



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DHS KICKS OFF 2012 SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM AND SEEKS SPONSORS FOR UNDERSERVED AREAS

NASHVILLE, TN--The Tennessee Department of Human Services (DHS) announces the availability of funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the 2012 Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). This program is intended to assure that children and individuals with disabilities, who rely on free and reduced price meals during the school year, have access to nutritious meals during the summer. DHS needs partners, especially in underserved areas, to help meet these needs. New sponsors are invited to partner with this initiative.

Children age 18 and under are eligible to receive meals through the SFSP. In addition, a person 19 years of age and older who has a mental or physical disability and participates during the school year in a public or private non-profit school program, established for the disabled, is also eligible to receive meals.

Eligible sponsors include schools, private non-profit organizations, government entities, and non-profit residential camps. Sponsors are reimbursed on a per meal basis for meals served to eligible children and may sponsor the SFSP at one or more sites. The criteria for the sponsorship are simple and straightforward, as outlined in the USDA Administrative Guidance for Sponsors Manual. In 2011, a total of 57 sponsors served 2,718,546 meals to children at 1,526 sites across Tennessee.

"Each year, we look forward to the opportunity to serve these children and youth through this program," said DHS Commissioner Dr. Raquel Hatter.

The deadline for new organizations to submit applications for sponsorship to the Tennessee Department of Human Services is at least 30 days prior to the anticipated starting date of their program. Sponsoring organizations must agree to serve meals to all children in attendance regardless of their race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

If your organization is interested in sponsoring the SFSP in your community, or becoming a feeding site under an existing sponsor, please contact David Farmer or Doug Hutchison, before March 16, 2012 at (615) 313-4749; or by e-mail at david.farmer@tn.gov or doug.hutchison@tn.gov.

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**CITIZENS PLAZA, 15TH FLOOR
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For more information on the Summer Food Service Program, please visit the following website:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/> .

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