

WHAT AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT...

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP): The At-Risk Afterschool Snack and Supper Program

The At-Risk Afterschool Snack and Supper Program is a federally-funded nutrition assistance program that helps qualifying afterschool programs provide free snacks and suppers to youth and teenagers. Throughout New York State (NYS), over 1,000 afterschool programs participate in the At-Risk Afterschool Snack and Supper Program.

Q: How does the At-Risk Afterschool Snack and Supper Program help children and teenagers?

A: No child should go hungry; by the time the school day ends, lunch has long passed. Well-nourished children attending afterschool programs have energy to focus on homework, socialize with peers, and participate in physical activities. When children and teenagers eat the nutritious snacks and suppers provided free of charge by this program, it discourages them from eating high salt, high sugar, and high fat foods such as junk food and fast food.

Q: How does the At-Risk Afterschool Snack and Supper Program help my afterschool program?

A: Serving high-quality, nutritious food to children and teenagers is another way in which your afterschool program can create a healthy afterschool environment. If your program is already providing food to children, using federal funds to pay for meals may help free program funds for other purposes.

Q: Is the At-Risk Afterschool Snack and Supper Program considered part of school meals?

A: No. The programs are separate nutrition assistance programs for children. The At-Risk Afterschool Snack and Supper Program is a federally-funded entitlement program administered at the state level by the [NYS Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) (NYS CACFP), part of the NYS Department of Health (NYS DOH). [The National School Lunch Program](#) and [School Breakfast Program](#) are also federally-funded entitlement programs, but are both administered by NYSED.

Q: Does my afterschool program qualify?

A: The At-Risk Afterschool Snack and Supper Program is targeted toward children from low-income families. In order for your afterschool program to qualify, your program must be located in a low-income neighborhood. This is determined by school district data that show that 50% or more enrolled students qualify for free or reduced-price school meals. Contact your local school, [Hunger Solutions New York](#), or [NYS CACFP](#) to find out if you are eligible to serve reimbursable snacks and/or suppers. Qualifying programs must provide quality educational or enrichment activities to youth and teenagers. This may include tutoring, computer classes, science and technology activities, homework help, arts, and/or recreation programs. As long as eligibility standards are met, most afterschool programs qualify to operate the At-Risk Afterschool Snack and Supper Program.

Q: When can my afterschool program serve snacks and/or suppers?

A: Meals can be served on school days, weekends, holidays, and when school is out of session during the regular school year.

Q: Can my afterschool program serve both snacks and suppers?

A: Yes. However, NYS CACFP recommends between two and two and half hours between serving the snack and supper to the same child.

Q: How can my program sign-up for the At-Risk Afterschool Snack and Supper Program?

A: Afterschool programs can apply through [NYS CACFP](#) to become a sponsor at any time of year. Contact their office at 1-800-942-3858 to determine if your afterschool program qualifies. Each afterschool program is then required to complete an application, as well as related paperwork, training, and approval processes.

Upstate/Long Island:

Qualified afterschool programs can apply for afterschool snack and supper reimbursement through [NYS CACFP](#). However, qualified afterschool programs operated by a school may choose to instead submit snack claims only through NYSED. *This option is for school-run afterschool programs only and additional administrative considerations exist.* Please contact your school district's food service department for more information. Afterschool programs operated by a school still need to claim suppers through NYS CACFP.

New York City:

Qualified afterschool programs located outside a New York City public school must apply for afterschool snack and supper reimbursement through [NYS CACFP](#). However, *afterschool programs located inside a New York City public school (run by a school or a non-school entity) must apply through the [NYC DOE Office of School Food](#).* Since the Office of School Food serves as the CACFP sponsor, afterschool programs must apply online through the Office of School Food.

Q: How much funding can my afterschool program receive?

A: The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) annually sets a fixed per-meal reimbursement for both snacks and suppers. As of July 1, 2015, the reimbursement is 84 cents for each snack and \$3.07 for each supper. For each meal served that meets program guidelines, sponsors receive the per-meal reimbursement from NYS CACFP. Reimbursement covers food costs, but may or may not cover related food service supplies, food service staff preparation time, or other administrative expenses related to the meal. Therefore, other funds may supplement the per-meal reimbursement. Reimbursement rates are available at the NYS DOH website:

www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/.

