

## Summer Food Service Program Webinar Transcript SNAP Outreach Grantees

Thank you. Hello everyone. Thanks for joining us today for the Summer Food Service Program webinar. Um, for those of you who are – have not been part of an outreach grant before, I am Susan Sheets, the Program Officer for outreach grantees and I work for the office of Strategic Initiatives, Partnerships and Outreach. Before the session kicks off, I'd like to review just some of the logistics of the webinar tools. Handouts for today's session can be found in the Handouts Tab of the Live Meeting tool. So if you look at your – at the toolbar at the top, over on the right-hand side you'll see what looks – a little icon that looks like three pieces of paper. If you click on that you'll see two handouts that you can download.

One is, um, the presentation that we're going to go through shortly and the other one is the list of state contacts for the Summer Food Service Program. There will also be a question and answer session following the presentation. You can ask a question through the webinar tool by typing your question into the Q&A tab and you'll find that at the left side. It just says Q&A. And if you click on that then you can send in your question, type it out, send it in, and we're going to try to get to all questions. You can also ask a question by talking on the telephone. And to do that you just press star one, the operator will put you in the queue. So this session is being recorded and will be available on line on demand in the near future. And any other further information we will mail out to all of the people who registered for the webinar. Now I'd like to turn over the session to Kiev Randall who is a colleague of mine from Special Nutrition Programs to introduce you to the world of the Summer Food Service Program. Kiev?

Thank you. Good afternoon everybody. My name's Kiev Randall and I'm a program specialist with the Child and Adult Care Food Program and the Summer Food Service Program. So this is the Summer Food Service Program webinar hosted by the Outreach Coalition, and we're very happy that we have so many people in learning about this program and hearing about the benefits of it. And we're hoping that this program works for you and in your community. So as you may know, many low income children face a seasonal nutrition gap. Low income children across the nation depend on free and reduced-price meals and snacks throughout the year. But during long vacation periods like summer or, for year round children the periods when they aren't in school, the USDA's Food Service Program makes a difference in these children's lives by providing nutritious meals when school is out. The USDA would like your help in reaching more eligible children in the under-served communities. So let's look at the numbers.

During the school year, the National School Lunch Program serves more than 30.9 million students in schools and residential child care institutions. In the summer about 1.4 million of these children eat a school meal in summer school while about 2 million more enjoy breakfasts, lunches or snacks through the Summer Food Service Program. Available at more than 32,700 meal sites in parks, schools, camps, churches and other locations nationwide, this program provides resources to foster healthier lifestyles. Since 59.6 percent of those students participating in the National School Lunch Program receive free or reduced-price meals, the numbers show that a significant portion of low-income children are not accessing these resources. The Summer Food Service Program is targeted to low income areas, areas where fifty percent or more of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

Provided to children the program serves up to two meals or one meal and one snack per day per child. Some sponsors may serve up to three meals per day. Despite aggressive outreach efforts at the federal and state levels, the Summer Food Service Program is vastly underutilized. Investing in and implementing proven strategies to engage more participants is critical to the program's success. Simply put, there aren't enough sponsors and feeding sites in many of the communities with the highest need. Even though more than 20,000 school districts operate the National School Lunch Program in over 101,000 schools and residential child care centers, only about 8% of these school districts sponsor the Summer Food Service Program.

Though FNS has worked to reach new sponsors in partnerships with national, state and local organizations, more sponsors are needed to bring the program to underserved areas. Recent legislative changes have simplified program operations as well. Since January 1 of 2008, the simplified Summer Food Service Program requirements were expanded to all sponsors nationwide. In addition to reducing paperwork, the streamlined procedures allow sponsors to receive maximum reimbursement rates for the meals they serve and provide maximum flexibility for using the reimbursement for all allowable costs. It has been proven that children who miss school meals are more likely to be sick, absent or tardy,

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disruptive in class, inattentive, and more likely to score lower on achievement tests. To insure the nutritional needs of low income children are met while school is out, a commitment from individuals and communities is imperative. Local governments, camps, school, and private nonprofit organizations may be eligible to sponsor the Summer Food Service Program. Parents are encouraged to contact organizations within their community that offer activity programs such as local schools, community centers, recreation centers and faith-based organizations. By improving opportunities and leveraging partnerships, our nation's children gain not only at better nutrition but better health.

