

**Child and Adult Care Food Program
(CACFP)
Child Care Centers Sponsored by
Early Childhood Alliance**

Welcome to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) sponsored by Early Childhood Alliance (ECA), in cooperation with the Indiana State Department of Education. As a child care provider one of your responsibilities and challenges is to serve the most nutritious and pleasant meals within your ability. The foods a child eats during his or her early years will shape the child's future eating habits and affect the child's physical and mental capabilities. Participation in the CACFP will help you to subsidize the cost of providing nutritious meals to your child care children as well as teaching the children good nutritional habits. Your role in teaching children lifelong healthy habits is very important!

The CACFP is an extension of the School Lunch Program. It is administered through the USDA and Indiana State Department of Education. The CACFP programs benefit children from zero to school age who are being served meals in licensed child care homes, centers and registered ministries and for school age children (12 years and under) during non-school times. CACFP enrolled child care providers receive reimbursement for the appropriate nutritious foods served to the children in their care.

The purpose of the CACFP is to improve child nutrition. Therefore, certain guidelines have been established by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE). These guidelines must be met to receive reimbursement for meals served. A child care home, center or ministry participating in the CACFP must operate in accordance with the USDA policies which prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department.



Building Better Futures for Children

Early Childhood Alliance
3800 North Anthony Blvd. Fort Wayne, IN 46808
260.745.2501 800.423.1498 www.ECAlliance.org

CACFP Sponsor Responsibilities

Early Childhood Alliance (ECA) serves as a sponsor for the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

ECA responsibilities include the following:

- To provide orientation and training to newly CACFP enrolled providers
- To keep on file all required forms, documents and reports for all CACFP providers
- To process and submit monthly CACFP claims to the state by the 10th of every month
- To administer reimbursement of funds within allotted time to CACFP providers for meals and snacks served to enrolled children
- To offer trainings and inform provider of trainings that meet the Indiana State Department of Education requirements
- To monitor CACFP provider compliance with CACFP rules and regulations
- To answer CACFP providers' questions and concerns in a timely manner
- To provide technical assistance whenever the need arises

CACFP Provider Responsibilities

CACFP enrolled provider responsibilities include the following:

- Plan, prepare and serve a variety of meals and snacks within CACFP nutrition requirements
- Serve meals in a clean and relaxed atmosphere
- Maintain a safe and sanitary food service
- Introduce children to new foods
- Maintain daily records
- Submit monthly claim to ECA on time, by the 3rd of every month
- Receive 6 hours of approved training per fiscal year in order to comply with Indiana Department of Education training requirements
- Inform ECA of changes in meals served, service times and/or site, and operation changes such as vacation days, holidays, hours of care, and termination of child care business at least 24 hours in advance
- Keep license current and to provide ECA with a current copy
- Follow proper hand washing procedures for all staff and children prior to meal service adhering to the Indiana state guidelines
- Use the two-step process when sanitizing tables and high chairs before each meal (water and soap followed by sanitizing solution)
- Provide water upon request
- Train all staff members
- Follow all CACFP policies and procedures

Food Program Acronyms

CACFP: Child and Adult Care Food Program

ECA: Early Childhood Alliance

FDCH: Family Day Care Home

IDOE: Indiana Department of Education

LCCC: Licensed Child Care Center

LLEP: Legally Licensed Exempt Provider

URLM: Unregistered Licensed Ministry

USDA: United State Department of Agriculture

Early Childhood Alliance

CACFP Policy and Procedures

Claiming Meals:

Per USDA policy: Providers can only be reimbursed for 3 meal services per day per child (one of which must be a snack). You are to document all meals served to a child/ren even if it is more than 3 meal services per day. The Minute Menu system will automatically calculate a provider's highest rate of reimbursement. Minute Menu also aids in tracking meals for attendance and tax purposes.

