

MONITORING SITES

Monitoring is essential to making a Program successful. Having knowledgeable trained monitors will enable operations to comply with Program requirements and run more smoothly.



Monitoring Responsibilities

Having an efficient and capable monitoring staff is one of the first steps towards successful operations. A monitor serves as a direct link between the Sponsor's administrative office and the food service sites. They are the "eyes and ears," providing valuable feedback about how the sites are operating by visiting sites on a regular basis and observing meal services. Establishing a proper monitoring system will help prevent problems from occurring and will make it easier to correct any problems that arise during the summer.

The size of the monitoring staff will depend on the size of the sponsor's Program. To meet Program monitoring requirements, USDA recommends no less than one monitor for every 15 to 20 sites in urban areas. The number of monitors necessary for rural sites may increase depending upon the geographic area to be covered. As part of the application process, the sponsor will be required to establish and submit a monitoring plan for the summer. The plan will include the name of each site, its dates of operation, who the monitor will be, the type(s) of monitoring that will be completed, and the scheduled date of the visit(s)/review(s).

Monitors are required to perform site visits and site reviews at various times throughout program operations. The Monitoring types below indicate the reasoning for visit/review and timeline for completion. All monitoring must be documented using the forms provided by DPI or a similar approved form.

Monitoring	Description	Sites	When
Pre-operational Visits	To determine that the site has the capability and the facilities to provide the meal service planned for the number of children anticipated to be served.	New sites, returning sites that experienced problems the previous year, and existing sites that are new to non-congregate meal service.	Prior to site operation
Site Visits	To ensure that the food service is operating smoothly and that any apparent problems are immediately resolved.	New sites, sites identified as having operational problems the prior year, and sites new to non-congregate meal service.	Within the first 2 weeks of operation
Site Reviews	To determine if the site is meeting all the Program requirements. Monitors must observe a complete meal service from beginning to end, including delivery or preparation of meals, the meal service, and clean up after meals.	Site reviews are required for ALL sites.	Within the first 4 weeks of operation. If completed within the first 2 weeks, the review may count as a site visit.
Follow-up Reviews	To determine if the site has corrected problems identified on a prior visit or review.	All sites where it has been determined that a follow-up review is warranted.	Determined by severity of the problem.

Conducting the Review

What to know before you go:

- Site location and type of site
- Name of Site Supervisor and training status
- Dates of operation and approved meal service times
- Meal delivery schedule, if applicable
- Meal count history
- Planned field trips



Before Meal Service Begins:

- Arrive prior to the meal delivery or during preparation
- Confirm type of site with site supervisor and look for signage at the site to confirm if the site is open to community, as well as the site dates of operation and times of meal service.
- Observe food delivery or meal prep. Provide technical assistance if needed, to site personnel.

Tip: Take along a copy of the approved site application for reference.

During Meal Serving:

- Observe the entire meal service... beginning to end
- Determine if meals are served within the approved meal service time and are being served in a safe and sanitary manner.
- Check that children are served complete meals, offer versus serve being handled appropriately, if applicable, one meal per child per day is provided, and that the meal is eaten on site, if congregate meal site.
- If non-program adults are being served, ensure that the adults are paying for the meals or that non-program funds are used to pay for the meals. Is there a system in place for collecting and storing payment?
- Observed how the meals are counted. A point of service method must be used in all cases.
- Determine if meals are served to all attending children, regardless of the child's race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Assure all children have equal access to services and facilities at the site.

After Meal Service:

- Check your meal count to see if it matches the site supervisor's count.
- Review daily records kept by the site. Are they complete and accurate?
- Complete the review form. Discuss any issues with the site supervisor and the action to be taken to correct them.
- Provide technical assistance and training as needed to the site supervisor.

Monitoring Forms & Assessment

Thoroughly document all site monitoring using the forms provided by DPI or an approved alternative.

- Pre-operational Visit Form
- Self-Prep Monitoring Form
- Central Kitchen/FSMC/Vended Monitoring Form
- Non-congregate Meal Service Form

The monitoring forms help assess the operation of sites. Sponsors must develop a procedure for reviewing the monitoring forms to assess the need for additional monitoring, training, and to ensure updates to the Site Applications are made in a timely manner.

Follow Up Reviews

Key issues that trigger a follow-up review of a site within the same summer include, preparing or serving meals that do not meet meal pattern requirements, inaccurate or no point of service count, allowing meals to be taken off site at a congregate meal site, untrained staff, safety and sanitation issues.

Monitoring Assessment for Future Participation

At the end of the summer, using the information provided within the Monitoring Assessment portion of the review forms, determine which sites had repeated problems that trigger the need for a site visit the following summer, within the first two weeks of operation.

