

# Virginia Child and Adult Care Food Program Fall Newsletter

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CACFP Fall 2024 Edition

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## Child & Adult Care Food Program Newsletter

### Sherri's Message



#### Happy Fall!

The Virginia CACFP would like to wish you a happy fall season! As summer came to a close, the SNP Team was thrilled to visit and connect with many of your organizations across the Commonwealth. We were truly impressed by your hard work and dedication. Looking ahead, we're excited to meet even more of you as we plan for upcoming visits and in-person trainings in the new fiscal year.

**T. Sherri Dorsey**

SNP Program Manager

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## The Economic Benefits of Child Nutrition



Excerpted from: ***“The Economic Benefits of Child Nutrition,” August 8, 2024, Joint Economic Committee***

***“Making sure kids have enough to eat is vital for their health and well-being, but far too many children are facing food***

***insecurity.”***

Ensuring children have proper nutrition and enough food to eat is critical for their physical, cognitive, and overall well-being. Proper nutrition can support children’s growth and development. It can also help protect them from dangerous and costly health conditions like anemia and asthma, oral health problems, and mental health disorders. Altogether, a 2016 estimate—the most recent one available—found food insecurity resulted in an additional \$52.9 billion in health care costs. This means that supporting kids’ nutrition and development can boost the economy even in the short run by avoiding these costly and damaging health conditions.

Unfortunately, roughly 3.3 million households with children do not have enough food as of 2022, a number higher than in previous years.

***“Outside of school, investments in child and family nutrition also improve health and economic well-being.”***

Providing students with nutritious food when school is out similarly helps maintain the health and well-being of students, in addition to helping the broader local economy. Summer programs that provide meals to children receiving free or reduced-price meals during the school year decreases food insecurity by up to 1 million children, according to a 2015 No Kid Hungry report. Access to summer meals would also help reduce health costs, potentially saving \$274 million in child hospitalization costs annually, and support academic achievement, increasing the number of high school graduates by 81,600, the same report finds.

Other federal nutrition programs that help support children also help stimulate economic activity. For every dollar invested into the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for example, GDP increases by \$1.50 during a weaker economy when the program has heightened importance and participation. In addition to providing children with access to nutritious food, SNAP also delivers long-term economic benefits. It has been shown to mitigate the impacts of unemployment and poverty during recessions and increase students’ chances of graduating high school. Similarly, every \$1 invested in the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is proven to save \$2.48 in medical, educational, and productivity costs.

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## IMPORTANT UPDATES

**Exciting News: We’re Upgrading Our System!**

We're thrilled to announce that we're working on implementing a brand-new system to enhance your experience! We've been busy reaching out to several sponsors across the state to gather valuable feedback, conduct surveys, and hold virtual calls about the current CHAAMPS system. A big shoutout to everyone who has contributed their insights so far—you're making a difference! But we want to hear from YOU too! If you have thoughts on what you love about the current system or suggestions for improvements, please reach out. Just send us an email at [cacfp@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:cacfp@vdh.virginia.gov). Your input is crucial in shaping the new system, and we can't wait to hear your ideas!

## ***CACFP Annual Renewals:***

As we begin new CACFP Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 – 2025, let's plan to start the year strong together. Please remember that renewal application packets must be submitted and approved within CHAAMPS by **October 31, 2024**, to be eligible to claim for the month of October 2024. FY25 Application Packets submitted and/or approved after October 31, 2024, will be considered for future claim reimbursement based on the month of application submission and approval. The FY24 Application Packet should be in APPROVED status.

Through Bright Track, Program Operators create an online account to enroll in SNP CACFP courses for an all-around training one-stop shop. Attendance by key staff, as defined by the state agency, is required prior to administration of CACFP operations.

## ***Child Nutrition Program Integrity Rule:***

Child Nutrition Program Integrity Final Rule codified the requirement for an annual reconciliation of bank account activity and accounting of reported actual expenditures with Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) payments.

The amended regulatory provisions have a compliance date of August 23, 2024, and state agencies will plan to implement these new requirements beginning October 1, 2024. Please review **USDA Policy Memo CACFP09-2024** for specific details regarding the new requirements.

## **Don't Get Caught in the October Crunch – Submit Early!**

Want to claim for the month of October? Make sure to submit your renewal by **October 31st!** Skip the last-minute chaos by getting your application in during September for a hassle-free experience. Early submission gives you plenty of time to tackle any unexpected bumps along the way!

## **CACFP Celebrates Farm to School**

Virginia Farm to School Week was observed from **October 7–11, 2024**. Schools and community partners participated through a variety of activities, such as incorporating seasonal foods into menus, hosting poster contests, organizing farm tours, providing lessons aligned with Standards of Learning that highlight Virginia's Harvest of the Month crops, and joining the Crunch Heard 'Round the Commonwealth event. These initiatives promote local agriculture and farm-to-school connections.

