

Area Eligibility in Child Nutrition Programs

USDA funded Child Nutrition Programs use two primary sources of data to determine whether a site is area eligible – school data or census data. Established area eligibility is effective for a period of five consecutive participation years.

Area Eligibility based on School Data:

- ✓ CACFP [At-risk Afterschool Meal](#) programs and [NSLP Afterschool Snack](#) programs must use school data to determine area eligibility.
- ✓ School data may be used to establish area eligibility for open sites sponsoring the [SFSP](#) or [SSO](#).
- ✓ School data must indicate that the proposed meal **site** is located in the attendance area of a public school where at least 50 percent of the children are eligible for school meals at a free or reduced price.
- ✓ OSPI Child Nutrition Services posts a [Washington Public School Data for Area Eligibility Report](#) annually, with a March 1 effective date.
- ✓ Schools that draw students from throughout the district may not be used, for example:
 - Alternative high schools or skill centers may not be used to qualify sites as area eligible.
- ✓ Community Eligibility Provision participating schools are included in the [Washington Public School Data for Area Eligibility Report](#) (the data for these schools has been adjusted so that no further calculations are needed).

Area Eligibility based on Census Data:

- ✓ Census data may be used to establish area eligibility for open sites sponsoring the [SFSP](#) or [SSO](#).
- ✓ Census data must indicate that the proposed meal site is located in a Census Block Group or Census Tract in which at least 50 percent or more of the children are eligible for free or reduced price school meals.
- ✓ The [FNS Area Eligibility Mapper](#) identifies if a specific location qualifies as area eligible, using the address of the potential meal site. The mapper is updated annually in October.

SFSP Special Situations:

- ✓ Use of Other Approved Data Sources in SFSP:
 - Other approved sources may demonstrate that 50 percent or more of the children in a defined area are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.
 - Approved sources: Department of Welfare, Zoning Commissions, USDAs Rural Development Housing Authorities, Housing and Urban Development Housing Authorities, and Local Housing Authorities.

- ✓ SFSP and SSO sites serving children of migrant workers:
 - Area eligibility may be established upon a determination that a meal site predominantly serves the children of migrant workers.
 - Sponsors must submit information obtained from a migrant organization that certifies that the site serves the children of migrant workers.

- ✓ SFSP and SSO sites serving American Indian or Alaska Native Children:
 - Area eligibility may be established for sites that are located in areas in which poor economic conditions exist.
 - Defined as a geographic area where at least 50 percent of the children enrolled at the site are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.
 - Sponsors must provide documentation from a Tribal authority that certifies that the proposed site is located on a Tribal reservation, on trust land, or in an Alaska Native village where at least 50 percent of the children enrolled at the site are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

Reference:

- ✓ [SP08-2017, CACFP04-2017, SFSP03-2017](#)
- ✓ [SP11-2011, CACFP02-2011, SFSP01-2011](#)
- ✓ [7CFR 226.6\(f\)](#)
- ✓ [7CFR 225.6\(c\)](#)

Acronym Reference

-CACFP	Child and Adult Care Food Program
-CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
-FNS	Food and Nutrition Services
-OSPI CNS	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Child Nutrition Services
-SFSP	Summer Food Service Program
-SP	School Programs
-SSO	Seamless Summer Option
-USDA	United States Department of Agriculture