



MARKETING RESOURCES GUIDE

Non-Congregate Meal Service

More Flexible Options for 2026



Take advantage of the new, flexible, Non-Congregate meal service. Non-congregate meal service can only be used in locations that are considered rural because of lack of transportation and/or access to a congregate site. Rural areas can now use alternate service models to distribute nutritious meals that are tailored to the needs of the children and communities they serve such as:

- Grab and Go
- Bulk food items for multiple meal days
- Home delivered meals

Use These Resources to Make Summer Meal Service a Success

Get answers with the [Guide to non-congregate meal service](#).

Use the [handy Tip sheet](#) for further details for allowable Multi-day meal issuance and Combining Rural Non-Congregate Meal Service with Congregate Meal Service.

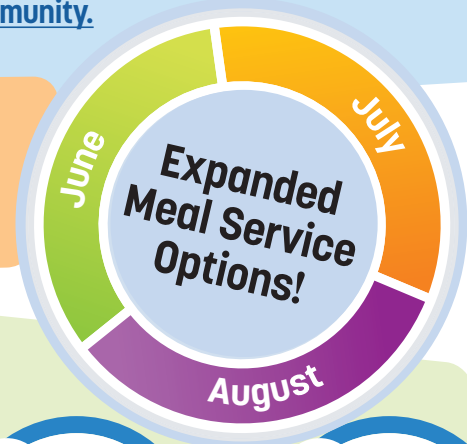
Find more resources with the [Tool kit for summer meals outreach](#)

Locate underserved areas and potential community site partners

Find out if mobile meals are right for your community.

Summer Electronic Benefit Program

[SUN Bucks \(Summer EBT\)](#) continues to provide grocery benefits to families of children eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.



Food Safety Guidance

Advise families to follow basic health & safety practices for handling food in the summer and all year long.



Cook to proper temperatures; reheat leftovers to 165° and serve hot



Keep cold foods cold; promptly refrigerate perishables; eat within 7 days



Check "Best By" dates and discard whenever necessary



Keep Hands and Surfaces Clean

Hunger Facts: Key findings from a survey of 600 rural families about the difficulties faced when school was out:

- Families in rural areas face increased hunger and hardship in the summer.
- 73% said it's harder to make ends meet during the summer than during the school year.
- Non-congregate summer meals help fill the gap for rural families who face barriers to traditional meal service.
- 72% would be likely to participate in non-congregate meals if they were available in their communities.

*National Summer Meals Survey/No Kid Hungry

Be sure to check with your State Agency before implementing any changes to your program.

