

FOOD PROGRAM Memo



IMPORTANT HOME VISIT UPDATES

**PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO READ THROUGH THIS ENTIRE DOCUMENT
REGARDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR UNANNOUNCED HOME VISITS**

On October 1, 2020 (the new year for the Food Program), the USDA home visiting requirements for the 4-C CACFP went back into effect – which means that the 4-C CACFP is required to again conduct three home visits a year, at least 2 of which are unannounced, and 1 of which is a food observation. The one flexibility remaining is the option to conduct these visits off-site/virtually.

Many of you have participated in scheduled/announced virtual visits over the past few months. While virtual visits are conducted differently than in-person visits, **the same requirements will need to be met**. Nutrition Specialists are required by USDA & DPI to verify all the same requirements they normally do (such as meal patterns, 5 Day Rec, allowable foods, menus and meal counts being up to date, etc.). The main difference is that you may be asked to submit some things via email or text as our goal is to keep the time spent on the actual video call at a minimum to allow for the least amount of disruption in your day as possible.

UNANNOUNCED VISITS & MEAL OBSERVATIONS

A part of being on the Food Program is the requirement of unannounced visits being conducted. Even though visits won't be physically in your home right now, think of us calling you on the phone as the same as us ringing your doorbell, with the expectation that a visit will be conducted.

We understand that the health and safety of the children in your care is the priority – which is why we are doing everything possible to make the virtual unannounced home visit abbreviated and take less time than a typical in-person visit. Please see the helpful tips at the bottom for ways that you can help ensure this happens.

What does an unannounced virtual visit look like? It will start with a phone call – your Nutrition Specialist will call you 15 minutes prior to the expected start time of the virtual home visit. On the phone call, they will let you know what type of technology will be used (i.e. Zoom Meeting, Facetime, Google Duo, etc.) and how to access it. If they cannot reach you via phone they will leave a message and follow up with a text letting you know of the intent to conduct a visit and the time frame.

The policies and consequences for unsuccessful unannounced visits are the same for virtual visits as they are for in person visits. An unsuccessful unannounced visit is a visit that was attempted but not able to be conducted due to a Nutrition Specialist being unable to contact a provider or a provider refusing to participate in the home visit. Please review the Sponsor Provider Agreement form that you receive annually in your new year packet for further details. This can also be found on the 4-C website at:

https://www.4c.org/images/stories/site_images/Food_Program/Sponsor_Provider_Agreement_Review.pdf

Also - please remember that at least one of your unannounced visits also needs to consist of a meal observation. In this case, a main focus of the virtual visit will be showing the meals components being prepared/served to children in your care.

4-C CACFP will begin implementing unannounced virtual visits on February 1, 2021.

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PROVIDER EXPECTATIONS

- ✓ You will be available by either phone or video call during your certified/licensed hours of operation.
- ✓ You will continue to notify 4-C CACFP by 8am each day regarding pre-scheduled times when you will be unavailable. If unforeseen events occur that lead to your unavailability throughout the day, please try and report those as well.
- ✓ You will respond promptly to 4-C CACFP's request for records, photos, current menus/meal counts, etc.

HELPFUL TIPS

In order to make unannounced virtual visits and meal observations as easy and quick as possible, keep the following in mind:

- Have your technology nearby (for example – if your records are kept on a laptop, have the laptop somewhere you can easily access it during an unannounced virtual visit).
- Keep your Nutrition Specialists up to date with your current meal times. At least one visit needs to be a meal observation – having the most accurate information about when you are serving meals helps us know when to conduct a visit.
- **Does your Nutrition Specialist have your cell phone number?** If not, make sure to pass that information along as texting is often an easier and less disruptive way to reach you while doing care.
- Before you submit records (such as attendance forms or menus) – stop and check if they are clear and easy to read.
- REMEMBER - if you are submitting pictures of food products or meal services to your Nutrition Specialist, do not include pictures of any children unless you have media request waivers on file for them.

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QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions regarding unannounced virtual visits and/or meal observations, or just want to talk out with your Nutrition Specialist how unannounced visits will work, please don't hesitate to reach out. All 4-C CACFP staff contact information is listed below.



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