We hope today's webinar provides you with good information about the Summer Food Service Program and hope you decide to join us in having your organization work with SFSP. Thank you for your time and for all you do to help our nation's children and strengthen our community.

Now I'll turn this presentation back over to Susan.

Thanks, Kiev. So a few more details about the program. It provides two meals per child per day, any combination of two meals may be served except the combination of lunch and supper, which leaves breakfast and lunch and breakfast and supper. Normally a program will provide a breakfast when the children arrive and then for the program and then provide a lunch before the children leave the site. A snack may be served but it doesn't count as a meal. There is an exception to the two meal rule. Camps as well as sites that serve children of migrant workers may serve up to three meals per child per day. And all meals must meet the US standards, USDA standards to be eligible for reimbursement. A typical lunch may consist of meat and cheese sandwich, carrot sticks, an apple, and a carton of milk. The summer program begins when a community works with the state agencies. State agencies are responsible for all the administrative requirements of the program. To participate in Summer Food Service Program, each sponsoring organization must sign an agreement with the state agency. The agreement sets forth the responsibilities of the state and also of the sponsor.

The state is also responsible for providing training and technical assistance to all the sponsors. States want sponsors to succeed so they will take every step necessary to assist both new and experienced sponsors. State agencies are also responsible for monitoring the operations of participating sponsoring organizations. Sponsoring organizations are those – are called the bread and butter of the Summer Program and they are responsible for a wide range of functions. The first, um, they accept the financial and administrative responsibility for their program. Second they manage a food service. This means the sponsor must have food preparation facilities or the capability to oversee a food service management contract. Sponsors also train and monitor sites and site personnel, arrange for meals at each site, oversee the operations of each feeding site, assure that all paperwork is complete, accurate and submitted in a timely manner, and most importantly submit claims for reimbursement. Several types of organizations can be sponsors of the Summer Food Service Program. They include community and faith-based organizations, private nonprofits, local governments, school systems, colleges and universities, migrant centers and Indian reservations. A feeding site can be located in a number of different places, indoors or out of doors. Sites can be located in parks, swimming pools, community and recreation centers, churches, housing projects, camps, schools, migrant centers, libraries, just about anywhere that children can be expected to congregate for the summer. Basically there are two types of feeding sites. The first is called an open site.

These sites serve meals free to all children eighteen years of age or younger. The second type is an enrollment – called an enrolled site. These sites require the child's family to complete an enrollment form and a household income application. In order for a site to be eligible for the program, it must meet one of two criteria. For an open site the location where the meals will be served must be located in a school attendance area where fifty percent or more of the children are eligible for free and reduced-price meals through the Lunch Program. The fifty percent criteria is based upon school data or census data. Your state agency can provide substantial technical assistance in making these determinations. For an enrolled site on the other hand, families must submit a household income application for each child enrolled in the program. If fifty percent of the applications demonstrate eligibility for free or reduced-price meals, then that particular site may serve free meals to all children. And it may sound a little confusing at

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first but the state agency, your state agency representative for the program can help you with further details and help you understand it.