Meal Attendance:

Attendance is to be documented at the point of service. This information can be documented online, on a Minute Menu attendance report or monitor approved form*. If documenting on a Minute Menu attendance report or monitor approved form, * this attendance information can be transferred to Minute Menu online at a later time. When documenting on another form, the ECA Food Program requires this data be transferred online weekly. It is best practice to transfer this data daily. If for any reason, you cannot get your meals posted by Tuesday, contact the ECA CACFP office.

*Your Food Program monitor must approve any non-Minute Menu form being used prior to using the form.

A provider can only claim the children in attendance at that meal. Attendance cannot be documented prior to the scheduled meal service. If during a monitor review it is observed that attendance is documented prior or after the meal service, **all meals** claimed will be disallowed.

Monthly Claims:

Monthly claims are due to the ECA CACFP Coordinator **by the 3rd of every month.**

All claims must be submitted online via Minute Menu/KidKare. Child Enrollment forms for newly enrolled children and infants must be submitted prior to the month end to receive reimbursement for new children. **Any enrollment received on the 1st or later will not be processed until after the claim.**

All documents submitted to the ECA CACFP Coordinator must be original and include proper signatures and dates.

Claims submitted after 11:59 PM on the 3rd of the month will be considered late, will be processed late, thus the reimbursement will be received late. You will still receive reimbursement for the claim, but that reimbursement will be late.

Per USDA policy the monthly food program claims do have an expiration date. Late claims will be accepted for processing but must be submitted to the ECA CACFP Coordinator within 45 days of the end of that claim month. For example, a May claim must be received by July 15th to receive reimbursement. **If a claim is not submitted within these 45 days, the claim cannot be accepted for processing and reimbursement for that claim will not occur.**

Monthly Claim Summary and Errors Report:

This report is created when a provider's claim is processed. It reports all activity and/or dis-allowances occurring with that monthly claim as well as the provider's reimbursement amount for the month. All providers must review their Monthly Claim Summary and Errors Report each month after their claim is processed. For any questions regarding claim errors and/or disallowances a provider must contact the ECA CACFP Coordinator within 14 days from creation of the report.

Locating Your Claim Summary and Error Report:

Claim Summaries and Error Reports can be accessed in Minute Menu by the following steps:

For Homes (FDCH & LLEP):

1. From the KidKare Home Screen, click on the Food Program.
2. Click on claims.
3. Click directly on the month you wish to view

For Centers (LCCC & URLM):

1. From the Minute Menu CX Home Screen, click on Claims on the top Tool Bar
2. Choose List Claims
3. Click View on the claim month that you would like to review
4. Click "Claim Errors" button on the right side on the screen

Meal Service:

For Home (FDCH & LLEP) meal scheduling guidelines see IDOE/CACFP Policy Instruction 02-01, Meal Service Times. Meals served outside of these guidelines **are not eligible** for CACFP reimbursement.

Your scheduled meal times must be followed. Serving meals before or after the times that you have given to ECA is not allowed. These meals will be disallowed for reimbursement. If you wish to make any changes in your meal service such as times of service, meals served, days of the week served, etc., the ECA CACFP Coordinator must be notified by email at least 24 hours prior to any changes. Meal Service changes must be approved by ECA prior to any changes. Failure to properly report meal service changes will result in the loss of meal reimbursements.

If you are not serving a scheduled meal or serving off site, notify the ECA CACFP office at least an hour before the scheduled meal time. Failure to notify will result in loss of meal reimbursements.

Field Trips

You may claim meals served during a field trip if:

1. The food is prepared at your home childcare/child care center
2. The activity is related to childcare
3. The CACFP meal pattern is followed
4. Health and sanitation standards are followed
5. Meal counts are documented at time of meal service

ECA Observed Holidays

Meals cannot be reimbursed on days ECA is closed for a holiday or for an observed holiday in the event the holiday falls on the weekend. The following are ECA observed holidays:

- New Year's Day*
- MLK Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day*
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving and the day after
- Christmas Eve*
- Christmas Day*
- New Year's Eve Day*

License:

