
42 U.S. Code § 1786

Special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children

(a) Congressional findings and declaration of purpose

Congress finds that substantial numbers of pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants, and young children from families with inadequate income are at special risk with respect to their physical and mental health by reason of inadequate nutrition or health care, or both. It is, therefore, the purpose of the program authorized by this section to provide, up to the authorization levels set forth in subsection (g) of this section, supplemental foods and nutrition education, including breastfeeding promotion and support, through any eligible local agency that applies for participation in the program. The program shall serve as an adjunct to good health care, during critical times of growth and development, to prevent the occurrence of health problems, including drug abuse, and improve the health status of these persons.

(b) Definitions

As used in this section—

- (1) “Breastfeeding women” means women up to one year postpartum who are breastfeeding their infants.
- (2) “Children” means persons who have had their first birthday but have not yet attained their fifth birthday.
- (3) “Competent professional authority” means physicians, nutritionists, registered nurses, dietitians, or State or local medically trained health officials, or persons designated by physicians or State or local medically trained health officials, in accordance with standards prescribed by the Secretary, as being competent professionally to evaluate nutritional risk.
- (4) “Costs of nutrition services and administration” or “nutrition services and administration” means costs that shall include, but not be limited to, costs for certification of eligibility of persons for participation in the program (including centrifuges, measuring boards, spectrophotometers, and scales used for the certification), food delivery, monitoring, nutrition education, breastfeeding support and promotion, outreach, startup costs, and general administration applicable to implementation of the program under this section, such as the cost of staff, transportation, insurance, developing and printing food instruments, and administration of State and local agency offices.
- (5) “Infants” means persons under one year of age.
- (6) “Local agency” means a public health or welfare agency or a private nonprofit health or welfare agency, which, directly or through an agency or physician with which it has contracted, provides health services. The term shall include an Indian tribe, band, or group recognized by the Department of the Interior, the Indian Health Service of the Department of Health and Human Services, or an intertribal council or group that is an authorized representative of Indian tribes, bands, or groups recognized by the Department of the Interior.

(7) Nutrition education.—

The term “nutrition education” means individual and group sessions and the provision of material that are designed to improve health status and achieve positive change in dietary and physical activity habits, and

that emphasize the relationship between nutrition, physical activity, and health, all in keeping with the personal and cultural preferences of the individual.

(8) “Nutritional risk” means (A) detrimental or abnormal nutritional conditions detectable by biochemical or anthropometric measurements, (B) other documented nutritionally related medical conditions, (C) dietary deficiencies that impair or endanger health, (D) conditions that directly affect the nutritional health of a person, such as alcoholism or drug abuse, or (E) conditions that predispose persons to inadequate nutritional patterns or nutritionally related medical conditions, including, but not limited to, homelessness and migrancy.

(9) “Plan of operation and administration” means a document that describes the manner in which the State agency intends to implement and operate the program.

(10) “Postpartum women” means women up to six months after termination of pregnancy.

(11) “Pregnant women” means women determined to have one or more fetuses in utero.

(12) “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture.

(13) “State agency” means the health department or comparable agency of each State; an Indian tribe, band, or group recognized by the Department of the Interior; an intertribal council or group that is the authorized representative of Indian tribes, bands, or groups recognized by the Department of the Interior; or the Indian Health Service of the Department of Health and Human Services.

(14) “Supplemental foods” means those foods containing nutrients determined by nutritional research to be lacking in the diets of pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, infants, and children and foods that promote the health of the population served by the program authorized by this section, as indicated by relevant nutrition science, public health concerns, and cultural eating patterns, as prescribed by the Secretary. State agencies may, with the approval of the Secretary, substitute different foods providing the nutritional equivalent of foods prescribed by the Secretary, to allow for different cultural eating patterns.

(15) “Homeless individual” means—

(A) an individual who lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence; or

(B) an individual whose primary nighttime residence is—

(i) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter (including a welfare hotel or congregate shelter) designed to provide temporary living accommodations;

(ii) an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized;

(iii) a temporary accommodation of not more than 365 days in the residence of another individual; or

(iv) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

(16) “Drug abuse education” means—

(A) the provision of information concerning the dangers of drug abuse; and

(B) the referral of participants who are suspected drug abusers to drug abuse clinics, treatment programs, counselors, or other drug abuse professionals.

