



## March/April: Establishing Logistics

### As a sponsor...

Take this opportunity to finalize all of your operational details. Be as thorough as possible and involve anyone who will be a part of your operations. Consider walking through a typical day or week with all parties, including your vendor and site staff. Make sure you are registered for your state agency's sponsor training and that you or someone from your team will be in attendance to take notes and collect any materials offered.

**Managing Your Sites** – Effective management of your sites is imperative to ensuring you remain in compliance with program regulations and will receive the reimbursement for the meals you serve. Comprehensive and ongoing site staff training

- **Where will my sites be located?** Review your list of potential site locations and confirm that those locations will be participating as sites. Finalize your list of sites to submit to the state agency and to assist you and your advocates in advertising the sites. Visit each site in person. Make sure that all of your sites meet local and state health and safety requirements. Keep copies of any records that you submit to the state agency regarding any inspections that are required. Work with your local health and safety agency to ensure violations any of your sites have received are resolved.
- **What days and times will they be open?** Establish the daily schedules for each site, which can vary between sites depending on which meals you have decided to serve. Always consider serving meals over the weekend and throughout the entire summer. If eligible, strongly consider operating most of your sites as open sites and plan to advertise it as such to the surrounding community.
- **Who will be staffing each site?** Assign a site supervisor for each site that you will sponsor. Site supervisors could be from your own staff or staff from the facility where the site is located. Schedule trainings with all of your site supervisors or offer one-on-one training at each site. Request that site supervisors bring a backup person with them to your training so that there will always be a supervisor on site every day of operation. Consider reviewing the following plans during a potential site supervisor training: Does the supervisor know how to get in touch with you immediately if there is an issue? How many hours will the site staff work and could they be there more hours if you decided to keep the site open for more days?

- **How often will I require sites to submit their paperwork?** Establish reporting methods with your site supervisors. Decide whether you will collect meal count forms daily or weekly from all of your sites. Who will be responsible for ensuring accurate site reporting? Have you trained the individual on the importance of accuracy for the purposes of submitting claims for reimbursement?
- **When will I conduct my reviews and monitoring?** Put your reviews and monitoring visits on the calendar now for each of your sites. Conducting pre-operational site visits before the summer begins will help you stay organized. It is your responsibility to fulfill the review and monitoring requirements and it will be more challenging to set aside time for these once the summer has begun. You can get the first week site visit waived for experienced sites to make the first week a bit easier.

**Managing the Meal Service** – Managing the meal service itself can sometimes be the trickiest, but most important component of your sponsorship. Allow flexibility and continuous planning around what works best for each site.

- **What meals will be served at the sites?** Consider serving both breakfast and lunch for maximum reimbursement. Many sponsors find that serving both lunch and breakfast better meets children’s nutritional needs during the summer and can increase their financial viability. Will some sites also be serving a snack? Will you change which meals you are serving depending on the participation rates of each site?
- **How many meals will you serve?** Estimate how many meals per day or per week your sites will likely need to request from your vendor based on past participation data at that site or eligibility data from nearby schools if opening a new site location. Allow flexibility in how many meals will be requested by each site and decide with your vendor how much notice they will need if the number of meals requested were to drastically change. Do you have a contingency plan with your vendor if more children show up at a site than expected? If less children show up than expected?
- **How will the food be delivered to each site and what is the storage capacity of the food and each site?** Will the food be delivered daily or weekly? The ability of the site to store food will impact this decision.
- **How will you serve the food?** Will site staff serve complete meals or is there some preparation involved? Have you trained them on this process?

### **As a supporter...**

As sponsors prepare the logistical details of their operations for this summer, advocates can assist them by offering to help in confirming site locations and helping connect sponsors with potential sites not yet on the program. Also consider convening a meeting of local sponsors at this time to discuss possible collaboration and coordination of outreach plans and promotion efforts.

## Assisting Sponsors and Sites –

- **Where will children congregate this summer and can there be sites at those locations?** Talk with community groups and schools to identify any summer programming you were unaware of. Some programs may just now be advertising to families as everyone gears up for summer and you can make these locations aware of the availability of the Summer Nutrition Programs.
- **Are there potential sites that are in need of a sponsor and have I connected those sites to a local sponsor willing to serve them?** If you still have sponsors who have the capacity to include some last minute sites, help connect the new site locations to the existing sponsors so they can be included. Be sure to assist the sponsor in reporting these additional sites to the state agency and help ensure the sites have met all program requirements and are eligible to participate.
- **How can I provide technical support to sites overcoming logistical barriers?** Are some sites concerned about keeping track of meal counts? Are some sites just now hiring more staff that need training on the programs? Have some sites lost many of their staff members who had committed to working over the summer? Does someone's vendor think they can no longer fulfill their agreement?

Many logistical barriers may arise during these last few months leading up to the start of the Summer Nutrition Programs. It can be your job as an advocate to help overcome these barriers and put both sponsors and site staff at ease.