## TIPS & RESOURCES

### Mastering Your CACFP Application Renewal: Essential Tips for Success

#### Keep an Eye Out for the Renewal Email

Get ready! When it's time to renew, you'll get an email from your state agency with all the important information—deadlines, new rules, and what to do next. Don't miss it!

#### Beat the Rush – Submit Early!

No one likes a last-minute scramble! Submit your renewal early for a stress-free experience. In Virginia, the deadline is October 31<sup>st</sup>, but getting it in early gives you plenty of time to fix any hiccups that might pop up.

#### Check Your Budget – Time for a Refresh?

Now's your chance to review your budget! Look over those operating, admin, and food costs to make sure everything lines up with your reimbursements. Need a hand? CACFP Solutions has your back!

#### Update Your Site Details Like a Pro:

**Mealtimes:** Make sure your mealtimes are spot-on and follow CACFP rules. A quick review now means smooth sailing later!

**License Info:** Double-check that your site license number, expiration date, and open/close times are all correct. It's crucial for keeping things running smoothly.

#### Don't Forget Those Important Docs!

Gather all those essential documents (like business licenses, training certificates, vendor agreements, and audits) to complete your checklist. This is your one-stop shop for a perfect renewal!

#### Stay Connected with Your State Agency

Keep an eye on your inbox for any follow-up messages. If a correction is needed, they'll let you know. Haven't heard back in a while? Send them a quick email to stay in the loop.



### Crunch Heard 'Round the Commonwealth

The eighth annual "Crunch Heard 'Round the Commonwealth" was held on **Thursday, October 10, 2024**, during Virginia Farm to School Week. This statewide event encouraged Virginians to support farm-to-school initiatives by collectively taking a bite of locally grown Virginia apples. Participation is open to everyone, regardless of location, including classrooms, cafeterias,

early care sites, adult day programs, offices, or homes. To join the event and access the 2024 Crunch Toolkit and marketing materials, participants can complete the Crunch Heard

2024 Station Toolkit and marketing materials, participants can complete the Station Toolkit 'Round the Commonwealth Registration Form.



## SNP SPECIALIST SPOTLIGHT

**Meet Michell FY25 SNP Specialist: Supermom, Oxtail Lover, and CACFP Rockstar!**

When Michell isn't saving the day as a CACFP Specialist, she's in full "mom-mode," driving her two amazing kiddos around town. Whether it's dropping them off at their next adventure or soaking up every giggle, Michell is all about making their little lives as exciting as possible!

With just over a year as an SNP Specialist, Michell has been on a mission to bring healthy meals to kids across Virginia—and she's loving every moment of it. Oh, and fun fact: her all-time favorite food is oxtail. Yum!

After a hectic week, her go-to way to unwind? A relaxing outdoor walk, where she can clear her mind and get some much needed "me time."

One of Michell's favorite memories? CACFP Week for FY24! She got to visit multiple locations and teach kids about planting seeds and making healthy food choices. The highlight? Seeing their little faces light up with excitement! Those smiles are what make her job so special.



## Ask the Experts

This issue's CACFP Program Sponsor Expert is **Patricia Feggins-Clary** from the Southside Region!

**Q: What is the name of your organization?**

Patricia's Child Care Center (PCCC) located in Broadnax, Virginia!

**Q: How long has your organization been participating in the CACFP program?**

We at PCCC have been an active participant in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) since the business opened over 20 years ago.



**Q: How many children/adults does your organization feed in the CACFP program**

**daily ?**

Under this program, we can provide breakfast, lunch and snacks to children in our daycare and after school program daily. We serve about 15 children a total average of 45-50 nutritious meals and snacks daily.

**Q: What do you consider some of the “strengths” and “weaknesses” of participating in the CACFP program?**

While I don't consider it a true weakness, more training on the guidelines and updates are always beneficial to learning and staying in compliance with the CACFP. The strength of the program is that it allows for programs in the rural community to provide nutritious meals for children in the program who are also from low-income families. Funding through this program helps to offset the costs of food in the current economic trends.

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## Important Contacts

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## USDA Non-Discrimination Statement:

Following a recent USDA audit, VDH has been requested to ensure that all sponsor websites, print materials and permanent agreements contain the appropriate non-discrimination statement. The SNP Specialists will be reviewing this required information for all sponsors during annual certification.

- All sponsors are required to have [the most current USDA Non-Discrimination Statement](#) on their website as part of the public notification system informing applicants, participants, and potentially eligible persons of their rights.
- The regional USDA office has provided us with additional guidance on acceptable posting of the NDS:
  - Sponsors may post the full NDS statement or the short NDS statement with a link embedded in the short statement like this: “This institution is an equal opportunity provider.”
  - The NDS statement must be on the main page where CACFP and other meal service or nutrition information is provided and available within one click.
  - If a sponsor does not have a public webpage but only a social media account like Facebook, the NDS statement must be pinned in the Featured section of their page.

If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please contact your assigned SNP

Specialist or email [CACFP@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:CACFP@vdh.virginia.gov). We are excited for the start of the 2025 Fiscal Year and are so thankful for all the work you do on behalf of the families we serve throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

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