



**STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

JAMES K. POLK BUILDING
505 DEADERICK STREET
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-1403

TELEPHONE: 615-313-4700 FAX: 615-741-4165
TTY: 1-800-270-1349
www.tn.gov/humanservices

BILL LEE
GOVERNOR

DANIELLE W. BARNES
COMMISSIONER

February 28, 2020

Joseph Harris, Chairman of the Board
Northside Learning Center
923 Mississippi Avenue
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37405-3023

Dear Mr. Harris,

The Department of Human Services (DHS) - Division of Audit Services staff conducted an unannounced on-site monitoring review of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) at Northside Learning Center (Sponsor), Application Agreement number 00444, beginning on January 16, 2020. The purpose of this review was to determine if the Sponsor complied with the *Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) applicable parts, provider agreement, and applicable Federal and State regulations.

Background

CACFP Sponsors utilize meal count sheets to record the number of breakfast, lunch, supper, and supplement meals served. Meals served by participating Sponsors must meet the minimum guidelines set by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and DHS to be eligible for reimbursement. The CACFP Sponsor reports the number of meals served through the DHS Tennessee Information Payment System (TIPS) for reimbursement.

We inspected meal counts sheets for our test period and reconciled the meals claimed to the meals reported as served for each meal service. We also assessed compliance with civil rights requirements. In addition, we observed a lunch meal service on December 4, 2019.

Our review of the Sponsor's records for December 2019 disclosed the following:

- 1. The Sponsor reported the number of participants in the free and paid categories incorrectly**

Condition

Based on our review of the Claim for Reimbursement for December 2019, we noted that the Sponsor reported one (1) participant in the free category, two (2) participants in the reduced-price category, and 65 participants in the paid category. However, based on our review, we

noted that there were zero (0) participants in the free category, two (2) participants in the reduced-price category, and 67 participants in the paid category.

The differences were based on the following:

- There was one (1) participant reported in the free category whose application was not signed or dated by the determining official. This participant was reclassified as paid.
- The number of participants reported in the paid category was underreported by one (1) participant.

There were 68 participants reported on the Claim for Reimbursement. However, based on our review of the Sponsor's records, we noted there were 69 participants enrolled in the program.

As a result, the Sponsor overreported the number of participants in the free category by one (1) participant and underreported the number in the paid category by two (2) participants. (See Exhibit)

This is a repeat finding from a previous report dated May 5, 2017.

Criteria

Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 226.10(c) states, "... In submitting a Claim for Reimbursement, each institution shall certify that the claim is correct and that records are available to support that claim ..."

Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 226.15(e)(2) states, "All types of centers, except for emergency shelters and at-risk afterschool care centers, must maintain information used to determine eligibility for free or reduced-price meals in accordance with §226.23(e)(1). For childcare centers, such documentation of enrollment must be updated annually, signed by a parent or legal guardian, and include information on each child's normal days and hours of care and the meals normally received while in care."

Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 226.17(b)(8) states, in part, "Child care centers shall collect and maintain documentation of the enrollment of each child, including information used to determine eligibility for free and reduced price meals in accordance with §226.23(e)(1). ..."

Recommendation

The Sponsor should maintain all information used to determine eligibility and ensure that each participant is classified and reported accurately based on categorical or income eligibility.

2. The Sponsor reported meal counts incorrectly

Condition

Based on our review of the Claim for Reimbursement for December 2019, the Sponsor reported 779 breakfast meals, 946 lunch meals, and 918 supplements served. However, based on our review of the available documents, we noted that there were 780 breakfast meals, 947 lunch meals, and 918 supplements served, prior to any meal disallowances.

As a result, one (1) breakfast meal and one (1) lunch meal served were underreported. (See Exhibit)

This is a repeat finding from a previous report dated May 5, 2017.

Criteria

Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 226.10(c) states, "... In submitting a Claim for Reimbursement, each institution shall certify that the claim is correct and that records are available to support that claim...."

Recommendation

The Sponsor should ensure that claims for reimbursement are completed correctly and based on accurate supporting documents.

3. The Sponsor provided menus that did not meet the USDA meal pattern requirements

Condition

Based on our review of the menus provided by the Sponsor for December 2019, the menus provided did not meet the USDA meal pattern requirements. The menus provided had deficiencies as follows:

Date	Menu	Menu Error	Supplements
12/05/19	Celery & Carrot Stick and Ranch Dressing	Missing second component	56
12/12/19	Celery & Carrot Stick and Ranch Dressing	Missing second component	58
12/19/19	Celery & Carrot Stick and Ranch Dressing	Missing second component	53
12/26/19	Celery & Carrot Stick and Ranch Dressing	Missing second component	12

As a result, 179 supplements claimed for reimbursement were disallowed. (See Exhibit)

This is a repeat finding from a previous report dated May 5, 2017.

