

How can a child care center participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)?

If a child care center wants to participate in CACFP, they can do so as their own sponsor or as an affiliated or an unaffiliated center site.

What is the difference between a Sponsor and a Center Site?

A Sponsor signs an agreement with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) to operate the CACFP in one or more facilities. A Center Site is where meals are served to children who eat in a supervised setting.

What is the difference between an affiliated and an unaffiliated center?

A Center Site can be an affiliated center (part of the same legal entity as the Sponsoring organization) or an unaffiliated center (not part of the same legal entity as the Sponsor organization).

Advantages to Unaffiliated Center Sponsors:

- Supports the mission to reach more low income children
- Additional revenue stream
- Enables more centers to participate in CACFP
- Increased community presence

Responsibilities of Unaffiliated Center Sponsors:

- Prepare site claims and disburse reimbursement to the site
- Conduct reviews and program monitoring of center sites
- Assume final administrative and financial responsibility
- Train center site staff and ensure all CACFP requirements are met
- May or may not prepare/deliver meals

Advantages to Unaffiliated Center Sites:

- Improved quality of meal service
- Rely on sponsor's CACFP knowledge
- Nutrition training available for all staff
- Participate sooner as they don't have to go through the application process
- Assistance with budgeting and allowable costs
- Sponsor accepts financial responsibility for mistakes or over claims
- Sponsor accepts responsibility for the center's CACFP participation

Responsibilities of Unaffiliated Center Sites:

- Allow sponsor to retain a portion of the reimbursement for administration
- Serve reimburseable meals to eligible children (a site may or may not prepare meals)
- Maintain recordkeeping as required by the sponsor and CACFP
- Attend trainings
- Allow sponsor to perform required number of program reviews

Contact Information: www.doe.mass.edu/cnp/