There are two exceptions to the basic site eligibility rules. Residential and non-residential summer camps may serve up to three meals per child per day. However only meals served to children who meet the free or reduced-price meals criteria based upon household income applications will be reimbursed. That's a big mouthful. The second exception is for feeding sites that primarily serve children of migrant workers. In order for the site to be determined eligible the location must be certified by a migrant organization and then the site can serve up to three meals per child per day to all children. The USDA provides two types of reimbursement to defray the cost of operating a Summer Food Service Program. Sponsoring organizations receive reimbursement for operating costs which include the cost of the food, food supplies such as paper bags and napkins, and the cost of the labor to prepare the meals. Sponsors also receive administrative reimbursement for costs associated with doing the paperwork and training, monitoring the sites and all the other functions we discussed earlier. Additional reimbursement is also provided to sponsors that operate sites in rural areas or prepare their own meals. And these are, uh, with regard to the program sometimes these particular kinds of sites are referred to as self prep.

There are a lot of things that as an organization you might be able to do to help. You could become a sponsor of a Summer Food Service Program. If you want less responsibility you could supervise a feeding site or you could oversee an activity program at a feeding site. Many folks spend their summers looking for interesting and innovative activities for children. Um, I was told by some of my coworkers in special nutrition they even had a zoo representative bring animals to a feeding site for show and tell. So if you have meal preparation facilities, you could be a meal vendor. And as a vendor, then, you would enter into a contract with a sponsor to provide meals for all those sites.

So in preparing for applying for the Summer Food Service Program, there are just a few organizations you may want to contact to obtain community information or to form partnerships with. The mayor's office will know how community organizations, um, will know all the community organizations you might be able to partner with. County extension agents usually know their community and other organizations. Boys and Girls Clubs are aware of many local children's programs. Salvation Army has had successful sites and are sponsors of this program. Police and fire departments are usually willing to help community organizations. Local community groups like the Rotary Club can help with transportation issues, and libraries often have summer reading programs in a building that is suitable for serving meals.

What are some of the keys to a successful summer program that have been determined by FNS? Over the years FNS has found five ingredients for a successful Summer Food Service Program. The first one is to have creative activities for kids and teens. The meal is often not enough to draw the children to a site. However add one or two meals to your recreation program and you have a winning combination. Partnerships are becoming more important as funding for children's programs continues to decrease. There may already be an established program in your community that could serve breakfast when a child, uh, when children arrive and lunch before they leave. Next, involve parents whenever you can. Parents often know the community and the neighborhood children very well, and they're often the best source of information. Be resourceful and innovative.

Looking for opportunities, especially unlikely ones. For instance, um, in rural Nebraska a sponsor was having difficulty finding a meal vendor until they approached a local hospital, and as it turned out the hospital was very interested in getting involved and they needed very little technical assistance on how to serve nutritious meals. Above all you need to find a local champion especially in rural areas. The fifth key. This is someone who will go the extra mile to get the job done. It's someone that FNS considers to be the person to know and understand starting a program, especially in a rural area, may be difficult at first but that his or her hard work will pay off in the end and local champions are creative, innovative and self starters. Every community has a few of them and we know that you are part of that group. You are local champions, most of you are local champions for, us, the Food Stamp program in your communities.

So how to get started? Um, there is state agency contact information at this site right here and the state agency will provide you with an application, with training on the required paperwork, and will help you with

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every aspect of the program, so it's very important to maintain that contact with your state agency representative for this program. Very soon we're going to be – and those contacts are listed in the handouts if you want to download them. And very soon we're going to be putting on the web a Summer Food Service Program online tool kit. I'll send out an announcement when that actually takes place, but it should be within a couple of weeks.

And now we'd like to answer your questions about the program and, in addition, we'd like to hear from you about why there is such low – why you think there is such low participation in the Summer Food Service Program and what can be done about it. Again, you can ask a question or give your comments by pressing star one and the operator will forward you or you can write in your question on the Q&A tab, by clicking on the Q&A tab. We're going to try – we want to try – we want to answer all the questions about the program that you have, but we're also interested in your feedback on how – how – how we might – what improvements or changes we might make to make this a better program or an easier program to work with. So we're ready to accept your questions. Operator, do you have anybody on line?

Currently we do not have any questions in queue. Once again, to ask a question at this time please press star one, to withdraw a request press star two. Once again if you have a question at this time please press star one. One moment.