The menus provided for supplements listed grain-based desserts. The menus provided had deficiencies as follows:

Date	Menu	Supplements
12/02/19	Apple Sauce and Nutri Grain Breakfast Bar	58
12/03/19	Blueberry & Strawberry Parfait and Rice Crispy treat	59
12/09/19	Apple Sauce and Nutri Grain Breakfast Bar	58
12/10/19	Blueberry & Strawberry Parfait and Rice Crispy treat	56
12/16/19	Apple Sauce and Nutri Grain Breakfast Bar	60
12/17/19	Blueberry & Strawberry Parfait and Rice Crispy treat	59
12/23/19	Apple Sauce and Nutri Grain Breakfast Bar	31
12/24/19	Blueberry & Strawberry Parfait and Rice Crispy treat	1

Due to the new CACFP meal patterns requirements and emphasis on providing technical

assistance during the implementation process, there were no meals disallowed.

Criteria

Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 226.17(b)(4) states, "Each child care center participating in the Program shall claim only the meal types specified in its approved application in accordance with the meal pattern requirements specified in §226.20 ..."

Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 226.14 (b) states, " In the event that the State agency finds that an institution which prepares its own meals is failing to meet the meal requirements of 226.20, the State agency need not disallow payment or collect an overpayment arising out of such failure if the institution takes such other action as, in the opinion of the State agency, will have a corrective effect."

Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 226.20(a)(4)(iii) states, "Grain-based desserts do not count towards meeting the grains requirement."

Recommendation

The Sponsor should ensure that all meals claimed for reimbursement meet the meal patterns established by the USDA, and menus should be reviewed to ensure they contain all required meal components to be eligible as a reimbursable meal.

Note: Our observation of the lunch meal service on December 4, 2019 revealed no deficiencies.

Technical Assistance Provided

During our monitoring visit on January 21, 2020, the Sponsor requested technical assistance regarding missing meal components. We provided assistance during the visit. Additionally, technical assistance was given regarding the new CACFP meal pattern requirements.

Disallowed Meals Cost

The disallowed meals cost associated with the findings above is below the DHS threshold for recoupment.

Corrective Action

The Sponsor should complete the following actions within 30 days from the date of this report:

- Prepare and submit a corrective action plan to address the deficiencies identified in this report. The corrective action plan template is attached. Please return the corrective action plan to:

AuditServices.CAPS.DHS@tn.gov

If you have questions relative to the corrective action plan please contact:

Allette Vayda, Director of Operations
Child and Adult Care Food Program
James K. Polk Building, 15th Floor

505 Deaderick Street
Nashville, Tennessee 37243
Allette.Vayda@tn.gov
(615) 313-3769

We appreciate the assistance provided during this review. If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Sean Baker, Audit Director 2, at 615-313-4727 or Sean.Baker@tn.gov.

Sincerely,

Sam O. Alzoubi

Sam O. Alzoubi, CFE
Director of Audit Services

Exhibit

cc: Leslie Morris, Director, Northside Learning Center
Allette Vayda, Director of Operations, Child and Adult Care Food Programs
Debra Pasta, Program Manager, Child and Adult Care Food Program
Elke Moore, Administrative Services Assistant 3, Child and Adult Care Food Program
Constance Moore, Program Specialist, Child and Adult Care Food Program
Marty Widner, Program Specialist, Child and Adult Care Food Program
Comptroller of the Treasury, State of Tennessee

EXHIBIT

Verification of CACFP Independent Center Claim

Name of Agency: Northside Learning Center

Review Month/Year: December 2019

Total Meal Reimbursement Received: \$1,020.34

Site Meal Service Reconciliation and Monitor Activity	Reported on Claim	Reconciled to Documentation
Total Days of CACFP Food Service	19	19
Total Attendance	1,001	957 ¹
Number of Breakfasts Served	779	780
Number of Lunches Served	946	947
Number of Supplements Served	918	739
Number of Participants in Free Category	1	0
Number of Participants in Reduced-Price Category	2	2
Number of Participants in Paid Category	65	67
Total Number of Participants	68	69

¹ The difference in the reported and reconciled attendance is immaterial and not included in the report as a finding



