

MEAL COUNT POLICY PROTOTYPE

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

As a qualifying Residential Child Care Entity, we are reimbursed for certain meals and snacks served to the residents of the “Residential Child Care” program. It is our desire to maximize use of this reimbursement money by complying with regulations as effectively and efficiently as possible. Reimbursement is made to **(Insert Name of RCCI)** by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the number of qualifying meals or snacks actually served. In order to request reimbursement, **(Insert Name of RCCI)** must have a procedure to document the number of meals or snacks served at the time the service actually takes place. Accordingly, a meal count policy has been developed to gather the required information.

The number of qualifying meals and snacks served each day should be counted and recorded daily. **This count should be done at the time the meals or snacks are served.** The meal count for each building should be recorded daily and returned to the meal count administrator by the end of the last day of the month.

Meals to be counted and recorded:

- a) **Breakfasts** – The number of resident children served breakfast in the institution on any day of the year. This includes weekends, holidays, and summer time. School does not have to be in session for us to claim reimbursement for breakfasts served. We are able to count a breakfast meal when purchased provided that all of the food groups and their correct portions are purchased.
- b) **Lunches** – The number of residents served lunch on any day of the year. This includes weekends, holidays, and summer time. School does not have to be in session for us to claim reimbursement for lunches served. Lunches should also be counted if a resident takes a sack lunch prepared to school (either on-campus or public) or to any other activity. However, lunches should not be counted if the resident purchases the lunch at **a public** school. We are able to count a lunch meal that we purchase (e.g. on break, for Sunday church lunch) provided that all of the food groups and their correct portions are purchased or served.
- c) **Lunches – On-Campus of the RCCI** – Residents attending school on-campus are required to bring their own sack lunch. In order for **(Insert Name of RCCI)** to be able to account for this meal, the resident needs to bring a lunch that will provide them with all food groups and their correct portions. Should a resident not bring a qualifying lunch, in order for **(Insert Name of RCCI)** to account for this lunch, the school staff would need to serve the resident staples available at the school from the food groups and their correct portions. (Such as ¼ cup of peanut butter, 1 bread slice, either 2 fruits or 2 vegetables or 1 of each and 8 oz. of milk served in a 10 oz. cup, etc.) The portions need to be served to the resident and if they choose not to eat, we need to dispose of the food unless it is individually packaged and unopened. All on-campus school lunches are eligible for the program if the above procedures are followed.
- d) **After-School Snacks** – The number of residents served snacks after school on any school day when a formal tutoring program is taking place. School does have to be in session for us to claim reimbursement for after-school snacks served. If school is cancelled, we cannot count the snack. If the public school is cancelled, we can still count the snacks for all kids if the on-campus school was still in session. The appropriate snack meal pattern must be followed to count the snack for reimbursement.
- e) **Offer vs. Serve during Lunch and Breakfast** –A number of servings must be offered but then requires that a number must also be served. For example, for lunch, 5 servings from various categories must be offered but only 3 servings need to be taken by the child. When a child packs their lunch, all 5 categories must be offered but they are only required to take 3 for the meal. If they drink milk at the school that counts as 1 category so they are only required to take 2 other categories for the meal to count.