



For Immediate Release:

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STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SEEKING APPLICATIONS FOR SUMMER MEAL SPONSORS

Sponsoring Organizations Help Provide Nutritious Meals to Thousands of Children

(HARTFORD, CT) – The Connecticut State Department of Education is now accepting applications for the 2017 Summer Food Service Program. This summer, the Connecticut State Department of Education aims to serve at least 37,000 Connecticut children free meals through the 2017 federal program. Qualified local sponsoring organizations must be identified to provide meals.

Last year, more than 35,000 eligible children were served at 708 locations statewide through 68 locally sponsored programs. If children are to receive a nutritious meal during the summer break, the assistance of local organizations is critical.

The Summer Food Service Program is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and serves as the summer extension of the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, which provide meals for students during the school year. The Connecticut State Department of Education coordinates local Summer Food Service Program activities.

Local Summer Food Service Program sponsors may include public or private nonprofit school food authorities; state, local, municipal, or county governments; residential public or private nonprofit summer camps; public or private nonprofit colleges or universities participating in the National Youth Sports Program; and private nonprofit organizations. Any of these groups or organizations who verify that at least half the children in their potential service area qualify for free or reduced-price school meals may apply to be a sponsor. A child's eligibility for free or reduced-price school meals is based on household income.

The Connecticut State Department of Education has identified several communities with neighborhoods eligible to host a Summer Food Service Program site. Eligible neighborhoods have at least 50 percent or more of the family income levels in the area at or below 185 percent of poverty guidelines. Eligible sponsor organizations are especially needed in these towns: Ashford, Bristol, East Windsor, East Granby, Ellington, Enfield, Fairfield, Griswold, Guilford, Hamden, Litchfield, Norfolk, North Stonington, Rocky Hill, Sterling, and Washington.

All sponsors must agree to serve meals to any eligible child regardless of his or her race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Summer Food Service Program sponsors are reimbursed for each meal served, according

to predetermined U.S. Department of Agriculture rates.

Summer Food Service Program applications and further information are available through the Connecticut State Department of Education's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Blvd., Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103. More information on the Summer Food Service Program is available at www.sde.ct.gov.

People can find Summer Meal locations by contacting [2-1-1 Connecticut](tel:211) or visiting End Hunger CT!'s [Summer Food Site Finder](http://www.CTSummerMeals.org) at www.CTSummerMeals.org.

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FOOD SERVICE MANAGEMENT COMPANY REGISTRATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

This release serves as notification concerning the mandatory registration requirement of food service management companies that must be met in order to participate in the 2017 Summer Food Service Program in Connecticut. Sponsors of the Summer Food Service Program may contract only with food service management companies that have registered with the Connecticut State Department of Education.

On or before March 15, 2017, each food service management company that desires to participate in the program within the State of Connecticut must submit an application or renewal for registration to the Connecticut State Department of Education. The application form for registration can be requested by contacting Andrew Paul at 860-807-2048 or Andrew.Paul@ct.gov.

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