Corrective Action Plan for Monitoring Findings

Instructions: Please print in ink or type the information to complete this document. Enter the date of birth for each Responsible Principal and/or Individual in Section B. Attach the additional documentation requested. Enter your name, title and date of signature on the last page. Please sign your name in ink. **Please return ALL pages of the completed Corrective Action Plan form.**

Section A. Institution Information

Name of Sponsor/Agency/Site: Northside Learning Center	Agreement No. 00444	<input type="checkbox"/> SFSP <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CACFP
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Mailing Address: 923 Mississippi Avenue Chattanooga, TN 37405-3023

Section B. Responsible Principal(s) and/or Individual(s)

Name and Title: Joseph Harris, Chairman of the Board	Date of Birth: 4/11/1951
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Section C. Dates of Issuance of Monitoring Report/Corrective Action Plan

Monitoring Report: February 28, 202	Corrective Action Plan: March 30, 2020
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Section D. Findings

Findings:

1. The Sponsor reported the number of participants in the free and paid categories incorrectly
2. The Sponsor reported meal counts incorrectly
3. The Sponsor provided menus that did not meet the USDA meal pattern requirements

The following measures will be completed within **30 calendar days** of my institution's receipt of this corrective action plan:

Measure No. 1: The Sponsor reported the number of participants in the free and paid categories incorrectly

The finding will be fully and permanently corrected.

Identify the name(s) and position title(s) of the employee(s) who will be responsible for ensuring that the finding is fully and permanently corrected:

DHS staff should check the "Forms" section of the intranet to ensure the use of current versions. Forms may not be altered without prior approval.

Distribution: OIG and CACFP/SFSP as appropriate

RDA: 2341

Name:

Position Title:

Name:

Position Title:

Describe below the **step-by-step** procedures that will be implemented to correct the finding:

When will the procedures for addressing the finding be implemented? Provide a timeline below for implementing the procedures (i.e., will the procedures be done daily, weekly, monthly, or annually, and when will they begin?):

Where will the Corrective Action Plan documentation be retained? Please identify below:

How will new and current staff be informed of the new policies and procedures to address the finding (e.g., Handbook, training, etc.)? Please describe below:

Measure No.2: The Sponsor reported meal counts incorrectly

The finding will be fully and permanently corrected.

Identify the name(s) and position title(s) of the employee(s) who will be responsible for ensuring that the finding is fully and permanently corrected:

Name:

Position Title:

Name:

Position Title:

Describe below the **step-by-step** procedures that will be implemented to correct the finding:

DHS staff should check the "Forms" section of the intranet to ensure the use of current versions. Forms may not be altered without prior approval.

Distribution: OIG and CACFP/SFSP as appropriate

RDA: 2341

When will the procedures for addressing the finding be implemented? Provide a timeline below for implementing the procedures (i.e., will the procedures be done daily, weekly, monthly, or annually, and when will they begin?):

Where will the Corrective Action Plan documentation be retained? Please identify below:

How will new and current staff be informed of the new policies and procedures to address the finding (e.g., Handbook, training, etc.)? Please describe below:

Measure No. 3: The Sponsor provided menus that did not meet the USDA meal pattern requirements

The finding will be fully and permanently corrected.

Identify the name(s) and position title(s) of the employee(s) who will be responsible for ensuring that the finding is fully and permanently corrected:

Name:

Position Title:

Name:

Position Title:

Describe below the **step-by-step** procedures that will be implemented to correct the finding:

When will the procedures for addressing the finding be implemented? Provide a timeline below for implementing the procedures (i.e., will the procedures be done daily, weekly, monthly, or annually, and when will they begin?):

Where will the Corrective Action Plan documentation be retained? Please identify below:

DHS staff should check the "Forms" section of the intranet to ensure the use of current versions. Forms may not be altered without prior approval.

How will new and current staff be informed of the new policies and procedures to address the finding (e.g., Handbook, training, etc.)? Please describe below:

I certify by my signature below that I am authorized by the institution to sign this document. As an authorized representative of the institution, I fully understand the corrective measures identified above and agree to fully implement these measures within the required time frame. I also understand that failure to fully and permanently correct the findings in my institution's CACFP or SFSP will result in its termination from the program, and the placement of the institution and its responsible principals on the National Disqualified List maintained by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Printed Name of Authorized Institution Official:

Position:

Signature of Authorized Institution Official: _____

Date: / /

APPEAL PROCEDURES FOR CHILD AND ADULT CARE INSTITUTIONS AND SPONSORING AGENCIES

Appeal Procedures

1. Pursuant to 7 CFR §226.6(k)(4), the TN Department of Human Services (TDHS) must provide administrative review procedures to institutions and responsible principals and responsible individuals as follows:

- (a) Annually to all institutions;
- (b) To an institution and to each responsible principal and responsible individual when the State agency takes any action subject to an administrative review as described in 7 CFR §226.6(k)(2); and
- (c) Any other time upon request.

