

# Food Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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 be going over the Provider Agreement with you. We would like to take this opportunity to 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 parent-teacher conferences, snow days, etc. This is important because schools often change their calendar, and it's 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:

- When enrolling a new child, write their name on the CEF
- It shows when children's Child Enrollment Forms are expiring. (Must be updated annually)
- Meal Time Range — if you need to change the time of your meals, text or email your field rep

### 3 And last of all:

- Always return your CIF with your claim if you have updated information or made any notes that you want us aware of



*Note: If you claim using KidKare online, 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, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

### How do I access my CIF on KidKare?



Click reports on the top gray tool bar  
Click "claim forms"  
Click "claim information form" (CIF)  
(This report lists enrolled children and highlights those about to expire. It also shows your meal time ranges on the bottom right of the page.)

## ***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 CACFP. Wildwood is required by USDA to disallow any meals served during the meal time range when a visit is attempted and you haven't given prior notice of being away from your home. We don't want to disallow meals, so be sure to let your field rep know your plans. Also, let them know if you don't have children in care on any given day.

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. Ask your program rep how they would like you to communicate this information.

## ***How can I avoid getting money deducted from my claim?***

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



*If you are submitting paper claims,*

- Make sure you write neatly and use a black or blue pen
- Make sure you sign your claim, or we can't process it

### ***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.

Combo meals can lead to confusion because usually the vegetables only count as 1 required component, 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".

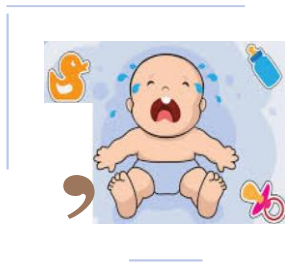
Once a day a "Whole Grain Rich" component is required and must be marked on your menu, this includes online claims

## *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, to ensure it meets the nutritional requirements of CACFP.

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 the child turns one, the parents 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.

You are reimbursed for feeding an infant breastmilk supplied by the mother and if the mother breastfeeds the baby in your home.



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

*There are multiple benefits for participating on the CACFP.*

- Children receive or have access to nutritious meals and snacks
- Families know their children will receive healthy food
- Financial reimbursement to help you with your food expenses
- Training materials and courses that count towards your license renewal hours every year (One hour of Program Training and One hour of Nutrition Training is required annually)



### **Why it Pays to Participate in the CACFP**

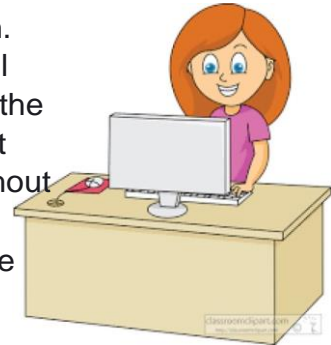
**Extra Income For You:** Whether you are Tier I or Tier II, the reimbursement you receive from the food program is extra income, even after taxes. Your food costs count as a business expense, so you only pay taxes on the amount of reimbursement that is more than your food expense. According to the Redleaf 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. The only difference between a provider not on the food program and one who is on the program is that the one on the food program has more money in their pocket at the end of the year."

**Better Nutrition For Your Children:** The reimbursement from the CACFP 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 timely payment, please have your claim into the Wildwood office by the 5th of each month. If your claim is submitted late, your payment will be late. We request funds from the state once a month, so we cannot pay late claims until the following month. 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. Record the attendance when 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 submit a manual claim, consider changing to submitting online. You don't have to worry about postage or whether your claim will get to the office by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month. Your claim submission is as easy as a click of the mouse.



*Be sure to allow adequate time within your meal for children to eat. Best practice for meals is 30 minutes and 20 minutes for snack. Children will be able to digest their food if there is ample time to eat.*



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**WILDWOOD Child and Adult Care Food Program**

12200 E Briarwood Avenue, #175 Centennial, CO 80112 303 730-0460 or 800 359-9453 [www.wildwoodonline.org](http://www.wildwoodonline.org)

## Food Program Frequently Asked Questions; Part 1



**WILDWOOD**  
Child and Adult Care Food Program

When you have completed this course,  
click [HERE](#) to take the test.  
or you can type this address into your browser:

<https://forms.gle/hpmbHVKEv2dw4yrG9>

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

**Thank you for choosing us for  
your training needs:**

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...for those who care for children

12200 E. Briarwood Ave. Suite 175

Centennial, CO 80112

Visit us online for more great tips and information:

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Phone: 303-730-0460