

CACFP in Maryland: Outreach & Referral Toolkit



The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federal nutrition program that provides funds for meals and snacks served to eligible children at child care centers and homes.

[Building Better Beginnings](#) (B3) and the [Food Research & Action Center](#) (FRAC) have developed a communications toolkit to help Child Care Resource Center (CCRC) staff and other early childhood stakeholders increase their knowledge of CACFP in Maryland and effectively promote CACFP to eligible child care providers. The toolkit provides background information on CACFP as well as outreach materials and templates to communicate with Maryland child care providers within the state that may be eligible for CACFP and unaware of the program.

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I. Fundamentals of CACFP

What is CACFP?

The Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP) is a federal nutrition program that pays for nutritious meals and snacks served to eligible children who are enrolled at participating child care centers, family child care homes, afterschool programs, and emergency shelters.

How does it work?

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) administers CACFP through grants to states. In Maryland the program is administered by the Maryland State Department of Education. Early childhood education centers and/or child care homes enter into an agreement with the Department of Education to assume administrative and financial responsibility for CACFP operations. Centers and child care homes may be approved to claim up to two reimbursable meals (breakfast, lunch or supper) and one snack, or two snacks and one meal, to each eligible participant, each day. CACFP works slightly differently based on whether you are a child care center or home.

Child Care Centers	Child Care Homes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can participate independently or use a food program sponsor that will help the center navigate CACFP• For profit centers must receive title XX funds for at least 25 percent of enrolled children or licensed capacity (whichever is less) or at least 25 percent of the children in care must be eligible for free and reduced price meals• Meals served to children are reimbursed at rates based upon a child's eligibility for free, reduced price, or paid meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must sign an agreement with a sponsoring organization to participate in CACFP• Must be licensed or approved to provide child care services• Reimbursement for meals is based upon eligibility for Tier I rates (higher levels of reimbursement) or lower reimbursement rates at Tier II. The Tier of the child care home is determined by where they are located.

What are the benefits of CACFP?



Financially, in Maryland a child care center could be reimbursed up to \$41,340 annually for serving 25 free-eligible participants breakfast, lunch, and a PM snack 5 days a week. A family child care home could be reimbursed up to \$7,456 annually for serving 6 participants breakfast, lunch and a snack, 5 days a week.

How does a provider participate in CACFP?

Getting started with CACFP is easy. The process for participating is a little different between child care centers and child care homes.

Child Care Centers

Child Care Centers can either participate directly through the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) or through a sponsoring organization that will help facilitate their participation in the program. For a child care center that would like to use a sponsoring organization they can find a sponsor by visiting info.cacfp.org/sponsor. Or contact one of the following CACFP sponsors of centers.

Sponsoring Organization	Phone Number	Areas Served	Online Application	Website
Child Care Resources, Inc.	855-427-2888	All Maryland Counties	Child Care Resources CACFP Pre-Application Here	ccresourcesinc.org
The Planning Council	410-967-5848 Or 800-410-9774	All Maryland Counties	The Planning Council Online CACFP Pre-Application	theplanningcouncil.org/childcare-providers/

If a child care center would like to participate in CACFP independently they can start by calling the Maryland State Department of Education at 410-767-0199, which will then determine the center’s eligibility for the program. If assessed to be eligible for CACFP the Department of Education will then create a user account for the center where the center will submit the agency application. Once approved by the Department of Education, center staff will attend CACFP orientation training after which they will submit program and site applications to the Department of Education. Maryland State Department of Education evaluates the center’s readiness to begin claiming meals and will review the center’s compliance during the first year. More information can be found at bit.ly/MDEDCACFP.

Child Care Homes

Family child care homes must use a sponsoring organization to participate in CACFP. The table below lists sponsoring organizations of homes in Maryland as well as their contact information:

Sponsoring Organization	Phone Number	Address	Areas Served	Website
Cecil County Government	410-996-0253	135 E. High St., Elkton, MD	Cecil County	facebook.com/cecilcacfp
Family League of Baltimore City	443-423-0914	2305 N. Charles Street, Suite 200 Baltimore, MD	Baltimore City	familyleague.org
Frederick Community Action Agency	301-600-3263	100 South Market Street, Frederick, MD	Frederick and Carroll Counties	cityoffrederickmd.gov
Montgomery County Public Schools	301-284-4937	8401 Turkey Thicket Drive, Gaithersburg, MD	Montgomery County	
Prince George’s County Public Schools	301-817-0535 ext. 41393	14201 School Lane, Upper Marlboro, MD	Prince George County	pgcps.org/offices/food-and-nutrition/lp---child-and-adult-food-program
The Planning Council	410-967-5848 Or 800-410-9774	2551 Eltham Avenue, Suite I, Norfolk, VA	All Maryland Counties	theplanningcouncil.org/childcare-providers/

Child care homes can also call 410-767-0199 to determine eligibility or visit bit.ly/MDEDCACFP for more information.