2. Pursuant to 7 CFR 226.6(k)(3) and (k)(9), some administrative actions are not subject to administrative review. Those actions are listed in paragraph 2.(a). Other administrative actions may be administratively appealed. Those actions are listed in paragraph 2.(b) and (c). All institutions and sponsoring agencies may appeal any adverse administrative action listed in paragraph 2.(b) which are taken by the TDHS by requesting a fair hearing to appear in person to refute the action, or by requesting a review of written information in lieu of a fair hearing.

(a) Pursuant to 7 CFR Part 226.6 (k)(3) TDHS is prohibited from offering administrative reviews of the following actions:

- (i) FNS decisions on claim deadline exceptions and requests for upward adjustments to a claim.
- (ii) Determination of serious deficiency.
- (iii) State agency determination that corrective action is inadequate.
- (iv) Disqualification and placement on State agency list and National disqualified list.
- (v) Termination.
- (vi) State agency or FNS decision regarding removal from the National disqualified list.
- (vii) State agency's refusal to consider an application submitted by an institution or facility on the National disqualified list.

(b) Pursuant to 7 CFR Part 226.6(k)(9), an abbreviated appeal process is available for the following actions. TDHS must limit the administrative review to a review of written submissions by the TDHS and institutions or sponsoring agencies concerning the accuracy of the State agency's determination if the application was denied, or the State agency proposes to terminate the institution's agreement because:

- (viii) The information submitted on the application was false;
- (ix) The institution, one of its sponsored facilities, or one of the principals of the institution or its facilities is on the national disqualified list;
- (x) The institution, one of its sponsored facilities, or one of the principals of the institution or its facilities is ineligible to participate in any other publicly funded program by reason of violation of the requirements of the program;

- (xi) The institution, one of its sponsored facilities, or one of the principals of the institution or its facilities has been convicted for any activity that indicates a lack of business integrity;

(c) Administrative review is also available if the State agency notifies the institution and responsible principal or responsible individual of the following actions: proposed disqualification of a responsible principal or responsible individual, denial of a budget, denial of a line item within a budget, downward adjustment of the amount approved in a budget, suspension of an institution's participation, denial of start-up or expansion funds, denial of a request for advanced payment, recovery of an advance in excess of a claim, denial of a claim for reimbursement (except for late submission), decision not to forward an exception request for payment of a late claim, overpayment demand, denial of a new or renewing institution's application for participation, denial of sponsored facility application, notice of proposed termination, claim denial, claim deadline exceptions and requests for upward adjustments to a claim, or any other action affecting an institutions participation or claim for payment.

3. All appeal requests must be presented in writing to the TDHS Division of Appeals and Hearings not later than 15 calendar days after the date the institution or sponsoring agency receives the notice of adverse administrative action.

4. The date of an institution's or sponsoring agency's receipt of a notice of suspension and/or proposed termination and disqualification will be governed by the federal regulation at 7 CFR Part 226.2. The notice must specify the action being proposed or taken and the basis for the action, and is considered to be received by the institution or day care home when it is delivered, sent by facsimile, or sent by email. If the notice is undeliverable, it is considered to be received by the institution, responsible principal or responsible individual, or day care home five days after being sent to the addressee's last known mailing address, facsimile number, or email address.

5. The TDHS Division of Appeals and Hearings will acknowledge the receipt of the appeal request within 10 calendar days of the receipt of the institution's or sponsoring agency's request for review. The written request for review should state if a fair hearing is requested or if a review of written information in lieu of a fair hearing is requested. If the appeal request from the institution or sponsoring agency does not specifically request a hearing, a review of written information in lieu of a hearing will occur. If a fair hearing is requested and the institution or sponsoring agency's representative fails to appear, the right to a personal appearance is waived.

6. If an institution or sponsoring agency does not request a fair hearing or a review of written information in lieu of the hearing within 15 calendar days from the date the institution or sponsoring agency receives a Notice of Proposed Termination, the TDHS will issue a letter advising the institution or sponsoring agency that it is terminated from the CACFP effective on the 16th calendar day following the institution's or sponsoring agency's receipt of the notice, and that the responsible principals and individuals of the institution or sponsoring agency are disqualified from participation.

