

C7. USDA Endorsement Letter

This page has been left blank for double-sided copying.

January 2022

Dear [Child Care Professional/State Agency Administrator]:

As you know, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA) focused on improving child nutrition and authorizing funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) child nutrition programs, including the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), which serves more than 3 million children. Recognizing that there is not enough research on the importance of nutrition and activity in child care, Congress directed the USDA to conduct the Study of Nutrition and Activity in Child Care Settings (SNACS-I), which collected data in 2016–2017 and was the first comprehensive, nationally representative assessment of child care providers participating in CACFP and the children they serve. Since the SNACS-I data were collected, updated meal pattern requirements have gone into effect to improve the nutritional quality of the meals and snacks that are served. To get an updated picture of the CACFP six years after these meal patterns went into effect, USDA is sponsoring SNACS-II and has contracted with Mathematica and its research partner Westat to conduct the study. We are asking you to help SNACS-II achieve the following important objectives:

- Describe the characteristics of CACFP providers, the CACFP environment, providers' food service practices and providers' wellness policies and practices.
- Determine the food, calorie, and nutrient content and quality of CACFP meals and snacks.
- Describe children's usual food, calorie, and nutritional intake during child care and non-child care days.
- Describe characteristics of children and their families, including child body mass index (BMI), household food security, and participation in food assistance programs.
- Describe the characteristics of youth ages 10 to 18 who participate in CACFP through before and after school programs, and the food content of the meals and snacks they were offered.
- Assess and describe plate waste (edible food that is served but not eaten) in the CACFP.
- Examine infant feeding practices and infants' food intake and activity levels while they are in child care.
- Determine the cost of producing CACFP meals.

SNACS-II will look at the nutrition and wellness policies and activities in child care centers, family child care homes and before and after school programs across the country. This important study will help providers, sponsors, and USDA understand how CACFP operates so it can better help children to learn and grow.

The study will include more than 1,300 child care centers, family child care homes and before and after school programs in 25 States that participate in CACFP. More than 3,000 infants, children, and youth ages 10 to 18, along with their parents or guardians, will also be involved in the study. Data will be collected primarily between January and May 2023.

Under the terms of Section 28 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, institutions participating in CACFP are required to participate in this data collection. Your participation is critical to its success. If you have any questions about the data collection activities for SNACS-II, please contact the study team toll free at [study phone] or email [study email].

Sincerely,
---insert signature image---

[Name]

[Title]

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is collecting this information to understand the nutritional quality of CACFP meals and snacks, the cost to produce them, and dietary intakes and activity levels of CACFP participants. This is a voluntary collection and FNS will use the information to examine CACFP operations. The collection does request personally identifiable information under the Privacy Act of 1974. Responses will be kept private to the extent provided by law and FNS regulations. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0669. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 0.0334 hours (2 minutes) per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, 1320 Braddock Place, 5th Floor, Alexandria, VA 22314. ATTN: PRA (0584-0669). Do not return the completed form to this address.