II. Talking Points for CACFP Frequently Asked Questions

Basics of the Child Care and Adult Food Program (CACFP)

❖ What is CACFP?

- Sometimes referred to as the “Food Program”
- Federal nutrition program that pays for nutritious meals and snacks for eligible children
 - Meals and snacks must comply with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) nutrition standards and meal patterns
 - Eligible children are enrolled at participating child care centers, family child care homes, afterschool programs, and emergency shelters.
 - Can claim up to two reimbursable meals (breakfast, lunch or supper) and one snack, or two snacks and one meal, for each eligible participant per day

❖ What are the qualifications to participate in CACFP?

- Early childcare education centers:
 - Can participate independently or use a food program sponsor that will help the center navigate CACFP.
 - For profit centers must receive title XX funds for at least 25 % of enrolled children or licensed capacity (whichever is less) or
 - 25 % of the children in care must be eligible for free and reduced price meals
 - Reimbursement rates are based upon a child's eligibility for free, reduced price, or paid meals
- A family or group child care home:
 - Must sign an agreement with a sponsoring organization to participate in CACFP.
 - The home must be licensed or approved to provide child care services.
 - Reimbursement for meals is based upon eligibility for tier I rates (which targets higher levels of reimbursement to low-income areas, providers, or children) or lower tier II rates
 - Tier I:
 - ◆ located in low-income areas or
 - ◆ The provider's household income is at or below 185 percent of the Federal income poverty guidelines
 - May use elementary school free and reduced price enrollment data or census block group data to determine which areas are low-income.
 - Tier II:
 - ◆ Family child care homes that do not meet the location or provider income criteria for a tier I home.

- ◆ may elect to have the sponsor organization identify income-eligible children, so that meals served to those children who qualify for free and reduced price meals would be reimbursed at the higher tier I rates

Benefits of CACFP

❖ What are the overall benefits of CACFP?

- Improves participants nutrition and health
- Promotes healthy growth
- Strengthens the quality of early care
- Helps boost and stabilize child care providers' income and services
- Reduces food insecurity
- Boosts learning and development
- Stimulates the local economy

❖ What are the financial benefits of CACFP?

- For a Child Care Center:
 - Reimbursement of up to \$41,340/year for serving 25 free-eligible participants Breakfast, Lunch, and a snack 5 days a week
- For a Family Child Care Home:
 - Reimbursement of up to \$7,456/ year for serving 6 Tier I participants breakfast, lunch and a snack, 5 days a week.

Signing Up For CACFP

❖ How can I sign up?

- General CACFP information can be found at bit.ly/MDEDCACFP
- Child care centers:
 - If using a sponsoring organization may find one by visiting <https://info.cacfp.org/sponsor> or contact a sponsor in the table below.

Sponsoring Organization	Phone Number	Areas Served	Online Application	Website
Child Care Resources, Inc.	855-427-2888	All Maryland Counties	Child Care Resources CACFP Pre-Application Here	ccresourcesinc.org
The Planning Council	410-967-5848 Or 800-410-9774	All Maryland Counties	The Planning Council Online CACFP Pre-Application	theplanningcouncil.org/childcare-providers/

- Independently participating:
 - Call the Maryland State Department of Education at 410-767-0199, which will then determine the center's eligibility for the program.

- If assessed to be eligible for CACFP the Department of Education will then create a user account for the center
 - Center will submit the agency application
 - Once approved by the Department of Education, center staff will attend CACFP orientation training
 - Center will submit program and site applications to the Department of Education
 - ◆ Which will evaluate the center’s readiness to begin claiming meals
 - ◆ Center’s compliance will be reviewed during the first year
- Family child care homes:
- Must use a sponsoring organization which can be found via the table below.
 - Can also call 410-767-0199 to determine eligibility or visit bit.ly/MDEDCAFP

Sponsoring Organization	Phone Number	Address	Areas Served	Website
Cecil County Government	410-996-0253	135 E. High St., Elkton, MD	Cecil County	facebook.com/cecilcacfp
Family League of Baltimore City	443-423-0914	2305 N. Charles Street, Suite 200 Baltimore, MD	Baltimore City	familyleague.org
Frederick Community Action Agency	301-600-3263	100 South Market Street, Frederick, MD	Frederick and Carroll Counties	cityoffrederickmd.gov
Montgomery County Public Schools	301-284-4937	8401 Turkey Thicket Drive, Gaithersburg, MD	Montgomery County	
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The Planning Council	410-967-5848 Or 800-410-9774	2551 Eltham Avenue, Suite I, Norfolk, VA	All Maryland Counties	theplanningcouncil.org/childcare-providers/

III. Outreach Materials

A. Email Templates

1. Email Template for Child Care Homes

Did you know that Child Care Homes like yours can receive funds for meals and snacks served to children in your care?

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federal nutrition program that pays for nutritious meals and snacks served to eligible children who are enrolled at participating child care centers, family child care homes, afterschool programs, and emergency shelters.