7. To be considered for a fair hearing or for a review of written information in lieu of a fair

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hearing, all written documents must be submitted to the TDHS Division of Appeals and Hearings not later than 30 days after receipt of the notice of adverse administrative action.

8. The action of the TDHS must remain in effect during the administrative review. The effect of this requirement on particular actions by TDHS is as follows:

(i) *Overpayment demand.* During the period of the administrative review, TDHS is prohibited from taking action to collect or offset the overpayment. However TDHS must assess interest beginning with the initial demand for remittance of the overpayment and continuing through the period of administrative review unless the administrative review official overturns the TDHS's action.

(ii) *Recovery of advances.* During the administrative review, TDHS must continue its efforts to recover advances in excess of the claim for reimbursement for the applicable period. The recovery may be through a demand for full repayment or an adjustment of subsequent payments.

(iii) *Program payments.* The availability of Program payments during an administrative review of the denial of a new institution's application, denial of a renewing institution's application, proposed termination of a participating institution's agreement, and suspension of an institution are addressed in paragraphs (c)(1)(iii)(D), (c)(2)(iii)(D), (c)(3)(iii)(D), (c)(5)(i)(D), and (c)(5)(ii)(E), respectively, of 7 CFR §226.6.

9. The institution or sponsoring agency must refute the charges contained in the notice during the fair hearing or in the written information that is provided in lieu of the hearing.

10. The institution and the responsible principals and responsible individuals may retain legal counsel, or may be represented by another person.

11. If a fair hearing is requested, the institution or sponsoring agency will be notified in writing of the time, date and place of the fair hearing at least 10 calendar days in advance.

12. Any information which supports an adverse administrative action taken by the TDHS shall be available to the institution or sponsoring agency for inspection from the date of the receipt of the request for a fair hearing or a review of written information in lieu of the hearing.

13. In accordance with 7 CFR Part 226.6 (k)(8), the TDHS Division of Appeals and Hearings must conduct the administrative review of the proposed disqualification of the responsible principals and responsible individuals as part of the administrative review of the application denial, proposed termination, and/or proposed disqualification of the institution with which the responsible principals or responsible individuals are associated. However, at the administrative review official's discretion, separate administrative reviews may be held if the institution does not request an administrative review or if either the institution or the responsible principal or responsible individual demonstrates that their interests conflict.

14. The procedures contained in the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act found at TCA 4-5-301 et seq. shall be followed in rendering a decision on all appeals. The decision of the hearing officer is the final administrative determination to be afforded to the institution or sponsoring agency, and shall be rendered in a timely manner not to exceed 60 calendar days from the date of the receipt of the request for a fair hearing.

15. The processing limits for administrative appeals MUST be met. In the event a continuance is requested by a party, one continuance may be granted at the Hearing Official's discretion. This

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continuance shall not be for a period longer than ten (10) calendar days unless there are exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances must be detailed in the order of continuance and the order must contain a date certain for the hearing, to be set as soon as possible. A report of pending CACFP desk review and fair hearing requests will be generated and reviewed daily by the Clerk's Office and the Legal Director for Appeals and Hearings who will monitor the dates for timeliness. In the event a decision has not been rendered within forty-five (45) calendar days of the date of receipt of the request for fair hearing or desk review, the Legal Director for Appeals and Hearings or their back-up shall notify the hearing official to take appropriate action.

16. All requests for a fair hearing or for a review of written information in lieu of a hearing must be submitted to:

Tennessee Department of Human Services
Division of Appeals and Hearings
PO Box 198996, Clerk's Office
Nashville, TN 37219-8996
Fax: (615) 248-7013 or (866) 355-6136
E-mail: AppealsClerksOffice.DHS@tn.gov

17. If a termination action is upheld by the hearing officer, the TDHS will issue a letter to the institution or sponsoring agency and its responsible principals and individuals advising that the termination and disqualification are effective on the date of the ruling issued by the hearing officer. The agency maintains searchable records of all administrative reviews and their dispositions for a period of five (5) years.

18. As required by 7 CFR Part 226.6 (c)(7), each disqualified institution, sponsoring agency, principal and individual will be placed on the National Disqualified List maintained by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Once included on the National Disqualified List, an institution, sponsoring agency, principal and individual shall remain on the list until such time as the USDA, in consultation with the TDHS, determines that the serious deficiencies that led to their placement on the list have been corrected, or until seven years have elapsed since they were disqualified from participation. However, if the institution, sponsoring agency, principal or individual has failed to repay debts owed under the program, they will remain on the list until the debt has been paid.