

Sponsor & Site Eligibility



Sponsors are eligible organizations that assume total responsibility for the administration of the SFSP. Sites are the locations where meals are served to children in a supervised setting.

Who can sponsor the SFSP?

- Public or private non-profit school food authorities
- Public or private non-profit colleges or universities
- Public or private non-profit residential summer camps
- Units of local, county, municipal, state or federal government
- Any other type of private non-profit organization

Sponsor Responsibilities

At a minimum, sponsors will:

- Attend the State Agency training
- Locate and recruit eligible sites
- Hire, train and supervise staff/volunteers
- Competitively procure food/supplies to prepare meals or hire a vendor for meal preparation
- Monitor all sites for compliance
- Prepare claims for reimbursement
- Maintain records for 3 years, plus the current year

Specific Eligibility Requirements for Sponsors

Demonstrate Financial Viability, Administrative Capability, and Program Accountability (VCA) – SFSP sponsor must have adequate financial resources to operate the SFSP, have adequate staffing to perform all administrative and management duties of the program, and the internal controls to ensure fiscal and Program accountability.

Not Be Seriously Deficient – Applicants must not have been declared seriously deficient or terminated from the SFSP or any other Child Nutrition Program. If the State Agency determines a sponsor has taken corrective action to permanently correct the deficiencies and/or the debt has been paid, the Sponsor may be approved to participate once again.

Serve Low-Income Children - Sponsors must agree to provide regularly scheduled meal service for children in designated low-income areas or they must agree to serve low-income children (except camps).

Conduct a Non-profit Food Service – The food service operation must be for the benefit of participating children and all the Program reimbursement funds are used solely for the operation or improvement of the food service.

Provide Year-round Service – Sponsors must provide a year-round public service to the area in which they intend to provide the SFSP. Exceptions may be granted for sponsors of residential camps, migrant sites, and in certain other limited circumstances.

Have Management Control Over Sites – Sponsors must demonstrate in their application that they will exercise management control over the meal service at all sites. The sponsor is responsible for maintaining contact with meal service staff, ensuring that they are trained, and will monitor the sites throughout Program participation. For sites not legally affiliated with the sponsor's organization, the sponsor should enter into an agreement with the site official. A sample [Sponsor/Site Agreement](#) is available online.

Conduct Pre-Operational Visits – Prior to approval, sponsors must visit new sites and sites that had operational problems the previous year.

Sign Written Agreements – Non-school sponsors must sign a permanent agreement with the State Agency.

Types of Sites & Eligibility

Sponsors may operate the SFSP at one or more sites, for any period during the summer months if the site and meal services have been approved by DPI prior to the start of the site’s operation. Sponsors may have different site types that serve different types of meals. When more than one sponsor operates in a community, the sponsors should work together to ensure needs are met without duplicating services. DPI can assist sponsors in determining eligible site locations, appropriate site types, and the process for documenting participant eligibility, when needed.

Determining Eligibility Using School & Census Data

Sponsors may use free and reduced data from elementary, middle or high schools to qualify SFSP sites. The site must be located within the attendance area of a school with at least 50% of its children eligible for free and reduced-price meals. School data is updated annually and posted to the [DPI Program Statistics website](#). If not located within an eligible attendance area, sponsors may look at census data to see if the potential site(s) fall within a tract that qualifies. The [USDA Capacity Builder Mapping Tool](#) can assist with making eligibility determinations and locating eligible areas within a community.

Site Type	Description	Eligibility
Open*	Meals are available to all children; schools with academic summer school are required to be open to community	Site must be located within attendance area of school with 50% or more free/reduced OR within a census tract that qualifies. All eligible meals are reimbursed.
Restricted Open	Operates much like an open site, but there is a need to restrict or limit meal participation for reasons of security, safety, or control.	Same as open site. Sponsors must make it publicly known that the site offers free meals to children, but it will be limited for the reasons noted. All eligible meals are reimbursed.
Closed Enrolled	Meals are made available to only the enrolled group of children attending the site, as opposed to the community at large. This site type may be selected when the site is unable to accommodate additional children from the community.	Same as open site OR at least 50% of the children enrolled in programming must be eligible for free/reduced price meals. When not area eligible, sponsors are required to keep enrollment records and participant eligibility documentation each month to verify that at least 50% of the children are eligible. All eligible meals are reimbursed.
Migrant	Serves primarily migrant children	Operated by a Migrant Organization or Agency participating in the DPI Migrant Education Project. All eligible meals are reimbursed.
Camps	Residential or day camp with a regularly scheduled meal service as part of an organized program.	The sponsor is reimbursed only for meals served to children determined to be income eligible/need (free/reduced). See Documenting Participant Eligibility .
Conditional Non-Congregate Site	Provides non-congregate meal service for eligible children in an area that does not meet the definition of “areas in which poor economic conditions exist” and is not a “Camp,”	The sponsor is reimbursed only for meals served to children determined to be income eligible/need (free/reduced). See Documenting Participant Eligibility .

*Rural Non-Congregate Meals Sites are typically classified as open if located within an area that is considered area eligible via census data or free/reduced data.