



PRESS RELEASE

USDA Boosts Food Assistance for Homeless Young Adults Seeking Refuge in Shelters

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WASHINGTON, April 9, 2021 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced that young adults under the age of 25 experiencing homelessness will now be able to receive meals at emergency shelters participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Under normal circumstances, USDA only reimburses shelters for meals served to children through age 18, but the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act expanded several nutrition assistance programs to reach the most vulnerable populations experiencing food hardship due to the pandemic, including homeless young adults.

CACFP is a federal program that provides child care centers, day care homes, and adult day care centers reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks they serve to eligible children and adults enrolled at their facilities. CACFP also provides reimbursements for meals served to children and youth participating in afterschool care programs, children living in emergency shelters, and adults over the age of 60 or living with a disability and enrolled in day care facilities.

“The pandemic has exposed how hunger can afflict anyone during tough times — including young adults who may not be equipped to cope with the financial challenges that this global pandemic may throw at them,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “The American Rescue Plan not only is proving to be one of the most powerful anti-poverty pieces of legislation in history, it is also driving down food insecurity with a host of new tools that help the most vulnerable among us.”

This provision of the ARP ensures CACFP facilities will be reimbursed by USDA for the meals they serve these residents for the duration of the public health emergency.

The risk of hunger has increased throughout the pandemic, with recent data suggesting approximately 23 million adults and as many as 12 million children are living in a household where they may not always have enough to eat. The pandemic has also worsened longstanding inequalities in food insecurity: Black and Latino adults are more than twice as likely as white adults to report that their households did not get enough to eat.

ARP includes more than \$12 billion to bolster food security during the pandemic with a variety of programs and interventions, from nutrition assistance programs to purchase food commodities for donation to food banks, to help and support for workers in the food supply chain.

“The Act ensures that we get the economy on track for everyone, especially those who have been marginalized, who are hurting, who have been overlooked or shut out in the past,” said Stacy Dean, deputy undersecretary of food, nutrition, and consumer services. “USDA stands ready to implement these important provisions and is providing states with new guidance to help them put these new benefits in place.”



For more information about CACFP, visit: www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp

To see the Implementation Guidance for State Agencies on Reimbursement for Meals and Snacks Served to Young Adults in CACFP, visit: www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/implementation-guidance-reimbursement-meals-and-snacks-young-adults.

More information on USDA's response to the COVID-19 pandemic can be found at www.fns.usda.gov/coronavirus

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

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