

CACFP Input Workgroup Accomplishments



The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) created the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Input Workgroup to gather feedback directly from contracting entities (CEs) and assess the challenges and opportunities they have at the local level. Workgroup members provide recommendations to TDA on how to enhance its administration of CACFP and help CEs discover new efficiencies for their operations.

Terms to Know

Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) - State agency administering the CACFP in Texas.

Contracting Entity (CE) - An organization that enters into an agreement with TDA to assume final administrative and financial responsibility for CACFP operations.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) - A federal nutrition program that provides aid to child and adult care institutions and family or group day care homes for the provision of nutritious foods that contribute to the wellness, healthy growth, and development of young children and certain adults. Contracting entities receive Federal reimbursement from TDA based on eligible meals served at one or more locations.



2019/2020

Workgroup Members

Angela Flowers

Food & Nutrition Solutions Association

Ashley Channel

Fort Bend ISD

Blake Stanford

Southwest Human Development Services

Elsa Ayala

New Beginnings Health and Day Activity Center

Emily Oneil

Opportunities for Williamson and Burnet County

Gylma Garza

Edinburg Child Care

Heather R. Guzman

San Antonio Food Bank

Jennifer Vogel

San Marcos ISD

Kenyatta Chandler

Houston ISD

Lisa Obenhaus

Valley Mills ISD

Mel Jackson

The Josh Howard Foundation

Pamela Alvarez

Valley Haven

Saul Fernandez

Extreme Activities

Sehr Qazi

Healthy Plate Solutions

Tangela Joseph

Destiney Empowerment Enterprises

Victor Salazar

CACFP Sponsors Association President

Subcommittee Goals:

Workgroup members completed a needs assessment to determine priority areas and provide TDA Input. Based on feedback, the following subcommittees were developed to address the needs identified:

1. Meal Count and Attendance Form

Goal/Purpose: Provide clarification and understanding regarding the errors, challenges, and barriers to completing the form correctly. Develop training and/or tools to reduce the number of findings.

2. Procurement Guidance

Goal/Purpose: Provide input on TDA training materials and venues to help CEs improve their understanding of the procurement process.

3. Compensation Policy

Goal/Purpose: Recommend efficient and effective methods to complete and submit a Compensation Policy to TDA for review while ensuring compliance with Federal guidance.



Key Accomplishments:

Requestor	Workgroup Recommendation	TDA Response	Date Resolved
General Committee	Workgroup members requested an update on Food and Nutrition (F&N).	Angela Olige, Assistance Commissioner for F&N, provided an overview of the “State of TDA” for Workgroup Members. Topics covered included USDA initiatives, TDA pillars, compliance approach, new compliance structure, administrative review training, and an ideological discussion of serious deficiency.	September 2019
General Committee	TDA provided clarification that the compensation policy is not functioning properly in TX-UNPS with the management plan. Workgroup members suggested creation of an Ad-hoc Subcommittee.	An Ad-hoc Compensation Policy Subcommittee was created to obtain recommendations from members for the most efficient and effective method to complete and submit a compensation policy to TDA for review.	September 2019
General Committee	Workgroup members requested TDA provide further clarification and explanation on recent revisions to Section 4000 of the CACFP Handbooks. Specifically, Input WG members sought clarification on the amount of documentation necessary to establish whether its sites are operating a nonprofit food service account.	TDA provided a summary of the policy regarding sponsors’ responsibility to verify that their sites are conducting a “non-profit food service” operation. TDA explained what it looks for during an Administrative Review when validating that a sponsor has assessed whether its sites are conducting a “non-profit food service” operation. TDA agreed to review Section 4000 and will clarify guidance accordingly in its next revision of that section.	November 2019
General Committee	Workgroup members requested that TDA assess whether listed family homes meet the CACFP eligibility requirements.	TDA reached out to HHSC about its ongoing rulemaking regarding listed family homes which is expected to be completed in December 2020. TDA will follow this rulemaking and, once it is completed, TDA will take this recommendation under further review.	November 2019
General Committee	Workgroup members sought clarification regarding disallowances for not serving whole grains.	TDA provided a written response summarizing USDA’s policy guidance in CACFP 02-2017.	November 2019



