph 3 (b) and (c) below.
 - (b) The **CN logo** (as shown below) is a distinct border which is used around the edges of a "CN label statement" as defined in paragraph 3(c).



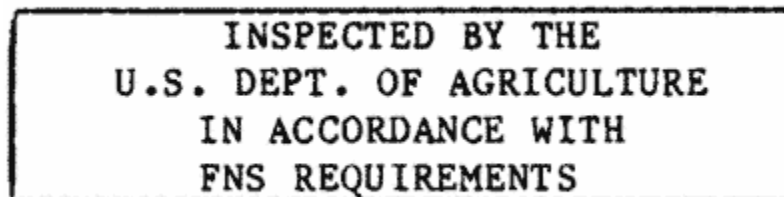
- (c) The **CN label statement** includes the following:
 - (1) The product identification number (assigned by FNS),

- (2) The statement of the product's contribution toward meal pattern requirements of 7 CFR 210.10, 220.8, 225.21, and 226.20. The statement shall identify the contribution of a specific portion of a meat/meat alternate product toward the meat/meat alternate, bread/bread alternate, and/or vegetable/fruit component of the meal pattern requirements. For juice drinks and juice drink products the statement shall identify their contribution toward the vegetable/fruit component of the meal pattern requirements,
- (3) Statement specifying that the use of the CN logo and CN statement was authorized by FNS, and
- (4) The approval date.

For example:



- (d) *Federal inspection* means inspection of food products by FSIS, AMS or USDC.
4. Food processors or manufacturers may use the CN label statement and CN logo as defined in paragraph 3 (b) and (c) under the following terms and conditions:
- (a) The CN label must be reviewed and approved at the national level by the Food and Nutrition Service and appropriate USDA or USDC Federal agency responsible for the inspection of the product.
 - (b) The CN labeled product must be produced under Federal inspection by USDA or USDC. The Federal inspection must be performed in accordance with an approved partial or total quality control program or standards established by the appropriate Federal inspection service.
 - (c) The CN label statement must be printed as an integral part of the product label along with the product name, ingredient listing, the inspection shield or mark for the appropriate inspection program, the establishment number where appropriate, and the manufacturer's or distributor's name and address.
 - (1) The inspection marking for CN labeled non-meat, non-poultry, and non-seafood products with the exception of juice drinks and juice drink products is established as follows:



- (d) Yields for determining the product's contribution toward meal pattern requirements must be calculated using the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* (Program Aid Number 1331).

5. In the event a company uses the CN logo and CN label statement inappropriately, the company will be directed to discontinue the use of the logo and statement and the matter will be referred to the appropriate agency for action to be taken against the company.
6. Products that bear a CN label statement as set forth in paragraph 3(c) carry a warranty. This means that if a food service authority participating in the child nutrition programs purchases a CN labeled product and uses it in accordance with the manufacturer's directions, the school or institution will not have an audit claim filed against it for the CN labeled product for noncompliance with the meal pattern requirements of 7 CFR 210.10, 220.8, 225.21, and 226.20. If a State or Federal auditor finds that a product that is CN labeled does not actually meet the meal pattern requirements claimed on the label, the auditor will report this finding to FNS. FNS will prepare a report of the findings and send it to the appropriate divisions of FSIS and AMS of the USDA, National Marine Fisheries Services of the USDC, Food and Drug Administration, or the Department of Justice for action against the company.

Any or all of the following courses of action may be taken:

- (a) The company's CN label may be revoked for a specific period of time;
 - (b) The appropriate agency may pursue a misbranding or mislabeling action against the company producing the product;
 - (c) The company's name will be circulated to regional FNS offices;
 - (d) FNS will require the food service program involved to notify the State agency of the labeling violation.
7. FNS is authorized to issue operational policies, procedures, and instructions for the CN Labeling Program.

To apply for a CN label and to obtain additional information on CN label application procedures write to: CN Labels, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Nutrition and Technical Services Division, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, Virginia 22302.

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