

CACFP Program Tips

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) can sometimes be confusing to those new to the program. Even seasoned home child care providers can be stumped at times by some of the rules. During a monitoring visit your program representative will go over the Provider Agreement with you. We would like to take this opportunity to also answer some of the most common questions we get regarding the Food Program.



Every month I am mailed a Claim Information Form (CIF). why do I need it?

1 Use your CIF to:

- Alert the office when school is closed. This can be due to snow days, parent-teacher conference, etc. This is important because schools often change their calendar, and also makes it so much easier for the office staff to process your claim!
- Alert the office when your own kids are out of the home.
- Document when you do care on a **major holiday***
- Alert the office when a child drops from care.

2 Check your CIF every month to:

- Make sure that you are using the correct number assigned to each child on your claim.
- When enrolling new children, write their name on the CIF next to the number you have chosen and return the CIF with your claim. However, do not drop a child from a number and reassign that same number to a new child in the same month.
- Do not change child numbers. If Sarah Smith was #1 last month, she will always be #1.

3 And last of all:

- Always return your CIF with your claim!



Note: If you claim using KidKare, you don't receive a mailed CIF because you can submit all of this information on your online calendar. It is simple and easy!

* **Major holidays** include: New Year's Day, Labor Day, 4th of July, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas,



How do I access my Error Report on KidKare?

- Click "Reports"
- Click "Claim Statement"
- Click "Claim Summary Error Report"

(This report lists children and which Child Enrollment Forms are about to Expire)

Why do I need to let my program representative know when I will be out of my home during meal times?



The rules of the CACFP specify that home child care providers “must notify their Sponsoring Organization in advance whenever they are planning to be out of their home with the children during the meal service period”. This is known as “prior notice” and is also specified on the Provider Agreement which you sign when you start participation on the CACFP. Wildwood is required by USDA to disallow claims for any meals served during the time of the missed visit if you don’t let your rep know that you will be out of the home. We certainly don’t want to disallow meals so please let your rep know this information! Also, please alert your rep if you will not have any kids on a given day. If the rep shows up to visit you, she cannot count the visit if there are no kids to see, and she will have to come back.

Keep in mind that many of Wildwood’s program representatives travel great distances to visit you! Since we have providers all over the state, our reps are often making long trips to see providers. An advance notice from you will save your rep time, and save the CACFP money spent on gas. We would love to spend that money on children participating in the program instead! You may call or email your rep with this information. All Wildwood reps have the ability to get text messages on their phones, and this can be a great way to communicate quickly with them if you will be gone or if you have no children on a given day. Ask your program rep how she would like you to communicate this information to her.

How can I avoid getting money deducted from my claim?



There are many steps you can take to help us help you get the most reimbursement that you are entitled to. Here are a few tips regarding the mistakes we see most often:

If you are submitting paper claims,

X Make sure that you write neatly.



If you are submitting scannable forms:

X Be sure to use a # 2 pencil and fill in the bubbles neatly. If the bubbles are not completely filled in, or if there are marks outside of the bubbles, the scanner will often disallow the meal or snack.

Other Tips:

- ◇ If you are serving macaroni and cheese, it must be homemade or have extra cheese added if you are using a boxed mix. Please document “HM” or “extra cheese added” on your menu.
- ◇ Be specific when documenting meat sauce on your menu. If you are serving a tomato based sauce with ground beef, document the ground beef as the meat and the tomato or spaghetti sauce as the vegetable. Commercially prepared sauces cannot be claimed as the meat.
- ◇ Combo meals can lead to confusion because usually the vegetables only count as 1 requirement, so careful documentation is a must. If you are serving a taco or burrito with beef, pinto beans, lettuce and tomato; be sure to serve one of the vegetables on the side and document on the menu “side of pinto beans” or “side of salad”. When serving a pizza with beef, onion, green pepper and tomato sauce, be sure to include an additional fruit or vegetable on the side for the meal to be creditable.

Can I still claim an infant if the parents refuse the formula I offer?

Yes, you can still claim the infant even if the parents supply the formula. If the parents of an infant refuse the formula you offer, have them check the box on the Child Enrollment Form (CEF) indicating this. You will need to write the name of the formula that is being supplied by the parents on the CEF. If the parents are **refusing the entire Food Program**, please have them write this on the CEF. If they choose to have their child participate on the Food Program once they turn one, they can write "refusing the Food Program until infant turns 1 year old". This will prevent the need for a new enrollment form to be filled out when the child turns 1 year old. If they write "I refuse the Food Program for my child", they will have to fill a new enrollment form out when the child turns 1 year old if they want them to participate at that time. Mothers can breastfeed babies at the provider's home and the provider can claim that baby as of October 2017.



What are the benefits of joining and staying on the CACFP?

There are multiple benefits of participating on the CACFP! The children in your care will benefit because they're eating nutritious meals and snacks; your child care business will benefit because families looking for child care will appreciate the peace of mind that comes from knowing their children will receive nutritious food; you will benefit because the financial reimbursement helps you with your food expenses, and the nutrition training you receive can benefit your own family as well! In addition, when you join Wildwood you will receive training materials and courses that count towards your license renewal hours.