To be eligible for the ECA CACFP a provider must hold a valid Indiana State issued Child Care license, LLEP or must be registered as a ministry through the State of IN. Current copies must be kept on file at the ECA CACFP office. **The license/ registration is the provider's responsibility to renew. When an updated license is received, it is the provider's responsibility to send a copy available to the ECA Food Program Coordinator.** If a provider's license status or registration should change for

any reason, it is the provider's responsibility to submit the change to the ECA CACFP Coordinator. You must maintain a current license or registration to remain on the ECA CACFP. **If your license expires or lapses for any reason, you cannot participate in the CACFP and will be ineligible for reimbursement.** Failure to do so may result in delay of reimbursement.

Training Requirements:

CACFP enrolled providers must receive 6 hours of CACFP related training each fiscal year (October 1 to September 30). Included in the 6 hours is a 2-hour mandatory training class in October. This class is required by ECA and all providers must attend.

Food Program related trainings are offered in various formats throughout the fiscal year. It is the Food Program provider's responsibility to receive the required training hours. Refer to ECA's online newsletter and training calendar on the ECA website for upcoming training that meets the USDA CACFP training requirements. Upcoming training will also be announced via broadcast messages and email.

Topics for trainings will include, but are not limited to: CACFP Policies, Meal Patterns, Menu Planning, Food Program Budgeting, Age Appropriate Feeding, Food Safety and Sanitization, Heathy Feeding/Eating, Minute Menu Training, Civil Rights, Feeding Children with Special Food Needs, Cultural Sensitive Meals, Family Style Dining, and Healthy Diet/Lifestyle Choices.

It is ECA policy that all training hours be documented and submitted to ECA by September 15th, of each fiscal year to ensure this requirement is fully met.

If you fail to obtain your required training hours **by September 15th** of each fiscal year, you will be determined seriously deficient in the operation of your food program and risk termination from the CACFP.

Monitor Reviews:

It is USDA/IDOE policy that CACFP providers are required to have at least three unannounced and successful monitor reviews within the fiscal year (October 1 to September 30). **All monitor reviews will be unannounced and at various scheduled meal service times.**

If your Child Care is open, even if you are not there, you may be subject to a visit. It is your responsibility to instruct all staff members on CACFP compliance, maintaining CACFP documentation and to assist ECA CACFP Monitors.

During a monitor review, if food program documentation is not available or other non-compliance occurs, meals will be disallowed.

If your childcare is closed for any reason, vacation, illness, etc., the ECA CACFP Coordinator must be informed. If you are serving off-site or at a different time, the ECA Food Program Coordinator must be informed via email prior to the meal.

If prior notification is not received and an ECA Food Program Monitor attempts a monitor review at a time the childcare is closed, this would be considered an unsuccessful monitor review. Meals for the entire day will be disallowed. If a provider receives three unsuccessful monitor reviews, she/he will be determined to be seriously deficient.

Upon joining the CACFP Food Program, providers must have a successful monitor visit within the first 4 weeks of participation.

During a monitor review the monitor will check the following items:

- Children's names and ages
- Meal Participation Documentation
- Current Dated Posted Menus – weekly for homes, weekly or monthly for centers
- Location of Cleaning Supplies
- Thermometers and Temperature of Refrigerator and Freezer
- Lidded Trash Container
- Components of Meal being Served

- Serving Sizes
- Current Dated Posted Infant Menus and Meal Components
- Current Posted License
- Cleanliness of Food Preparation and Dining Area
- Licensing/ Registration Compliance with Food Service licensing requirements
- Publically Visible Posted copy of “And Justice for All”
- Publically Visible Posted copy of “Building for the Future”
- Publically Visible copy of WIC Information Flyer
- Publically Visible CACFP serving size poster

NOTE: If during a monitor review any concerns regarding the licensing compliance and/or the health and safety of children arises, the Food Program is obligated to report these concerns to the FSSA Licensing Consultant.

