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Afterschool Care Program

The Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act of 1998 enhanced nutrition benefits for all children with a special emphasis on older children by authorizing reimbursement for snacks served to children through age 18 (and to individuals, regardless of age, who are determined by the state agency to be mentally or physically disabled) who participate in programs organized to provide after school care. The intent of these provisions is to assist schools to operate organized programs of care that include education or enrichment activities known to help reduce or prevent children's involvement in juvenile crime or other high risk behavior.

Eligible Programs

To be eligible to qualify for reimbursement under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), Afterschool Care Program (ASCP) must meet the following criteria:

- A contracting entity (CE) must operate an afterschool care program.
- The purpose of ASCP is to provide care in after school settings. This does not mean that the programs must offer formal childcare as recognized by a licensing authority. There is no federal requirement for after school care sites operating under this provision to have either federal, state, or local licensing or approval as a condition of eligibility. However, to qualify under this provision, these programs must be organized to provide children with regularly scheduled activities in a setting that is structured and supervised. The program does not have to occur daily to be considered as regularly scheduled. While eligible programs would not need to establish formal enrollment procedures, they must have a means of determining that children are present on a given day. Documentation could include a roster or sign-in sheet.
- Eligible programs must include education or enrichment activities in organized, structured, and supervised environments. Any extracurricular activities, such as the school choir, debate team, drama society can qualify to participate under this provision if the basic purpose is to provide after school care as defined above and be open to all students. Under no circumstances can organized athletic programs engaged in interscholastic sports or community level competitive sports only (i.e., youth sports leagues such as "Babe Ruth" and Pop Warner" baseball leagues, community soccer and football leagues, area swim teams) be approved for ASCP snacks under this provision. However, a program that includes supervised athletic activity along with education or enrichment activities may participate as long as the program is open to all and does not limit membership for reasons other than space or security considerations.
- Afterschool care programs that are designed to accommodate students with special needs or that have other limiting factors may be eligible to participate in the ASCP. Special needs may include programs targeted to children who have learning disabilities or programs for children who are academically gifted.

- Charter schools, private schools and residential child care institutions (RCCIs) including juvenile detention centers are eligible for the ASCP as long as the afterschool care program includes enrichment or education activities. If no regularly scheduled education activity is taking place, as is generally the case on weekends, holidays and vacation, reimbursement cannot be claimed for snacks served on those days. Schools cannot claim snacks on weekends.
- Educational programs aimed at serving at-risk children. These programs typically operate expanded learning times longer than the traditional school day. “Expanded learning time” is a term used to describe schools or CEs that add significantly more school time for academic and enrichment opportunities to improve school achievement. A school with expanded learning time is eligible, provided that it operates a school day that is at least one hour longer than the minimum number of school day hours required for the comparable grade levels by the local education agency (LEA) in which the school is located.

It must be emphasized that under no circumstances can organized athletic programs engaged in interscholastic sports be approved as afterschool care programs under this provision. However, while athletic teams participating in interscholastic sports programs may not be approved, programs that include supervised athletic activity along with education or enrichment activities may participate. The key would be that they are open to all and do not limit membership for reasons other than space or security considerations.

At-Risk Afterschool Care Center Component under the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

CEs also have the option of participating in the At-Risk Afterschool Care Center component under the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The CACFP is a federally-funded USDA Child Nutrition Program authorized by the National School Lunch Act. It is administered in Texas by Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) Food & Nutrition (F&N).

There are several situations in which a CE participating in the School Nutrition Programs (SNP) would qualify to participate in the At-Risk Afterschool Care Center component of the CACFP:

1. The CE has schools that **DO NOT** participate in the ASCP and want to participate in the At-Risk Afterschool Care Center component during the school week and/or during weekends or holidays, including school vacations like Spring Break. In this situation, the CE can do one of the following:
 - a. The CE can participate in the At-Risk Afterschool Care Center component during the regular school day and serve one of the following combinations:
 - Afterschool snack only;
 - Supper only; or
 - Afterschool snack and supper.

- b. The CE can participate in the At-Risk Afterschool Care Center component during weekends or holidays, including school vacations like Spring Break and serve all meal types (breakfast, lunch, snack and supper), but can only claim one meal (breakfast, lunch, supper) and one snack.
 - c. The CE can combine (a) and (b) above.
 2. The CE has schools that **DO** participate in the ASCP during the regular school day. The CE can do one of the following:
 - a. During the regular school day, the CE can serve snack under the ASCP and serve supper under the At-Risk Afterschool Care Center component; or
 - b. The CE could serve snack under the ASCP during the regular school day and meals under the At-Risk Afterschool Care Center component on weekends, holidays or school vacations, like Spring Break. On the weekends, holidays or school vacations, the CE can serve all meal types (breakfast, lunch, snack and supper), but can only claim one meal (breakfast, lunch, supper) and one snack under the At-Risk Afterschool Care Center component; or
 - c. The CE can combine (a) and (b) above.