We do have a question from Cynthia on Q&As. Transportation is the biggest barrier especially in rural areas. So are there any thoughts on how we can provide funds for that? Kiev, any ideas on that?

You know, we understand, um, we take into account rural areas when we consider our programs, um, and we do understand that there are some transportation barriers there. However, there really isn't anything built into the program to directly address that. Um, you know there is some leeway in the funds that you receive if you're a sponsoring organization, um, for administrative funds so maybe if you want to divert some of those funds to maybe transporting the food then that's an option. Or also it could just be about, um, you know collaborating with somebody else in the area who maybe has to go through that way anyway or maybe has other business in there and maybe getting together with them to seeing – seeing how exactly it is you can get the food to where it needs to go. So maybe not necessarily looking into the program but looking at maybe other options that you may have outside of the program to get that food delivered.

It matters also what kind of transportation program you're having. I mean there are two kinds, you know, we can either transport food or transport children. And within those two categories those are very different kinds of transportation problems. So if you could, if you could elaborate Cynthia, if you want to call in and let us know we might be able to get closer to some suggestions for you. Right now in terms of transporting people, or children, the only suggestion that, well the biggest suggestion that we've come up with is that you need to partner with other groups who are going to be willing to help out with these summer activities. During the year kids take the school bus to school and that's often not an option in the summertime so there has to be some kind of alternative. So if you care to elaborate on that, we'd love to hear about it. Ann? Ann Kells, you had a question here. But it's – it's not there now.

I have questions in the queue, would you like to take those?

Yes.

Okay. Our first question comes from Bonnie ~~INAUDIBLE~~. Your line is open.

Um, the question is also about transportation. I think you have already answered it. We are in an urban area and, uh, the safety of the children is a huge concern. There's five gangs located in the area that we serve so, um, you know transportation needs to be addressed and we have partnered with other organizations to address it, but it continues to be a cost factor and some of those organizations have lost their busing so they can't help out any longer. Possibly putting – allowing sites to be closer together so that the children do not have to cross gang territories might be a solution. Do you have any other input on that?

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Um, well in terms of the sites being linked together, that's definitely something that can take place. Um, what you'll have to do is maybe when both of you guys put in your applications you'll have to make it clear in the applications that those two sites will not be serving the same children. And if you can make that distinction then they have no problem making it so that you have two sites in close proximity. And sometimes we have that in terms of like, you know, there will be a freeway that separates a neighborhood, so you'll have one site on one side of the freeway and ~~INAUDIBLE~~ on the other side of the freeway. They're literally a couple hundred feet apart but that freeway is a barrier. But because of that you can have sites pretty close together, so that's very much a possibility.

Okay. Thank you.

Okay, we have a question from Sam Covington. I'm trying to understand the difference between the child and adult care food programs and the Summer Food Service Program. Is the Summer Program a part of CACFP or are they separate programs?

The Child Adult Care Food Program and the Summer Food Service Program are two separate programs. So, uh, you know Summer is not a part of the Child Adult Care Food Program. And CACFP is basically a program that provides meal reimbursement to children who aren't up to school age yet. So for preschool children, daycare homes, children that are in daycare homes who haven't quite gotten to the age of five yet and are in school, and it also serves emergency shelters, after school programs, and also adult care – adult daycare centers. So we're basically reaching the child – the child population that the school program is not reaching. So that's the, um, and the CACFP runs year long so that's all year on a continuing basis. And in the Summer Food Service Program is we're basically picking up those children that are being serviced by the School Lunch Program during the school year but they don't have that option during the summer.

Okay. Any other questions?

Once again, to ask a question over the telephone press star one. Our next question comes from Cynthia Irvin, your line is open.