Ending Food Program Agreement:

If a provider decides to end their participation in the CACFP, they must notify the ECA CACFP Coordinator by written or e-mail notice with a reason for ending the agreement and end date. ECA CACFP reserves the right to end Food Program agreements for just cause.

Seriously Deficiency

Child Care Centers may be declared seriously deficient which could lead to termination/ disqualification of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) for the following:

- If during the current year, a CACFP monitor is conducting an unannounced visit and the provider does not have menus, participation records, enrollment roster
- If during an agreement year, a CACFP monitor is conducting an unannounced visit and the children’s enrollment records are incomplete
- If during an agreement year, a CACFP monitor is conducting an unannounced monitor and is denied entrance into the center to conduct the monitor visit

- If during an agreement year, a provider (or staff) falsely records the type of food served, the number of meals served, or the names of the children who participated in the meal
- If during an agreement year, the provider does not receive the 6 hours of mandatory training required to participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. This training must include record keeping, sanitation, nutrition and nutrition education
- **If during an agreement year, the monitor determines that there is imminent danger to the children in care.**

Seriously Deficient/Terminations/Appeal:

The Seriously Deficient Process is the procedure to address issues with a provider's continued non-compliance with the ECA, IDOE and USDA CACFP agreement terms, policies and procedures, licensing standards and/or threat to the health and safety of enrolled children.

The child care will be notified in writing if he/she is seriously deficient. Once notified, the provider has 15 days to submit a Plan of Correction in writing on how the issue will be permanently resolved. Once ECA receives the plan of correction, it will either be accepted or denied. The provider will be notified in writing. The ECA CACFP Coordinator will conduct follow-up visit(s) with the provider to ensure the plan is followed and the issue is fully corrected.

If a provider has been found previously Seriously Deficient on a issue and subsequently has the same issue arise, ECA must move to terminate the provider. For example, if a provider fails to finish training one year by the deadline and is found seriously deficient and a plan of correction is completed to defer the SD finding but fails to complete training on time at a future time – the provider will be proposed for termination based on the past deferred SD finding.

Termination occurs when a provider is determined to be in continued non-compliance with the Food Program. Termination results in the provider being placed on the CACFP National Disqualified List and ineligible for 7 years to participate in the CACFP nationally.

It is ECA policy that ECA will not sponsor any provider has been placed on the CACFP National Disqualified List after they have regained eligibility.

Appeals

A provider may appeal the termination decision by applying in writing within fifteen (15) working days of the date of notification. The appeal process will be included with the intent to terminate notification and be followed if a provider wishes to appeal the decision. Appeals are handled by a third-party arbitrator.

Audits:

ECA conducts ongoing audits during the fiscal year. The two audits conducted are Menu Audits and Parent Audits.

Menu Audits are conducted to assure compliance with the meal pattern. Providers menus are audited for components, variety and foods high in both sugar and processing. Providers will receive a copy of their menu audit with constructive comments to aid in future menu planning. Once audited, menus will be rechecked to see how the suggestions have been implemented.

The Parent Audit is a USDA requirement. This audit is required to make sure that parent and provider records agree on days and times that the child(ren) are receiving CACFP meals. It is very important for the provider to make sure that all parent contact information is correct and regularly updated. Please assure your parents that this is a routine audit and they were chosen at random. The Parent Audit is also a tool that is used should a program's enrollment be questioned by the Sponsor, DOE or USDA.

Reimbursement rates

For Homes: Homes are tiered upon entering the program. Home rates are determined by tiers and are updated annually. Reimbursement rates are issued by the USDA on July 1st and run through June 30th.

For Centers: Reimbursement is classified as free, reduced and paid based on individual family eligibility. Eligibility will be reviewed annually in September and all enrollment forms must be sent to the CACFP Office. Reimbursement rates are issued by the USDA on July 1st and run through June 30th.

Reimbursement Schedule:

NOTE: There is no set Food Program reimbursement payment schedule. All Food Program reimbursements are issued as direct deposits.

