

# Using Federal Child Nutrition Programs for Emergency Feeding

---

Vermont Agency of Education




# FREE MEALS

Atkins Field Site is CLOSED July 13  
All Other Sites are OPEN July 13

## JULY 13

for kids & teens  
ages 18 and under



Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union  
July 13


All OSSU summer meal sites except Atkins Field in Hardwick are OPEN today, Thursday, July 13, for our grab-and-go breakfasts and lunches—at no charge—to kids and teens ages 18 and under.

Adults in need affected by the flooding may also receive a free meal today at Hardwick Elementary School.

The Hardwick Elementary School location will remain open an extended time today until 1:30pm.



Thank you for the food mmmm good  
2020  
BY Landen W



I ❤️





# Why turn to school meals programs for emergency feeding?

---

- Located in all parts of the state, maybe at your designated shelter.
- Staff are already trained in food safety, efficient meal prep, menu planning.
- The program may already have delivery vehicles and hot/cold-holding transport units.
- If you are planning to use the school kitchen for emergency feeding, school food service staff know that kitchen and equipment already.
- Staff are already employed by or contracted through a public entity that could be eligible for FEMA public assistance in a declared emergency or disaster.
- Food and supplies are already on hand.
- If school is closed or electricity is lost, perishable foods may be going to waste.
- School food service staff are part of your community and want to help.
- Federal funding is available to help pay for meals for children when school is closed unexpectedly and for meals served to impacted adults.
- Schools have existing communication channels to get information out to families.

# Strategies

---

1. Keep school open if possible.
2. If school must be closed, the school may be able to activate the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) to feed children 18 and under.
3. Purchase meals from the school meals program for adults, and for child meals not covered through the school meals programs or SFSP.
4. Schools can use USDA Foods to reduce the per-meal price for purchased meals.
5. If the school meals program isn't able to produce meals, USDA Foods can be provided to other organizations to produce meals.
6. If a congregate emergency shelter is set up, consider using the CACFP to provide 3 meals per day to children 18 and under.
7. Document all costs, food and supplies used, number of people served, and volunteer hours for possible FEMA and USDA reimbursement.
8. If grocery distribution is disrupted, inquire with the SEOC or Agency of Education about Disaster Household Distribution of USDA Foods.



# Keep school open, if possible

---

1. When school is open, all students receive free breakfast and lunch at school
  - Some schools also offer free after school snacks or meals to all children
2. Ask what might be needed to keep school food service operational
  - Back-up power
  - Clean water
  - Hand washing and toilet facilities
  - Specific roads for delivery vehicles
3. If you must close the school, be aware that students will be missing at least 2 meals per weekday.



Lunch at Williamstown Elementary School

# Use the SFSP to feed children when school is closed

---

- During the summer months, or when school is closed unexpectedly, the USDA's [Summer Food Service Program](#) can be used to feed children 18 and under.
- The school, non-profit, or government organizations may sponsor sites.
  - It will likely be fastest to have the school be the sponsor.
- If the location qualifies as low-income (“area-eligible”) all children 18 and under can be served with no applications.
  - Speak with your school food service program to learn what locations in your community are area-eligible.
  - If the location is area eligible, only the number of kids served needs to be tracked.
- 2 meals per day may be provided, 7 days per week.
  - Breakfast and lunch or supper, or a snack and lunch or supper.
- Meals are generally served in a congregate setting, but there is flexibility to allow non-congregate meals (delivered, picked up) in some cases.

# Buy meals from the school meals program



Grab and Go meals at Spaulding High School (Barre, VT)

- Whether school is open or not, the school meals program may sell meals to individuals or organizations.
- The program must cover their costs, but rates are usually very economical.
- The typical adult meal rate charged by VT schools is around \$5-6 for lunch and \$3-4 for breakfast.
  - If USDA Foods are approved for disaster congregate feeding, that can bring down the cost further.
- Meals typically include fruits and vegetables, protein, grain, and milk.

# Use USDA Foods for Prepared Meals

---

- USDA Foods are foods purchased by the federal government to support school meals programs and food pantries.
- With State Agency approval, these foods can be released for use in disaster congregate feeding.
- Foods must be used to make prepared meals (no grocery distribution).
- It is ok if the meals are taken off site (delivery, grab-and-go).
- In as situation of distress or a Presidentially Declared Disaster, the foods will be replaced or reimbursed by the federal government.
- Schools have USDA Foods on hand. If they use them, they can deduct the value from the minimum per-meal price they need to charge.
- TEFAP Foods located at your local food pantry may also be used this way.
- Foods may also be released to other emergency feeding organizations with State Agency Approval.