Why it pays to participate in the CACFP:



Extra Income For You: Whether you are Tier I or Tier II, the reimbursement you receive from the Food Program is extra income, even after taxes. Your food costs count as a business expense, so you only pay taxes on the amount of reimbursement that is more than your food expense.

According to the Redleaf Institute, "For every \$1000 you get from the Food Program, you will keep about \$600-700 after taxes. Therefore you are always better off financially participating on the Food Program. Providers who join the Food Program can continue to deduct their food expenses in exactly the same way as before. In other words, providers on the Food Program can still deduct the cost of the food served to the children for whom they are now receiving reimbursements. One difference between a provider not on the Food Program and one who is on the program is that one on the Food Program has more money in her pocket at the end of the year."

Better Nutrition For Your Children : The reimbursement from the Food Program enables you to purchase high-quality, nutritious food. The Food Program guidelines help to ensure that children get enough dietary iron and important vitamins such as A and C, as well as help them to learn habits for healthy eating that will last a lifetime. In addition, you will receive nutrition information, training and support that will not only benefit the children in your care, but your own family as well.

Better Marketing For Your Business: Child care studies have shown that a key indicator of a top-quality child care home is participation in the Food Program. Participating in the Food Program will show parents that you are a professional and that you care about the health of their children.

When does my claim need to be turned in?

To ensure the most accurate and timely payment, please have your claim into the **Wildwood office by the 5th** of each month. If your claim is submitted late, your payment may be late. Also, remember that if you are doing care through the entire month, please wait until after the last meal of the month to submit your claim. You are not allowed to write down the attendance at your meals until the meal is served. Make sure you keep up on your paperwork and record daily so that your claim will be ready to submit at the end of the month and you can get paid without delay! If you are submitting a paper or scannable claim, consider changing to submitting your claim online. You don't have to worry about postage or whether it will make it through the mail to our office on time. Your claim submission is as easy as a click of the mouse!



Child Enrollment Form (CEF)

Claim information form (CIF) highlights when an enrollment form will expire. To avoid children dropping off or being deleted, causing a deduction for a particular child, make sure you submit an updated (CEF) child enrollment form *PRIOR* to the expiration date. Another confusing issue is dating the enrollment forms. The enrollment forms are valid for one (1) year. If you have an enrollment form expiring in February, the renewal needs to be dated February of the following year. This will give an entire year on the renewal form. Be sure to have the parents sign and date the enrollment forms, new and renewed enrollment forms. On your CIF it will show the child's enrollment form will expire January 31st of the following year. As long as we receive the renewed CEF in February with a February renewal date, you will not lose any reimbursement.

Online claimers are able to enter an exact date on enrollment forms, so this is not an issue for you.

On infant enrollment forms, be sure to indicate whether the child is on Mothers Milk, Parent Provided Formula or Provider Provided Formula. Also, it is necessary to list the name of the formula on the enrollment form.

I know I need to have a current license on file with Wildwood but what happens when I move? May I continue to claim at my new address?

Very good question! Proof of licensing at your new address is required but the answer is twofold. Contact state licensing for a move packet as soon as you know that a move is in your future. Six weeks is recommended. Your licensing worker will need to do an inspection of your new home before a license can be issued. Proof of licensing at the new address must be issued before food program participation can be resumed. Also, as soon as you know you are moving, call your Claims Coordinator at the Wildwood office, (303) 730-0460. She will mail out a "food program" moving packet and notify your field rep. This packet will include a new provider agreement, a planning to move form that shows your old address, your new address, along with an area that must be completed, giving us your move date, a school verification sheet for your new address that asks for the elementary, middle and high school serving the area to which you are moving. This paper work must be completed and mailed back to the Wildwood office accompanied by your new license. All paper work must be returned to the Wildwood office for approval prior to the end of the month. This means your paperwork would be due in the Wildwood office at the end of March in order to process your February claim. Your coordinator will keep you informed of the deadlines as you work through the process so keep in touch with her. It is no longer necessary for you to send a copy of your renewed license, ***unless*** something has changed, like capacity, name, or address. We are notified by the state if your license has been renewed.

Cycle Menus...A Thing of the Past!

Since the New Meal Pattern that goes into effect in October 2017, many of the cycle menus will not be creditable. Therefore, Cycle Menus will be phased out permanently as of October 2017. Providers on scannables and manual claims will be required to write their menu on their claims.

When you have completed this course, click [HERE](#) to take the test.

(or you can type this address into your browser:
<https://goo.gl/forms/MeVBz5B16FoObzNj1>)

Thank you for choosing
us for your training
needs:

Wildwood CACFP
...for those who care for children
12200 F. Briarwood Ave. Suite 175

Be sure to read each field carefully to ensure that you receive an accurate certificate.

Visit us online for more great tips and information:

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www.facebook.com/WildwoodCACFP