The ECA CACFP monthly reimbursement is issued to us from the State of Indiana Auditors office. These reimbursement funds are not released on a regular schedule. The State Auditor's office has up to 45 business days to issue the monthly CACFP reimbursement to the ECA Food Program office. The ECA Food Program office then has 5 business days to issue providers' CACFP reimbursements. Please do not contact the ECA office to inquire about reimbursement checks within the 50-day window.

There can be an occasional delay in receiving the CACFP reimbursement funds from the State of Indiana Auditors office. ECA will contact providers via Minute Menu broadcast message if a delay has occurred.

Record Keeping Requirements:

Per IDOE/CACFP Policy Instruction 09-05 providers are required to keep all Food Program related records for the current fiscal year plus the past three fiscal years. The past 12 months of Food Program related records must be kept on site at the Food Program child care site. Per USDA and IDOE instructions a provider's record retention files will be reviewed on a regular basis during monitor reviews. Meals will be disallowed if these records are not available for review.

Minute Menu Record Keeping Practices:

- Menu and Attendance records are kept on-line and available for at least 3 full years.
- For enrollment forms and annual enrollment renewals, there is no digital signature process from the parents so copies of these forms with parent signatures must be kept in the provider's files.
- Minute Menu recommends at the end of the child enrollment process, providers print two copies, have parents sign both, send one to their food program sponsor coordinator and keep the other signed copy for their records.

Note: When providers are no longer on the Food Program, they are typically denied access to their Minute Menu account within 3 months of leaving the Food Program. However temporary access to these required records can be re-instated if they must have access to these records for State Agency, USDA, or IRS audit purposes. Notify the Food Program Coordinator if access is needed.

Documentation

Menus:

All menus must be pre-planned, currently dated and should be planned at least one week in advance. All regular and infant menus are to be posted and available for parents and CACFP staff to review. The posted menu/s must be printed or typed to be easily and quickly read

Menus should be kept for a minimum of three years. Any changes to your weekly menu should be written on the weekly posted menu.

Enrollment:

To receive reimbursement for meals served to children, valid Food Program Child Enrollment forms must be completed for each child and on file in the ECA Food Program office. A valid Food Program Child Enrollment form must contain the child's name, enrollment date, days and times of attendance, meals participating in, school information, parent/guardian name, address, phone number, original parent signature and original provider signature and if applicable, infant obligation information.

Incomplete enrollment forms will be returned for completion and can result in delayed start date and disallowed meals.

NOTE: If enrollments are received after the claim has been submitted, the child's start date will be the first of the current operating month. Meals claimed for the previous month will not be allowed.

Special Dietary Needs:

If you have children with special dietary needs such as a food allergy, this must be noted on the child's enrollment form. A doctor's statement must be kept on file at the ECA Food Program Coordinator as well as at the childcare facility. If the special dietary need is cultural or religious in nature, a signed note from the parent is to be on file at the childcare and ECA office. This will be checked on monitor visits and when processing claims.

Enrollment Renewal:

Per IDOE/CACFP Policy 05-03 enrollment forms shall be collected annually and must be signed by parent or guardian and shall include information on each child's normal days and hours in care and meals received in care. The parent/guardian must sign the enrollment renewal form each year and provide financial information, even if there is NO change in days, hours and/or meals. This process is called the Annual Enrollment Renewal Process. The ECA Food Program office conducts the annual enrollment renewal process each year. ECA will notify providers on this process each year.

Minute Menu:

The ECA Food Program office uses the Minute Menu software system. Providers enrolling in the ECA Food Program must document their Food Program information using the Minute Menu online system.

Questions:

If you have any questions or concerns about the ECA Food Program, please contact us. We are here to support you and to assist you in addressing any problems or concerns you may have. Email is often the best way to receive a quick response to your questions.

Early Childhood Alliance Food Program Office- 1-800-423-1498 ext. 2478
or 260-469-2478

I have received the ECA CACFP Policy Handbook and will follow the policies outlined.

Provider

Date

ECA Representative

Date

ECA
10/2015

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer