



Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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Informational Letter

Section 1

Transmittal:	16-INF-08
To:	Local District Commissioners
Issuing Division/Office:	Center for Employment and Economic Supports
Date:	May 17, 2016
Subject:	Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)
Suggested Distribution:	SNAP Benefits Staff, Temporary Assistance Staff, Services Staff
Contact Person(s):	SNAP Bureau - @ 1-800-343-8859, ext. 3-1469
Attachments:	Attachment 1 - 2016 SED SFSP Resource Order Form Attachment 2 - 2016 Radio PSAs Attachment 3 - 2016 Spanish postcard Attachment 4 - 2016 English postcard Attachment 5 - 2016 USDA Spanish Flyer Attachment 6 - 2016 USDA English Flyer Attachment 7 - 2016 Summer Texting Overview Attachment 8 - 2016 Summer Meals Myths Busted
Attachment Available Online:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Filing References

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
15-INF-06 14-INF-08 13-INF-04 12-INF-09			7 CFR 225 7 CFR 225.2		

Section 2

I. Purpose

The purpose of this release is to provide updated information to social services districts (SSDs) about the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), a program administered by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) that offers the opportunity for low-income children 18 years of age and younger, as well as disabled young adults over age 18 enrolled in school programs for persons with disabilities, to receive free, nutritious meals during the summer months when schools are not in session.

II. Background

Today, while nearly 1.6 million children in New York State receive free or reduced-price school meals for nine months out of the year, only approximately 400,000 children participate in SFSP. The SFSP was created to reduce the likelihood of nutritional risk for low income children during the months when schools are closed for summer recess. By providing free meals at participating summer meal sites such as schools, parks, pools, recreation centers, camps, housing authorities and other neighborhood locations, children can receive the nutritious meals they need. Through SFSP, schools, governments and nonprofit organizations receive Federal and State funds to continue a child's physical and social development with the number of meals and dates varying by site.

Because summer meal sites are selected based on community demographics and pervasiveness of need, any child 18 years of age or younger who comes to an approved open site may receive meals without the need for an eligibility determination to be conducted. Most Summer Meal Program sites are 'open sites,' which means they are open to the community and do not require that children sign up in advance or even 'check-in' at the site. Children and teens must simply show up at the site to get their meal. At camps, children eligible for free and reduced-price meals may receive SFSP meals. Young adults over age 18 who are enrolled in school programs for persons with disabilities may also participate.

Families currently in receipt of SNAP benefits may have their children participate in the Summer Meals program as the USDA Summer Meal Program helps with replacing the meals that the children were receiving during the school year. Summer Meal Program 'open sites', are open to the community. Parents are not required to give any personal information about their children to site operators in order for the child to receive a free meal.

III. Program Implications

Getting the word out to families about Summer Meals is a key factor to ensure that children who rely on school breakfast and lunch during the school year have access to good nutrition this summer. The advertising campaign for this summer's program will begin on June 13, 2016. The SFSP officially ends September 3, 2016; however, most sites close by the end of August.

Local Social Service districts are asked to help increase SFSP awareness by:

- Including the following information about the SFSP on your county website regularly visited by SNAP applicants and recipients:
 - *New York State Growing Up Healthy Hotline* at 1-800-522-5006
 - USDA National Hunger Hotline: 866-3-HUNGRY or 877-8-HAMBRE

- Letting users know that more information may be found at www.Summermealsny.org
 - Online mapping tool is available to locate the nearest open sites: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks>.
- Informing clients they may also use the text hotline. Texting “food” or “comida” to 877-877 will provide the closest open site data information. Please see attachment, “No Kid Hungry Summer Meals Texting Program.”
 - Posting SFSP information in your lobby using the attached SFSP posters, providing Summer Meal Programs flyers at the front reception desk, and including SFSP flyers in TA/SNAP application packets June, July, and August. Additional SFSP materials may be requested by using the attached **2016 SED SFSP Resource Order form**. Outreach information, including brochures, flyers, and postcards are attached for your convenience. Other promotional materials may be found at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/raise-awareness>.
 - Collaborating with various community based partners, such as your local Nutrition Outreach Provider and area food assistance organizations, to coordinate efforts to increase participation in the SFSP. Flyers, bookmarks, postcards, and more in both English and Spanish, are available to let your community based organizations and SNAP families know about the availability of summer meals and how to find meal locations near them.
 - Adding messages about Summer Meal Programs to your social media communications. Use the Twitter hashtag **#summermeals**, tag **@USDANutrition**, and promote the Summer Meal Site Finder at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks>.

OTDA has taken the following steps to increase SFSP program awareness:

- All Client Notice Systems (CNS) notices for TANF funded TA households with children and SNAP openings, recertifications, and re-opening transactions include information about the Summer Food Service Program:

Summer should be a stress-free time full of food, friends and fun. Free summer meals can help. During the summer months, children 18 and under can receive free, nutritious meals at Summer Food Service Program meal sites. Many sites also offer fun activities, so kids and teens can stay active and spend time with friends while enjoying healthy meals. Meals and snacks are also available to persons with disabilities, over age 18, who participate in school programs for people who are mentally or physically disabled. To locate a site in your community or for further information, please contact the New York State Growing Up Healthy Hotline toll-free at 1-800-522-5006 or www.Summermealsny.org.
- **myBenefits.ny.gov** includes SFSP information under “Assistance Programs,” (click on “*Summer Meal Program*”).
- The *myBenefits* Prescreening Tool provides a link to users with children for free summer meals. The link brings the user to the *Hunger Solutions of New York*, “**Find Free Summer Meals**” webpage.
- The OTDA Internet site includes SFSP information on the “Summer Food Service Program” webpage: <http://otda.ny.gov/workingfamilies/nutrition.asp>.
- The following message will run from June 1, 2016 until August 31, 2016 on the CEES hotline and be posted on the New York EBT Cardholder Website (www.ebt.acs-inc.com/nyebtclient.) EBT cardholders must be registered to the website with a valid User ID and Password to view the message:

During the summer months, children 18 years old or younger are eligible to receive free, nutritious meals at participating Summer Food Service meal sites. For further details about the program in your community, please contact the State toll-free helpline at 1-800-522-5006 or go to www.Summermealsny.org.

Thank you for your support in improving access to healthy, nutritious meals for low-income children during the summer months.

Issued By

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