CEs interested in the At-Risk Afterschool Care Center component should contact TDA F&N at (877) TEX-MEAL. Additional information regarding the At-Risk Afterschool Care Center component can also be found at www.squaremeals.org.

Eligible Sites

Any CE that is eligible to operate the NSLP may be reimbursed for snacks served to eligible children in eligible ASCPs.

The CE and not an outside organization must administer the ASCP. The CE is not required to use school personnel or school facilities; however, the CE must retain final administrative and management responsibility for the ASCP. Furthermore, the CE must be the party that enters into the agreement with the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) and must assume full responsibility for meeting all ASCP requirements.

Area Eligibility

Schools participating in the ASCP must provide sufficient information to enable TDA to determine if the school is considered area eligible or non-area eligible.

Area Eligible Sites

The Texas Unified Nutrition Programs System (TX-UNPS) will automatically determine if a school is area eligible (50 percent or more free and reduced) based on the percentage of students

eligible for free and reduced-price meals. All relevant provisions in the agreement apply to the after school care activities, including the requirement to comply with regulations.

All schools and RCCIs must meet one of the following criteria for area eligibility to participate in the ASCP:

- If the attendance in the ASCP is limited to students enrolled in the school, at least 50 percent of the enrolled school students must be eligible for free or reduced-price meals for the site to be area eligible.
- If attendance in the ASCP is not limited to students enrolled in the school, but is open to other students, the school must use the free and reduced-price information from the individual school attendance area in which the school is located in (elementary, middle school or high school).
- If a school at one grade level (such as a high school) with less than 50 percent free or reduced-price school enrollment is located in the attendance area of another school (such as middle school) that has 50 percent or more of the enrolled children eligible for free or reduced-price meals, then the school could be eligible to operate as area-eligible.
- To obtain information on an individual school, the school should contact the CE administrative office and ask for a written statement that includes:
 - Name and phone number of the CE;
 - Name of school within the CE used to determine area eligibility;
 - Confirmation from the CE verifying the free or reduced-price percentage of the enrollment from the named school(s); and
 - Confirmation that the ASCP site is located in the named school's attendance area.
- The determination of area eligibility must be based on the total number of children approved for free or reduced-price meals as of the last day of operation for the previous October.

Example: If a site applies for area eligibility in August 2011, the most current October data would be October 2010. If a site applies for area eligibility in December 2011, the most current October data would be October 2011.

- The site's area eligibility is valid for the entire school year.

Example: A determination of a particular site's eligibility made on April 20, 2011, is valid for afterschool snacks served for the remainder of the school year (SY) 2010-2011, that is, from April 20, 2010 through June 30, 2011. Similarly, a determination of a site's eligibility made on August 30, 2011, is valid for the remainder of SY 2011-2012, that is from August 30, 2011 through June 30, 2012.

Non-Area Eligible Sites Qualifying as Area Eligible Sites

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has given state agencies additional guidance regarding how schools can qualify as area eligible and claim all students at the free

reimbursement rate for the ASCP. If an CE has a school that is non-area eligible but the school is located in the attendance area of a school that qualifies as area eligible, the CE may submit a request to change that school's status.

To do so, the school must:

- Send a letter to TDA stating this request.
- Identify both schools by name and by campus number.
- Use the most recent October data.
- Identify which campus is area eligible.
- Identify which campus is physically located in the attendance area of the eligible campus.
- TDA will verify the change through TX-UNPS.

For unassigned attendance areas, school staff should use individual school data where the snack site is located (example, Magnet School). For an open attendance area, sites located in the attendance area of a school with 50 percent free and reduced-price eligible students can claim the free rate for all students. Contact TDA for guidance.

CEs with No Set Attendance Areas or Boundaries

If a CE does not have assigned attendance areas or boundaries for its schools, the area-eligible determinations must be based strictly on the free and reduced-price percentages of 50 percent of the individual schools.

Busing

An after-school care program located in an area that has mandated busing of students should use free and reduced-price school data from the individual school (elementary, middle or high school) in the attendance area where the after-school site is located.