# More on using USDA Foods

- To request authorization to use USDA Foods in a disaster, contact the SEOC or the Agency of Education as soon as practicable.
  - SEOC Watch Officer: 1-800-347-0488
  - Agency of Education: [mary.krueger@vermont.gov](mailto:mary.krueger@vermont.gov)
- Ahead of big predicted storms, AOE will pre-authorize schools to use USDA Foods for disaster congregate feeding.
- Track for later reporting:
  - Number of cases and types of food used
  - Number of people served
  - Dates that meals were served
- Meals may be provided to first responders and volunteers, but they should be primarily used to serve survivors of the disaster.
  - More than half of the people you are serving should be those impacted by the disaster.



Take-home meals at Mt. Abraham Unified School District (Bristol, VT)

# Disaster Household Distribution (DHD) of USDA Foods

---

- The state can apply to USDA to use USDA Foods in the state for distribution to households.
  - Usually approved for 30-day increments.
  - Contact [mary.krueger@vermont.gov](mailto:mary.krueger@vermont.gov) or the Vermont Foodbank to get approval process started.
- USDA Foods (canned, dried, frozen foods) are distributed to households, not prepared meals.
- USDA will replace/reimburse the value of USDA Foods used.
- Appropriate if grocery distribution (grocery stores, food pantries) have been impacted in your community.
- Track: number of households or individuals served, number and type of cases distributed, locations/dates of distribution.

# Use CACFP at shelters (maybe)

---

- The [Child and Adult Care Food Program \(CACFP\)](#) can be used to provide 3 meals per day, 7 days per week to children in emergency shelters.
- Meals must be served in a congregate setting.
- CACFP paperwork means this option only makes sense for schools or organizations that are already CACFP sponsors.
- Likely not a good option if the shelter will only be open for a few days.
- Contact Rebecca Bogart ([rebecca.cochran@vermont.gov](mailto:rebecca.cochran@vermont.gov)) at the Agency of Education for more information on using the CACFP in an emergency shelter.

# Homeless Students

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines students experiencing homelessness as children and youth who **lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence**, including those who are:

- **Sharing the housing of others** due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason
- **Living in motels, hotels**, trailer parks, camping grounds due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations
- **Living in emergency or transitional shelters**
- Living in a public or private place not designed for humans to live
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- Migratory children living in above circumstances

Make sure that the [local school homeless liaison](#) is aware of any students who have been displaced by the emergency/disaster. This helps the student access:

- Transportation to school
- Food, eyeglasses, school supplies, clothes, laundry
- Any other items needed to ensure that the child has access to their education.



# Track all costs

---

- Costs not covered by USDA may be covered by FEMA in a declared disaster.
- Track hours (including overtime) worked by school food service employees and other school employees, for possible FEMA public assistance reimbursement.
- Volunteer hours and donations could be counted towards the state/local cost-share for FEMA reimbursement.
- Assign a volunteer to track:
  - Donated meals, ingredients, and supplies
  - Number of people served
  - Volunteer hours worked



Grab-and-go meal preparation at Windham Northeast Supervisory Union

## **What to do now: Make a plan with your local school food service program**

- What vulnerabilities might impact their program operations? Can you help mitigate any of these potential issues?
- Are there any supplies, equipment, or non-perishable items that they could keep on hand to help in the event of an emergency?
- What sites in your community qualify as area-eligible for open summer meal sites? Does the program plan to use any of these sites if school is closed unexpectedly?
- What is the program's capacity to make additional meals for the community in an emergency/disaster?
- What is their delivery capacity?
- What is their per-meal rate for adult meals?
- Is there a food service management company, or is the program self-operated by the school district/supervisory union?
- If a school is a designated shelter, who will manage the kitchen if it is to be used for emergency feeding?
- Does the program operate the CACFP? If so, would they be willing to use the CACFP to feed children in a shelter?
- How does the school district communicate with families? Can this be used to communicate emergency info?
- Is the program interested in entering into an agreement now to be ready in the event of an emergency?
- Obtain after-hours contact information for food service director, head of facilities, business manager, superintendent, and principals and share local emergency management contact information.



Lamoille Union High School, Hyde Park, VT

# Questions?

# Contact Info

---

Rosie Krueger

802-828-1589

[mary.krueger@vermont.gov](mailto:mary.krueger@vermont.gov)



Summer Food Service Program,  
Burlington School Food Project