Q: How and when will my program receive the meal funding?

A: CACFP is a reimbursement-based program, not a grant. Once the required paperwork is completed and the program is approved to begin serving reimbursable meals, a designated afterschool program staff member submits a monthly reimbursement claim (either in hard copy or electronically) to NYS CACFP that records how many meals were served in the preceding month. Per-meal funds are reimbursed to the sponsor directly in a few weeks.

Q: What kinds of food can we serve as snacks and/or suppers?

A: In order to receive reimbursement, each snack and supper must meet the CACFP meal pattern. A supper must include milk, a bread or grain, meat or meat alternate and two servings of different fruits or vegetables for a total of five components. A snack must include two of the following: milk, meat or meat alternate, bread or grain, or vegetable or fruit. Meals can be hot and/or cold. Contact a Public Health Nutritionist at NYS CACFP for [menu planning ideas](#) and meal suggestions.

Q: Where does the food come from and who prepares the snacks and/or suppers?

A: Programs have discretion to choose where the food originates and who prepares it. Programs can purchase food (from places like grocery stores) and self-prepare it themselves in facilities that meet certain preparation standards. Or, programs may instead contract with a local food vendor to prepare snacks and suppers. For school-based afterschool programs, it is highly recommended that the school's food service department prepares the meals (in New York City, the Office of School Food prepares meals).

Q: How does our program decide on preparing meals on our own versus hiring a vendor?

A: Before making a decision, you should consider equipment capacity such as refrigeration, storage, and cooking space, but also your ability to access quality food at an affordable price. Staff at the [NYS CACFP](#) can offer suggestions of types of vendors to contact, as well as other considerations with self-preparation versus vending.

Q: What kinds of health and safety standards does my program need to meet in order to serve meals?

A: All kitchens in which CACFP meals are prepared and/or served must meet local county department of health inspection requirements and/or receive a permit, which varies per county. If meals will be prepared in a kitchen that has never prepared industrial meals before, it is best to first contact your [local department of health](#). Older students attending the afterschool program can help with meal service, as long as they are trained and supervised. [ACT for Youth Center of Excellence](#), in partnership with [Cornell University Cooperative Extension](#), developed [Guidelines for Healthy Food and Beverages for Adolescent](#)

[Health Programs](#) for youth-serving providers, funded by the DOH. These guidelines give practical ideas for offering healthy food choices, raising awareness about nutrition, and engaging participants in menu planning and food preparation. They offer a helpful [webinar](#) that reviews the content of the guidelines.

Q: Is there a limit to how many snacks and suppers my afterschool program can serve?

A: Meals must be served to children and teenagers participating in the afterschool program. Afterschool programs registered through the [NYS Office of Children and Family Services](#) (NYS OCFS) can only claim up to their licensed participant capacity.

Q: Can more than one afterschool program located in the same building provide CACFP meals?

A: Yes. Multiple afterschool programs located in the same building can serve snacks and/or suppers, as long as the same children are not being fed multiple meals and all students are engaging in a quality afterschool enrichment activities.

Q: Who do I contact for more information and how do I apply?

A: For more information about the At-Risk Afterschool Snack and Supper Program and/or to become a program sponsor, please call [NYS CACFP](#) at: 1-800-942-3858. NYS CACFP staff will determine your afterschool program's eligibility, provide estimated reimbursement for serving snacks and suppers, and guide you through the application process. If you are a school-run afterschool program and want more information about serving snacks only, please contact your [child nutrition representative at NYSSED](#).

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AfterSchool Works! NY: the New York State Afterschool Network (ASW:NYSAN) works to strengthen the commitment and capacity of communities, programs, and professionals to increase access to high-quality programs and services beyond the traditional classroom. To learn more about ASW:NYSAN's efforts to build a system of youth services in New York State, please visit www.nysan.org & www.afterschoolworksny.org