A child care home can claim up to two reimbursable meals (breakfast, lunch or supper) and one snack, or two snacks and one meal, for each child per day. CACFP improves participants' nutrition and health, promotes healthy growth, strengthens the quality of early care, helps boost and stabilize child care providers' income and services, reduces food insecurity, boosts learning and development and stimulates the local economy. Financially, in Maryland a child care home could be reimbursed up to \$7,456 per year for serving 6 children breakfast, lunch and a snack, 5 days a week.

In Maryland, child care homes must work with a sponsoring organization to participate in CACFP and need to be licensed or approved to provide child care services. The reimbursement rate for meals is based upon your location, which determines eligibility for tier I rates (the higher rate) or lower reimbursement rates at tier II.

Want to apply for CACFP? Contact your closest Maryland CACFP sponsoring organization with the information below:

Sponsoring Organization	Phone Number	Address	Areas Served	Website
Cecil County Government	410-996-0253	135 E. High St., Elkton, MD	Cecil County	facebook.com/cecilcacfp
Family League of Baltimore City	443-423-0914	2305 N. Charles Street, Suite 200 Baltimore, MD	Baltimore City	familyleague.org
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The Planning Council	410-967-5848 Or 800-410-9774	2551 Eltham Avenue, Suite I, Norfolk, VA	All Maryland Counties	theplanningcouncil.org/childcare-providers/

You may also contact the Maryland State Department of Education at 410-767-0199 or bit.ly/MDEDCAFP for more information.

2. Email Template for Child Care Centers

Did you know that Child Care Centers like yours can receive funds for meals and snacks?

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federal nutrition program that pays for nutritious meals and snacks served to eligible children who are enrolled at participating child care centers, family child care homes, afterschool programs, and emergency shelters.

A child care center can claim up to two reimbursable meals (breakfast, lunch or supper) and one snack, or two snacks and one meal, for each eligible participant per day. CACFP improves participants' nutrition and health, promotes healthy growth, strengthens the quality of early care, helps boost and stabilize child care providers' income and services, reduces food insecurity, boosts learning and development and stimulates the local economy. Financially, in Maryland a child care center could be reimbursed up to \$41,340 annually for serving 25 free-eligible participants breakfast, lunch, and a snack 5 days a week.

In Maryland the Department of Education administers CACFP. Child care centers can participate independently or use a food program sponsor that will help the center navigate CACFP. In order to qualify for profit centers must receive title XX funds for at least 25 percent of enrolled children or licensed capacity (whichever is less) or at least 25 percent of the children in care must be eligible for free and reduced price meals. Meals served to children are reimbursed at rates based upon a child's eligibility for free, reduced price, or paid meals.

Want to apply for CACFP? Contact the Maryland State Department of Education at 410-767-0199 or visit bit.ly/MDEDCACFP for more information.

Maryland Child Care Centers and Homes Can Use CACFP For Meals and Snacks



What is CACFP?

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federal nutrition program that pays for nutritious meals and snacks served to eligible children at participating child care centers, family child care homes, after school programs, and emergency shelters.

Benefits of CACFP



Reduces Food Insecurity



Promotes Healthy Growth



Strengthens the Quality of Child Care



Boosts learning and development



Improves Nutrition and Health



Boosts Providers' Income and Services



Stimulates the Local Economy

Child Care Centers

Save up to

\$41,340 a year

for serving 25 eligible children breakfast, lunch, and a PM snack 5 days a week

Child Care Homes

Save up to

\$7,456 a year

for serving 6 children breakfast, lunch and a snack, 5 days a week

For more information on how to sign-up for CACFP visit bit.ly/MDEDCACFP or call 410-767-0199



C. Social Media
[Download Here](#)



**Maryland Child
Care Providers:**
You can receive
funds for meals
and snacks
through the Child
and Adult Care
Food Program
(CACFP)!



Learn more at
bit.ly/MDEDACFP
or call 410-767-0199

D. Additional Resources

1. **WEBPAGE: Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) CACFP**

This webpage provides fundamental information on CACFP in Maryland as well as resources on CACFP meal patterns and trainings.

2. **PRESENTATION: Child Care CACFP Information Session Slides**

These presentation slides review updates from the MSDE Office of School & Community Nutrition Programs (OSCNP), provides explanation of benefits and responsibilities of participating in CACFP, and where to find additional information.

3. **WEBPAGE: MD Department of Education CACFP Training and Technical Assistance**

This webpage provides training and technical assistance to CACFP operators to ensure that they understand and meet the nutritional standards and guidelines established by the United States Department of Agriculture. Including educational videos like *The Benefits of CACFP*.

4. **FLYER: Steps for Child Care Centers to Participate in Maryland's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)**

This flyer from the Maryland State Department of Education provides an overview of the step-by-step process for how child care centers can participate in CACFP, including contact information.