


[Back](#)**For Immediate Release***Monday, June 3, 2019***FREE HEALTHY MEALS AND SNACKS ARE AVAILABLE TO ILLINOIS STUDENTS AND FAMILIES DURING THE SUMMER***FAMILIES CAN FIND SITES BY TEXTING "FOODIL" TO 877-877 OR VISITING [SUMMERMEALSILLINOIS.ORG](http://SUMMERMEALSILLINOIS.ORG)*

**SPRINGFIELD** – The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) will provide healthy meals and snacks to children and teens age 18 and younger at hundreds of sites across Illinois this summer. Families can find their nearest summer meals site by calling (800) 359-2163, texting "FoodIL" to 877-877, or visiting [summermealsillinois.org](http://summermealsillinois.org) (<http://summerfeedingillinois.org/>).

Hunger touches every community in Illinois. Only 12 percent of children who receive a meal at school during the school year in Illinois receive an SFSP meal in the summer, according to the Food Research & Action Center  (<http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/2018-summer-nutrition-report.pdf>). Illinois' summer meals programs rely on community organizations, school districts, and other sponsors who are dedicated to ending childhood hunger in Illinois.

"A healthy return to school starts with a healthy summer," said State Superintendent of Education Dr. Carmen I. Ayala. "Equity means ensuring students get what they need year-round. ISBE is grateful to all those who have stepped up to sponsor the Summer Food Service Program, making it possible for free and healthy meals and snacks to reach the families who need them."

Approximately one in six children in Cook County are at risk of hunger, according to the Greater Chicago Food Depository.

The Food Depository's Lunch Bus (<http://www.chicagosfoodbank.org/summer-lunch-bus/>) provides summer meals as part of the Summer Food Service Program. This summer, the Lunch Bus will travel to 15 sites on three routes throughout Chicago and the suburbs every summer weekday. The Lunch Bus provides approximately 2,700 meals every week; it provided more than 27,000 total meals in summer 2018.

"The presence of hunger among our children diminishes hope – in our communities and in ourselves," said Kate Maehr, executive director and CEO of the Greater Chicago Food Depository. "A healthy community begins with food. We're proud to continue our participation in the Summer Food Service Program."

The SFSP is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and administered by the Illinois State Board of Education in partnership with local organizations across the state. The program provides funding to public or private nonprofit Local Education Agencies; entities of state, local, municipal, or county government; residential camps; organizations with 501(c)(3) status; and faith-based organizations to serve nutritious meals to children during the summer months when schools are not in session.

**Summer Food Service Program Service Requirements**

All participating SFSP sponsors must provide free meals to all sites that meet income eligibility. Income eligibility can be determined through school attendance area data, census data, or household eligibility data.

Open and restricted open sites serve areas in which poor economic conditions exist and must provide meals to all children without charge. The meals must be the same for all children regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Sites will provide meals on a first-come, first-served basis.

Enrolled sites and camps must provide meals to all eligible children free of charge given certain criteria. Enrolled sites are sites open only to children enrolled in a program or to a group of identified children, as opposed to the community at large. Enrolled sites are able to qualify by either area eligibility or individual income eligibility of the children attending the site. For residential and non-residential camps who wish to participate in SFSP, children may qualify for free meals by meeting the income guidelines for reduced-price meals in the National School Lunch Program. The income guidelines for reduced-price meals by family size are listed below. A foster child and children who are part of households that receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps) benefits or benefits under Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) are automatically eligible to receive free meals at eligible program sites. Acceptance and participation requirements for the program and all activities are the same for all regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

There will be no discrimination in the course of the meal service at any sites.

### USDA Summer Food Service Program 2019 Income Guidelines

Household Size	Annual	Monthly	Twice Per Month	Every Two Weeks	Weekly
1	22,459	1,872	936	864	432
2	30,451	2,538	1,269	1,172	586
3	38,443	3,204	1,602	1,479	740
4	46,435	3,870	1,935	1,786	893
5	54,427	4,536	2,268	2,094	1,047
6	62,419	5,202	2,601	2,401	1,201
7	70,411	5,868	2,934	2,709	1,355
8	78,403	6,534	3,267	3,016	1,508
For each additional family member, add	7,992	666	333	308	154

If a household's income falls within or below the guidelines listed below, a family member should contact the site's sponsor to learn the benefits of the program. If the site does not meet area eligibility, families may be required to complete an application and provide income, TANF, or SNAP information. Please contact ISBE at (800) 545-7892 or at [cnp@isbe.net](mailto:cnp@isbe.net) (<mailto:cnp@isbe.net>) for possible alternative methods to meet site eligibility.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027) found at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) ([http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html)) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit the completed form or letter to USDA by (1) mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture; Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax at (202) 690-7442; or (3) email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov) (<mailto:program.intake@usda.gov>).

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