

## Qualifying an Afterschool Meals Program Site (Determining Area Eligibility)

In order to qualify an afterschool program site for the Afterschool Meals Program (AMP), the site must be located within the geographical boundaries of a school zone in which 50 percent or more of the children enrolled are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. This is referred to as area eligibility.

**Below is the process you must follow to determine and document a site's area eligibility:**

1. Determine and document **school zone information** (elementary, middle, or high school) for the afterschool care site(s) by using one of the following methods:

- A. Local school board website (if available)
  - a. Explore the website to find school zone listings.
  - b. Type in the address of the site.
  - c. Print the page that lists the school zone for the site.
  - d. Ensure that the printed web page includes the computer-generated printing date. If this cannot be obtained, you must use one of the following two methods for school zone verification.
- B. School board contact
  - a. Obtain a school board official's attestation of the site's school zone in an email or written on school board letterhead, or
  - b. Place a memorandum in the site's file, which details the school zone information provided by the school board official(s), the name(s) of the official(s) consulted, and the date the information was obtained. A memo to the file should always be dated and initialed by the person obtaining the information.
- C. Current county school-zone map from the school board
  - a. Copy the section of the map that includes the site's address.
  - b. Mark the location of the site.
  - c. Highlight the school zone boundaries.
  - d. Maintain a copy of the current county school zone map from the school board for audit purposes.

2. Once the school zone is determined for the site, check the current **DOH 50% School List**. (The DOH 50% School List is updated annually and is located on the CCFP website at [http://www.floridahealth.gov/healthy-people-and-families/child-care-food-program/guidance/\\_documents/50percent-school-list.pdf](http://www.floridahealth.gov/healthy-people-and-families/child-care-food-program/guidance/_documents/50percent-school-list.pdf)). If the school that the site is zoned for is listed on the DOH 50% School List, then the site qualifies as area eligible for the AMP.

*Please note that some schools on the list (e.g., exceptional schools, university lab schools, Florida School for the Deaf & Blind, Juvenile Justice schools, charter schools, virtual schools, etc.) do not have traditional school zones, and should not be used to determine area eligibility.*

3. Some counties have "school choice school zones," which means that parents living in an assigned geographical area (or zone) are allowed to choose a school for their child from a set of schools. When determining area eligibility for a site located in a school choice school zone:

- A. If the site is located in a school that is on the DOH 50% School List, then the site qualifies for the AMP. If the school is not on the DOH 50% School List, then the site is not eligible.
- B. If the site is **not** located in a school, then **all** of the schools in the set of elementary schools **or** set of middle schools **or** set of high schools must be on the DOH 50% School List for the site to qualify for the AMP.
- C. Schools that can be attended by students from outside of the school choice school zone (e.g., a county-wide magnet school) should not be included in the set of schools used to qualify the site.

4. Contractors must retain the school zone documentation and a copy of the appropriate page of the DOH 50% School List for each site.

### **If the Site Doesn't Qualify**

If you've already determined the afterschool site does not qualify at 50% FRP Meals or above, this will need to be resolved before you can begin AMP. You have some options.

### **Look at Alternative Means**

#### **Private and Charter School Data**

Because most private schools (and some charter and magnet schools) do not have defined attendance areas, generally private school free and reduced price enrollment data may not be used to determine area eligibility. However, if an at-risk afterschool program site is located in a private school, then that site may use the free and reduced price enrollment data for that private school, or free and reduced price enrollment data for the public school attendance areas in which the private school is located, to qualify as an area eligible site.

In areas that do not have specific assigned schools but allow children to enroll in any of the area schools, at-risk afterschool care programs located in school buildings should use the free and reduced price enrollment data from the school they are located in to determine area eligibility. FNS will work with State agencies on a case-by-case basis to determine the area eligibility of at-risk afterschool programs operating in non-school sites in areas with unassigned attendance areas [CACFP 08-2012, *At-Risk Afterschool Meals Component of the CACFP, Questions and Answers*, February 17, 2012].

#### **Busing**

If an at-risk afterschool program is located in an area that has mandated busing of students, site eligibility based on school data may be determined using one of two methods. Eligibility may be based on the enrollment data obtained for:

- the school the children attend and are bused to, or
- the school the children would have attended were it not for the school's busing policy (the neighborhood school where the children live)

A site may be determined area eligible in situations as described above only if the SFA can document the percentage of children eligible for free and reduced-price meals at each school before and after students are reassigned. The same method of determining site eligibility must be used for all sites participating under that program sponsor to avoid duplicate counting [CACFP 02-2011, *Effects of Busing on Area Eligibility in Child and Adult Care Food Program*, December 6, 2010].

**Emergency Shelters**

Emergency shelters are not required to prove that they are located in a low-income area to participate in the at-risk afterschool meals component of CACFP. Emergency shelters that operate afterschool programs with education or or enrichment activities for homeless children and youth during the school year may participate without regard to location [7 CFR 226.2 Definitions].

**Move Site Location**

Unfortunately if none of the previous suggestions work, you probably won't be able to run this program unless you move your site to a qualified area. Some programs have either moved or held back on expanding the program until they had site locations that could qualify.