In situations where public schools bus children from their neighborhood schools to other schools, school data and site eligibility may be determined using one of two methods. The CE may determine eligibility based on the enrollment/attendance data obtained for:

- The school the children attend and are bused to, or
- The school the children would have attended if it were not for the school's busing policy (the neighborhood in which the facility is located and where the children live).

Site eligibility may be determined in the above situations only if the CE is able to document the percentage of children eligible for free and reduced-price meals at each school, both before and after the students are reassigned to the school outside their neighborhood.

The CE must use the same method of determining ACSP site eligibility for all sites in which busing occurs. CEs must continue to use the attendance/enrollment data from the school in whose attendance zone the ACSP facility is located when busing is not used.

Reimbursement

Under the ASCP, schools may claim reimbursement for one snack, per child, per day. Children are eligible to participate through age 18, and if a student's nineteenth birthday occurs during the school year, reimbursement may be claimed for snacks served to that student during the remainder of the school year. Reimbursement may also be claimed for individuals, regardless of age, who are determined to be mentally or physically disabled.

If the CE operates the NSLP in any of the school under its jurisdiction, then all schools under the CE are eligible to provide and receive reimbursement for afterschool snacks under the NSLP.

Schools may receive reimbursement for after school snacks if the ASCP is designed with an educational or enrichment purpose. Schools in area eligible locations (at least 50 percent of the children enrolled in school are certified for free or reduced-price school meals) may serve after school snacks to all students through age 18 and be reimbursed at the free rate. Schools that are not in area eligible locations (schools that do not meet the 50 percent criterion) may also serve afterschool snacks to students through age 18 and will receive reimbursement at the free, reduced-price, or paid rate depending on the eligibility status of the child receiving the snack.

For non-area eligible sites, schools must have free and reduced-price applications to document eligibility for all snacks served free or at a reduced-price. Under no circumstances may a school charge children for snacks claimed at the free reimbursement rate. The amount charged for reduced-price snacks may not exceed 15 cents.

Times of Operation

The ASCP applies to schools that provide care for children after their school day has ended. This may include afterschool care programs that operate for children that are attending summer school. Reimbursement for afterschool snacks may not be claimed for snacks served to children before or during the school day, weekends, holidays or school vacations.

Eligibility of Expanded Learning Time Programs for ASCP in the NSLP

The ASCP components were established to support programs operating afterschool programs with educational and enrichment activities for children in the late afternoon or evening when they might otherwise be unsupervised and engage in risky behaviors. Regulations define afterschool care programs as those "providing organized care to enrolled school-age children after school hours for the purpose of care and supervision of children." Recently, educational programs aimed at serving at-risk children have evolved to include schools operating expanded learning times longer than the traditional school day.

"Expanded learning time" is a common term used in the education arena to describe schools or CEs that add significantly more school time for academic and enrichment opportunities to improve student achievement.

A school operating longer than the traditional school day may be eligible for the ASCP reimbursement through NSLP, provided that it operates a school day that is at least one hour longer than the minimum number of school day hours required for the comparable grade levels by the CE in which the school is located. In determining an expanded learning program's eligibility for ASCP reimbursement, TDA will first use school day hour data from the particular school's CE as the standard to determine the minimum number of school day hours required. In CEs in which all schools operate an expanded learning time program, or in single-school CEs, TDA will average the length of the school day or average the length of the school day of surrounding CEs to determine the standard minimum number of school day hours.

Questions and Answers: Eligibility of Expanding Learning Time Programs for Afterschool Snack Service in the NSLP

1. **Question:** Are districts that have moved to a four-day week eligible if their hours are over the average of a five day a week school?

Answer: The district may be eligible. If a district's change to a four day school week increases the school day at least one hour longer than the State's average school day or the school day of surrounding CEs, the district is eligible for afterschool snacks.

2. **Question:** Does this policy apply to residential child care institutions (RCCIs)?

Answer: Yes. RCCIs that serve an afterschool snack may serve this snack during school hours provided they meet the requirements. If snack is served at multiple times, care must be taken to assure only one snack per child is reimbursed.

3. **Question:** If a school extends their school day for two weeks before exams, are they eligible for a snack?

Answer: If the school is already participating in the ASCP, they may move the snack to the school day if all the requirements are met. A school may not simply start the program before exams and then stop the program when exams are complete.