Um, actually I wanted to call in and clarify my question. Um, I understand that sponsors can be crafty enough that they can use their administrative funds for transportation, but getting back to rural areas, um, they're either if you have to use transportation in a rural area you have to drive long distances to either get to kids or you got to go long distances to bring kids in. At any rate it is very difficult and our reimbursement does not cover that and with the way of economy, the way the economy is going, there – people do not have the extra money to spend for that and it's really hard to come up with partners to help you out with that because they are also concerned about liability. So my point is that I think in general that this is one thing, if there is any one thing that needs to be put on the forefront of what we can do to address this issue, this is one. I agree if you're a big organization, maybe a school, you probably can absorb those because you have a lot of infrastructure, but when you are looking at private nonprofit organizations, I'm really concerned about that.

Okay.

Thank you Cynthia. Are any of you involved now with providing either programs or meals for the Summer Food Service Program? Are any of you thinking about getting involved, or enticing another organization to get involved?

Once again, for your line to become open, please press star one.

Ann, are you on the line still? I know your – your shelter provides an awful lot of different – Ann Kells. Your shelter provide in Phoenix provides a lot of different services. Is this something that you see that your organization

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Okay, I just went ahead and opened Ann's line.

Uh huh.

Is this something, Ann, that your organization would see as something that they would fit into?

Um, we actually operate a food bank and we've been partnering with a local school district to, um, help get the program to more sites but, um, like I say, a lot of the sites in our community are shutting down where we would typically do the program and so now we're trying to figure out where these kids are going to be this summer so we can get food to them.

Now, that's an interesting point. Why are the sites shutting down?

Well, like our local library and the public pool are closing because the city has cut their budget.

The funding, okay.

Some of the schools don't have summer school programs any more because their budget has been cut. The city used to operate a summer recreation program at school sites and they closed those for the summer. So we don't know where these kids are going to be, how we can reach them. I don't know if anybody else is having that same experience. We'd like to know what they're going to be doing.

Does anyone else want to respond to that question? Star one. Alma, if you're still on. Yeah, you are. What's happening in Laredo with your food bank? Do you see this program as something that would be, um, easy to start up in your community? Alma Blanco, I know you're there.

We do have a question in the queue. The name is not recorded. If you had a question, your line is open at this time.

Hello?

Yes.

Oh. This is Dayton – public school in Dayton, Ohio. We have ran a summer program for quite some time and, uh, I overheard the comments from I guess it was from Phoenix regarding Parks, funding from Parks and Recreation being cut and we've experienced similar situations, however we have, um, tried to address that by getting on our local airways, i.e. the media television or radio and we've tried to put our Summer Food Service Program out there as much as possible in the public sector so that they are aware of the locations where meals are being provided. Um, but it is – it is a concern, it's a growing concern and I'm not really sure what the answer is in regards to reaching those children that are not available to go to parks and some of those locations. We, too, are reducing our locations because of the cost that it costs to operate. I'm more in tune of thinking smaller – smaller – fewer locations, bigger numbers going to fewer locations to help reduce food costs and some of those dealing with small feeding locations so we're, you know, we're all – we're all trying to find ways to continue the program but to reduce our costs because it's beginning to be an in – I mean, it's an in kind program. Let's face it. But, uh, if districts are like mine they are suffering because of the low reimbursement rates that we're getting on our national school lunch and then, uh, Summer doesn't cover everything either.

Are you getting any response from the private sector at all?

Not much. Not much. But I guarantee you if we stop the program I bet we'll get a whole lot of – a whole lot of feedback.

Yeah. Yeah.

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See that's the thing it's okay as long as you continue doing it but once you stop it, everybody's going to be concerned. Uh, but uh

I think one of the most compelling statistics that can be used with your local government is the number of kids in your community who are likely not to get three meals a day unless they have the Summer Food Service Program.

Yeah. And the – there's an organization here in Ohio called Children Hunger Alliance that, uh, that's pretty much what they do. They're advocates for, one for Summer Food Service Program knowing what the number of students or children that are out there that are not receiving meals in the summer as well as those that don't receive breakfasts, so I know that information is getting out there to the public sector.

