

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Food Safety Tips and Tricks



How to Use this Factsheet

This factsheet is designed to help CACFP Sponsors and Participating Sites understand and ensure food safety when serving meals and snacks as part of CACFP activities. For more information on the CACFP program and how to participate, please review the *How to Participate in CACFP Factsheet* on the **NDA CACFP website**.

Food Safety

CACFP Sponsors are responsible for ensuring the food they offer has been appropriately prepared, stored, and served.

Requirements for ensuring food safety may differ depending on whether the Participating Site prepares AND serves the food offered, OR only serves food prepared off-site. All CACFP Sponsors and Participating Sites must pass the appropriate health and safety inspections, and staff must have appropriate certifications. Staff must also participate in food safety trainings as determined by NDA.

The information presented below provides general guidelines for reducing the risks of foodborne illness, but remember, it is ultimately up to you to ensure that the food you serve is safe for your participants! More resources and guidance are available on the **NDA CACFP website**.

Food Allergies



Know Participants' Allergies

Food allergies can be extremely dangerous and life-threatening.

Be sure to ask participants and/or their parents and caregivers about any potential allergies, the severity of the allergies, common symptoms, and potential treatment. Share this information with anyone responsible for preparing, distributing, or serving food.

It is recommended that facilities are kept free of identified allergens if possible and have a contingency plan in place for any incidents.



This factsheet is part of a series on CACFP participation specific to early childhood education/ child care providers, funded by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program—SNAP. The entire series, as well as information on how non-ECE providers may participate, is available on the NDA CACFP website at <http://agri.nv.gov/Food/CACFP/>. NDA is an equal opportunity employer.

Maintain a Clean Environment



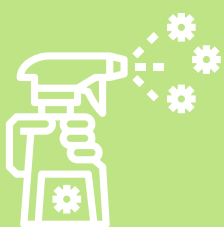
Wash Hands with Soap and Water

Before serving or handling food, be sure to wash your hands with soap and warm, clean, running water. Work the soap into a lather and scrub all parts of your hands for at least 20 seconds. Rinse hands thoroughly and dry using a clean paper towel (reused towels may contain bacteria). If possible, use a paper towel to turn off the faucet.

Be sure participants also wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before sitting down to eat or drink.

Discard Unsafe Food

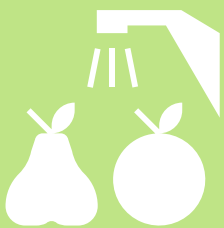
At least weekly, check for and throw out any food that is no longer safe to eat. Follow all guidelines provided by vendors on how to store and serve the food they provide. Make sure to adhere to all expiration dates and storage instructions for food you purchase yourself.



Sanitize Surfaces Regularly

Surfaces that food is placed on should be washed regularly with hot, soapy water. A solution of one tablespoon of unscented, liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of water can be used to sanitize surfaces. Make sure to use only food-safe cleaning supplies in any areas used to store or serve food. Do not forget areas or furniture that participants may touch while eating, such as chairs and counter tops.

Store and Prepare Food Safely



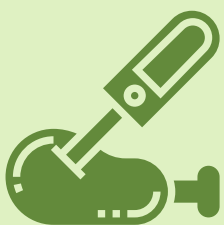
Separate Foods when Purchasing, Storing, Washing, and Serving

Always keep raw meat, seafood, poultry, and other microbe-prone food separate from ready-to-eat foods. Always rinse fruits and vegetables before serving or preparing, even if they have a peel or you do not think they have come into contact with any pathogens. Never place cooked food back on a surface that previously held uncooked food unless it has been cleaned and sanitized.

Maintain Appropriate Temperatures During Storage and Cooking

Keep food at safe temperatures

Keep cold foods at 41°F or below and hot foods at 135°F or above. Never leave food out of refrigeration over two hours. If the temperature is above 90°F, food should not be left out more than one hour.



Cook food to safe internal temperatures

Follow preparation instructions for any foods you will cook or reheat in your facility that were provided by another group. Make sure all meat and egg dishes you cook reach a safe internal temperature before serving. Keep a food thermometer on hand, and make sure to wash it between uses, even when repeatedly checking the same item of food. Safe internal temperatures for food types can be found at <https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/food-safety>.