Afterschool Care Program Meal Pattern

<i>Select two different components from the four listed for a reimbursable snack.</i>	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13 and Older¹ Recommended
Milk, Fluid	½ cup	½ cup	1 cup	Portions for children ages 13 through 18 shall be no less than the portions stipulated for children ages 6 through 12. It is recommended that schools offer larger portions for older children (Ages 13-18) based on their greater food energy requirements.
Fruit or Vegetable				
Juice ^{2,3} , fruit, and/or vegetable	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	
Grains/Breads^{4,5}				
Bread; or Cornbread, biscuit, roll or muffin; or Cold dry cereal ⁵ ; or	½ slice ½ serving ¼ cup or ⅓ oz. ⁴	½ slice ½ serving ⅓ cup or ½ oz. ⁴	1 slice 1 serving ¾ cup or 1 oz. ⁴	
Cooked cereal grains; or Cooked pasta or noodles	¼ cup ¼ cup	¼ cup ¼ cup	½ cup ½ cup	
Meat or Meat Alternate				
Lean meat or poultry or fish ⁶ ; or Alternate Protein Products ⁷ ; or Cheese; or Egg (large); or Cooked dry beans or peas; or Peanut or other nut or seed butters; or Nuts and/or seed ⁸ ; or Yogurt – plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened – commercially prepared	½ oz. ½ oz. ½ oz. ½ large egg ⅛ cup 1 Tbsp. ½ oz. = 50% ⁸ 2 oz. = ¼ cup	½ oz. ½ oz. ½ oz. ½ large egg ⅛ cup 1 Tbsp. ½ oz. = 50% ⁸ 2 oz. = ¼ cup	1 oz. 1 oz. 1 oz. ½ large egg ¼ cup 2 Tbsp. 1 oz. = 50% ⁸ 2 oz.	

¹Portions for children ages 13 through 18 shall be no less than the portions stipulated for children ages 6 through 12. It is recommended that schools offer larger portions for older children (Ages 13-18) based on their greater food energy requirements.

² Full-strength vegetable and/or fruit juice or an equivalent quantity of any combination of vegetable(s), fruit(s) and juice.

³ Juice may not be served when milk is the only other component.

⁴ Grains/Breads must be whole grain or enriched, or made from whole grain or enriched flour or meal that may include bran and/or germ. Cereal must be whole grain, enriched and fortified.

⁵ Either volume (cup) or weight (oz.), whichever is less.

⁶ A serving consists of the edible portion of cooked lean meat or poultry or fish.

⁷ Alternate protein products must meet requirements in Appendix A of 7 CFR Part 210.

⁸ Nuts and seeds are generally not recommended to be served to children ages 1-3 since they present a choking hazard. If served, nuts and seeds should be finely minced.

Content of Snacks

Snacks served must meet the meal pattern for the ASCP. The minimum meal pattern is the same for children ages 6-18; however, it is recommended that schools offer larger portions for older children (ages 13-18) based on their greater food energy requirements.

Snacks shall contain two different components from the following four:

- A serving of fluid milk as a beverage, or on cereal;
- A serving of meat or meat alternate. Nuts and seeds and their butters listed in program guidance are nutritionally comparable to meat or other meat alternates based on available nutritional data;
- A serving of vegetable(s) or fruit(s) or full-strength vegetable or fruit juice or an equivalent quantity of any combination of these foods. Juice may not be served when milk is served as the only other component;
- A serving of whole-grain or enriched bread; or an equivalent serving of cornbread, biscuits, rolls, muffins, etc., made with whole-grain or enriched meal or flour; or a serving of cooked whole-grain or enriched pasta or noodle products such as macaroni, or cereal grains such as rice, bulgur, or corn grits; or an equivalent quantity of any combination of these foods.

Student's eligibility is based on when their scheduled school day ends and not on whether or not the school continues in session. For example, if a kindergarten program ends at noon but the students remain in school under a care program as described on the previous pages, snacks served to these students may be reimbursed. The same would be true for older students enrolled in schools that have split sessions. If students enrolled in the early session remain on campus to participate in an approved ASCP, they may receive reimbursable snacks even though the school continues to operate a later academic session.

Other Snack Service Information

- There is no offer versus serve.
- Both components must be offered in full portions.
- It is recommended that sweet items be served no more than twice a week. Special attention should be given to the fruit/vegetable/juice component, because of the portion size, which is $\frac{3}{4}$ cup for children 6-12.

Shelf-Stable, Dry or Semi-Dry Meat Snacks

Shelf-stable, dry or semi-dry meat snacks are not creditable in any meal served under the School Nutrition Programs (SNP). Please place this Policy Clarification in Section 1, Meat/Meat Alternates, of the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*.