Okay. Great. Great. Um, Kiev, can you tell us a little more about the application process?

We got a question about the application process, uh, where organizations can also become sites, and I'll just read you the question. It says, briefly talk about the application process and reporting requirements and how they've been streamlined for an organization considering becoming a site. I volunteer with an agency that will provide homework assistance and tutoring year round. Now I've only been here for four months so I was not here when the lengthy application was out there, so I'm not exactly sure. All I know is the streamlined version, but there should be when you follow the link that's on your, uh, that's up on the web page now, there should be something there that discusses how the application process has changed and how its been made a lot, um, a lot simpler.

And I do know that they just don't require as much of the paperwork as they used to. So that's one of the ways that they've streamlined it. Now **INAUDIBLE** specific agency, I don't know the details of it but your saying that your providing homework assistance and tutoring year round. So because of that, um, I'm not exactly sure if your only looking for reimbursement for the summer or whether or not you're going to be looking to get reimbursed the year round. So if that's the case, then, um, maybe like the CACFP program would work best for you if you want to look for year round. But if it's just something that's for the summer, then that's what this program here is fair.

Thanks, Kiev. So I did hear from Alma on line through the Q&A tab to which she stated she's having problems with her phone but she can hear us fine. Right now the food bank of Laredo, which covers Webb County, right now they are partnering with the Housing Authority and the Boys and the Girls Clubs locally and also the county to provide programs through the food bank called Kids Cafes and the food bank operates twelve of these Kids Cafes throughout Laredo, Texas. So, um, the Housing Authority is another group that was on the list of possibilities and it looks like it's turning out to be a pretty good partnering resource as well as the Boys and the Girls Clubs. Are there any other questions?

We do have a question in the queue. The name is not recorded. Your line is open if you had a question. Apparently there are no other questions on line.

Okay. With us here in the room is Pam Phillips who is the Branch Chief for the Outreach Branch, and she is going to be doing some work with the Boys and the Girls Clubs she'd like to tell you about.

Yes, I just wanted to mention that we're working to partner with the Boys and Girls Clubs and they have a webinar I believe it is for next week because we would like to increase their participation in the Summer Food Service Program from the current 28% even up further and I think they could be a strong partnering base to get kids centralized in one location for summer food service. Hopefully assisting and addressing some of the transportation concerns and I know that still doesn't quite get to the rural concerns, uh, that is a dynamic that I think we will be looking more into. Thank you.

Oh, thanks Pam. Are there any other questions? We're – we're interested on a continuing basis in hearing about your comments and your ideas, so feel free to send those to, those of you who know me you can send them to me, or send them in to the Outreach Coalition or let any one of us know here at Food and Nutrition Service exactly what you're thinking about this. When the tool kits for the Summer

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Food Service Program come out, we'll be letting all of you know and we'll be giving you contact information at that time also. So if there are no further questions

We do have one more question in the queue. The name again is not recorded. Your line is open. Please check your mute button. Your line is open in conference.

Hello?

Yes, hi.

Hi.

I was just wondering if – if – can we as a food bank apply for these funds and distribute food to children who come into our food bank during the summer?

Yeah, you can. The only stipulation is that you're serving an underserved area so if the food bank is located in the area where fifty percent or more of the children are eligible for free or reduced-price meals based on that local school data, then you would. But you would only be reimbursed for the meals that you served to children.

Okay. Thank you.

This is meals, it's not just food, right?

Well, do you consider a meal to be like a sack lunch?

It – what we consider – what we have is meal components, so each meal has to meet those meal components.

Right.

And as long as that sack lunch meets those meal components, then that's perfectly fine. We don't have any requirements about whether it has to be a hot lunch or a cold lunch or anything like that.

Okay.

If it meets those requirements, then you'll be reimbursed.

Okay. Thank you.

At this time there are no other questions.

And thank you very much everyone, and we'll hope to be hearing from you in the future. Thanks for your time and have a good afternoon.