



# 12 TIPS FOR PROGRAM INTEGRITY

**Planning meals** in advance will help ensure that you have what you need available to be in compliance with the CACFP meal pattern. Work with your sponsor to be sure that your meals meet requirements before the meal service.

*Always review how you have been paid by your sponsor and always ask questions if you think the amounts are not correct.*

**Understanding food program requirements,** and updating your sponsoring organization or state agency with changes in your meal service or license status for child care is very important.

**Milk is an important component** for the meal service. Be sure you are serving the correct milk to the correct age group based on the new meal pattern requirements. It is also important to purchase enough milk for the age groups in your child care so as not to lose reimbursement.

**Attendance records** should be maintained daily, and should support the number of meals claimed for reimbursement. An attendance record is not a meal record.

**Facilities must have documentation** of a child's enrollment, signed by a parent or guardian, and indicating the normal days and hours of care and the normal meals served. Enrollment documentation must be updated annually. At-Risk Afterschool sites and homeless shelters are excluded from this requirement.

**Payments rates** are determined in several different ways depending on the income level of the families you serve. In some cases you will receive what is called categorical eligibility and in other instances you may collect income forms from parents. Be sure you work with your sponsor to obtain the best payment rate you will be entitled to receive.

**Child care centers,** remember to record meals at the "point of service". This means when the child is served a meal, not before, and not later in the day. If you record online be sure to maintain any source documents for review.

*Training is an important component of the CACFP requirement. Be sure to obtain your annual regulatory training for CACFP.*

**CACFP records** must be kept for three years, plus the current year. Keep copies of any records you submit for food program participation and back up electronic copies securely.

**Payment information** from parents is confidential and must be protected. Income forms from parents must be completed by the parent and not tampered with by the home provider, center provider or sponsoring organization. Income forms are good for one year.

*let's talk money*

**Family child care,** remember to record your meals daily. If you record online be sure to maintain any source documents for review.