Non-Creditable Shelf-stable Meat Snacks

Non-creditable meat snacks can include, but are not limited to, the following products:

- Smoked snack sticks made with beef and chicken;
- Summer sausage;
- Pepperoni sticks;
- Meat, poultry or seafood jerky such as beef jerky, turkey jerky and salmon jerky; and
- Meat or poultry nuggets (shelf-stable, non-breaded, dried meat or poultry snack made similar to jerky) such as turkey nuggets.

The shelf-stable, dried meal, poultry and seafood snacks do **not** meet the usual and customary function of the meat/meat alternate component as either an entrée or side dish of a meal.

Also, dried meat, poultry or seafood snacks **do not** qualify for the Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program because they **cannot** contribute to the meat component of a reimbursable meal. Fact sheets or company certified product formulation statements **should not** be accepted for these products.

Creditable Meat Snacks

While the above mentioned snacks cannot contribute as a creditable component in a reimbursable meal, there are some meat stick type products that **can** be used in a reimbursable meal. The following are examples of meat stick products that may be counted as a creditable meat/meat alternate component in a reimbursable meal with a CN Label or company certified product formulation statement:

1. Cooked, cured meat and/or poultry sausages excluding byproducts, cereals, binders or extenders such as Bologna, Frankfurters, Knockwurst and Vienna Sausage as are listed on pages 1-36 and 1-37 of the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*.
2. Finger-food types of shelf-stable sticks, usually packed in water, with a parenthetical product name such as “chicken strips packed in water”, are creditable when offered for children one and older, and when made without byproducts, cereals, binders or extenders. These products are similar to Vienna Sausage. They are **not** creditable on the Infant Meal Pattern (ages 0-12 months).
3. Extended meat or poultry “patty-like” products shaped into sticks which are usually breaded and either frozen or refrigerated; and
4. Dried pepperoni when used as a topping on a CN Labeled pizza.

Food Production Records

CEs have the option to use TDA food production records for both Food Based Menu Planning Systems and NSMP and ANSMP Menu Planning Systems. If the CE uses their own food production record, they must include all elements included on the TDA production records.

CEs have the option to maintain their food production records in either paper copy or electronically. However, the CE must be able to provide the food production records to TDA upon request.

Application/Amendment to the Food and Nutrition Division (FND) Agreement

To participate in ASCP, the CE must amend their application in TX-UNPS and submit an amendment to the FND Agreement to TDA.

On the amendment to the FND Agreement, the CE must indicate that they will participate in the ASCP.

In TX-UNPS, the CE will:

- indicate the schools that will participate in the ASCP
- update enrollment and free and reduced-price eligibility data as of the last day of operation for the most current October.

Record Keeping

At a minimum, CEs participating ASCP must maintain the following records.

- Documentation that the site has at least 50 percent of the enrolled students certified eligible for free or reduced-price meals or is physically located in the attendance area of an eligible school if all snacks are claimed free.
- For non-area eligible sites, documentation of free and reduced-price eligibility for all children for who free and reduced-priced snacks are claimed (applications on file.)
- Snack counts (total number of snacks qualifying for free reimbursement for all children for area-eligible; snack counts by type for non-area eligible sites).
- Documentation of individual children's attendance on a daily basis (roster or attendance record).
- Documentation of compliance with meal pattern requirements (production records).
- Documentation of on-site reviews conducted at each snack site.

Monitoring Requirements

The ASCP must be monitored two times per year with the first review occurring during the first four weeks of snack service. The next monitor review must occur before the school year is completed. The monitoring reviews should be conducted by the SNP director or his/her designee.

TDA may review these operations as part of its general oversight of the NSLP monitored during regularly scheduled CRE reviews. The Afterschool Care Program On-site Monitoring Checklist is located at the end of this section.

Afterschool Care Program On-site Monitoring Checklist

School Food Authority _____ Date _____

School _____

	YES	NO	N/A
1. Do the snack served meet minimum requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Are food production records kept on snacks claimed for reimbursement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. For non-area eligible sites, is the snack priced as a unit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. For non-area eligible sites, is the charge for a reduced-price snack 15 cents or less?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. For non-area eligible sites, is there a collection procedure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Are there roster/sign-in sheets to document student participation on a daily basis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Are records kept showing actual meal counts on a daily basis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Is reimbursement claimed for no more than one snack, per child, per day?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. Are snacks claimed according to the school's eligibility (i.e., Area Eligible – all free; Non Area Eligibles – by category)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10. Are attendance boundaries available (i.e., maps) that show area eligible sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
11. Does the afterschool care program administering Afterschool Snacks include educational/enrichment activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
12. Was the first monitoring review conducted within the first four weeks of the start date?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Signature of Supervisor/Director