Key Accomplishments *(continued)*:

Requestor	Workgroup Recommendation	TDA Response	Date Resolved
General Committee	Workgroup members sought guidance regarding the document upload process for administrative reviews and expressed challenges experienced in the process.	TDA provided the “CACFP Entrance Checklist” to Workgroup members for review and sought best practices related to the DPR process that could be shared with all CEs. TDA committed to addressing CE questions and to continue to work with the CACFP Input Workgroup to identify process improvements and/or additional resources to further assist CEs.	January 2020 and ongoing
Procurement Guidance Subcommittee	The subcommittee requested data regarding procurement-related findings.	The subcommittee analyzed recent procurement finding data to determine the most common areas of noncompliance and establish a path forward.	January 2020
General Committee	Workgroup members suggested that TDA clarify how costing standards are assessed as part of an administrative review.	TDA clarified that it does not issue a finding if a CE does not use costing standards; however, if there is no evidence of budget analysis being done, TDA will provide technical assistance to the CE. TDA published this guidance in the monthly <i>CACFP Insight</i> .	January 2020
General Committee	Workgroup members requested TDA address the ongoing COVID-19 response.	TDA provided members with an overview of its current process for responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency. TDA briefed members on its process for addressing the large number of operational questions and the SquareMeals.org/Coronavirus webpage used to communicate the most up-to-date guidance, including Frequently Asked Questions. TDA also provided an overview of the requested regulatory waivers from USDA.	March 2020
General Committee	Workgroup members requested TDA conduct a general question and answer session about operating during the COVID-19 public health emergency.	TDA led an open discussion with Workgroup members and provided the latest information on several topics of interest, including providing multi-day meals, scope of non-congregate waiver, service at adult care centers, and naming of sites using COVID-19 flexibilities.	March 2020



Key Accomplishments *(continued)*:

Requestor	Workgroup Recommendation	TDA Response	Date Resolved
Procurement Guidance Subcommittee	Members assessed and evaluated the initial purpose of the subcommittee and identified the need to ensure the administrative review process is consistent across review staff and is tailored to the size of the sponsor (based on total reimbursements).	TDA will continue the work of this subcommittee during the 2020/2021 Input Workgroup with a modified purpose to address procurement during administrative reviews.	Ongoing
Meal Count & Attendance Form Subcommittee	Members evaluated the meal counting and claiming form to determine what issues/challenges need to be addressed.	TDA will develop forms (hard copy/manual, Excel, and JotForm) and will clarify policy related to the use of the forms.	Ongoing
CACFP Compensation Policy Subcommittee	Members provided input on the development of a Compensation Policy that is consistent with federal regulatory requirements.	A compensation policy document was drafted with input from subcommittee members and is in the TDA review process.	June 2020
General Committee	Members requested TDA to evaluate how it communicates policy updates and alerts to CACFP CEs.	TDA is exploring new ways to enhance policy updates and alerts communications, including more clearly documenting the impetus for change in the Revision Notices the handbooks themselves. TDA encouraged CEs to continue to provide input and suggestions for improving policy communications.	June 2020



Key Accomplishments *(continued)*:

Requestor	Workgroup Recommendation	TDA Response	Date Resolved
General Committee	Members requested access to previously released CACFP Insight Newsletters.	TDA developed a webpage on SquareMeals.org under the “News” tab to provide access to previously released Newsletters, including the CACFP Insight.	June 2020
General Committee	Workgroup members sought further guidance regarding the document upload process for administrative reviews, specifically the amount of documentation required and challenges experienced uploading to TX-UNPS.	TDA has identified documents, including financial documentation, that will no longer be required as part of the initial document upload process. With constructive feedback from the workgroup, TDA will continue to evaluate its guidance related to this process, including ways to reduce the burden on CEs. TDA is also pursuing system enhancements to TX-UNPS to make uploading more efficient.	Ongoing

Learn More:

For more information on the CACFP Input Workgroup, please visit [SquareMeals.org/CACFPWorkgroup](https://www.SquareMeals.org/CACFPWorkgroup)



Food and Nutrition Division
Child and Adult Care Food Program



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

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