

January 27th, 2025

The Montana Office of Public Instruction Announces the Summer Food Service Program

HELENA – The Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) announces the ongoing availability of summer meals for children via the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) in preparation for summer 2025. The SFSP is made possible by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and offers free, nutritious meals to all children and teens 18 years or younger throughout the summer months.

Children are especially susceptible to food insecurity over the summer when they no longer have access to school meals. The SFSP provides an opportunity to bridge this gap by offering meals at eligible sites throughout the summer. These sites are generally situated in public areas where at least 50% of children qualify for free and reduced school meals. Children 18 years or younger may receive a free meal at open sites.

The non-congregate service model for the SFSP will be an available option again this summer at approved participating sites. Non-congregate service may operate in rural locations and allows children to pick up meals to take home in a grab'n go style, rather than eating on-site like the traditional congregate method of meal service. The non-congregate service model is utilized to allow greater flexibility for families in rural communities to participate in the SFSP.

OPI seeks additional community partners to operate as sponsors or sites for the SFSP in summer 2025.

Sponsor applications open March 3rd, 2025. OPI will be accepting applications from:

- Public and private nonprofit schools
- Local government agencies
- Private nonprofit organizations

How can you help your community?

1. **Become a SFSP site.** Reach out to existing Summer Food Service Program sponsors to add open sites at schools, community centers, parks, pools, libraries, or other eligible locations kids gather in the summer months. Check out the [USDA Capacity Builder Map](#) to find where sponsors and sites operated in 2024.
2. **Become a SFSP sponsor.** Eligible sponsors include public and private nonprofit schools, local government agencies, and private nonprofit organizations. Program sponsors operate sites at eligible locations in their community during the summer months. Sponsors of the SFSP handle the financial, administrative and food service responsibilities,



and training of SFSP sites. Sponsors are reimbursed at a set rate for meals served to eligible children. For more information follow this link to the USDA website for [information on becoming a sponsor](#).

3. **Help publicize local SFSP sites.** Here are some tools for advertising 2025 Montana SFSP sites:

- Advertise in the SFSP at your neighborhood, workplace, school, community center, daycare, or wherever you see fit. Visit our website for [flyers](#).
- To find SFSP sites, visit this link: [Summer Meals Site Finder](#). This map is updated in late spring/early summer when sites begin operating for the year.

Learn more about the MT OPI Summer Food Service Program by clicking [here](#). If you are interested in becoming a summer sponsor or site, please contact Sarah Kuhn at sarah.kuhn2@mt.gov or (406) 594-9747.

The deadline for sponsors to apply to operate the 2025 SFSP is May 16, 2025. Existing approved 2025 sponsors can add sites at any point throughout the summer.

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights



1400 Independence Avenue, SW
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2. **fax:**
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