(17) “Competitive bidding” means a procurement process under which the Secretary or a State agency selects a single source (a single infant formula manufacturer) offering the lowest price, as determined by the submission of sealed bids, for a product for which bids are sought for use in the program authorized by this section.

(18) “Rebate” means the amount of money refunded under cost containment procedures to any State agency from the manufacturer or other supplier of the particular food product as the result of the purchase of the

supplemental food with a voucher or other purchase instrument by a participant in each such agency's program established under this section.

(19) "Discount" means, with respect to a State agency that provides program foods to participants without the use of retail grocery stores (such as a State that provides for the home delivery or direct distribution of supplemental food), the amount of the price reduction or other price concession provided to any State agency by the manufacturer or other supplier of the particular food product as the result of the purchase of program food by each such State agency, or its representative, from the supplier.

(20) "Net price" means the difference between the manufacturer's wholesale price for infant formula and the rebate level or the discount offered or provided by the manufacturer under a cost containment contract entered into with the pertinent State agency.

(21) **Remote indian or native village.** — The term "remote Indian or Native village" means an Indian or Native village that—

(A) is located in a rural area;

(B) has a population of less than 5,000 inhabitants; and

(C) is not accessible year-around by means of a public road (as defined in section 101 of title 23).

(22) **Primary contract infant formula.** —

The term "primary contract infant formula" means the specific infant formula for which manufacturers submit a bid to a State agency in response to a rebate solicitation under this section and for which a contract is awarded by the State agency as a result of that bid.

(23) **State alliance.** —

The term "State alliance" means 2 or more State agencies that join together for the purpose of procuring infant formula under the program by soliciting competitive bids for infant formula.

(24) **Supply chain disruption.** —

The term "supply chain disruption" means a shortage of supplemental foods that impedes the redemption of food instruments, as determined by the Secretary.

(c) Grants-in-aid; cash grants; ratable reduction of amount an agency may distribute; affirmative action; regulations relating to dual receipt of benefits under commodity supplemental food program

(1) The Secretary may carry out a special supplemental nutrition program to assist State agencies through grants-in-aid and other means to provide, through local agencies, at no cost, supplemental foods, nutrition education, and breastfeeding support and promotion to low-income pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants, and children who satisfy the eligibility requirements specified in subsection (d) of this section. The program shall be supplementary to—

(A) the supplemental nutrition assistance program;

(B) any program under which foods are distributed to needy families in lieu of supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits; and

(C) receipt of food or meals from soup kitchens, or shelters, or other forms of emergency food assistance.

(2) Subject to amounts appropriated to carry out this section under subsection (g)—

(A) the Secretary shall make cash grants to State agencies for the purpose of administering the program, and

(B) any State agency approved eligible local agency that applies to participate in or expand the program under this section shall immediately be provided with the necessary funds to carry out the program.

(3) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to permit the Secretary to reduce ratably the amount of foods that an eligible local agency shall distribute under the program to participants. The Secretary shall take affirmative action to ensure that the program is instituted in areas most in need of supplemental foods. The existence of a commodity supplemental food program under section 4 of the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973 shall not preclude the approval of an application from an eligible local agency to participate in the program under this section nor the operation of such program within the same geographic area as that of the commodity supplemental food program, but the Secretary shall issue such regulations as are necessary to prevent dual receipt of benefits under the commodity supplemental food program and the program under this section.

(4) A State shall be ineligible to participate in programs authorized under this section if the Secretary determines that State or local sales taxes are collected within the State on purchases of food made to carry out this section.

(d) Eligible participants

(1) Participation in the program under this section shall be limited to pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants, and children from low-income families who are determined by a competent professional authority to be at nutritional risk.

(2)

(A) The Secretary shall establish income eligibility standards to be used in conjunction with the nutritional risk criteria in determining eligibility of individuals for participation in the program. Any individual at nutritional risk shall be eligible for the program under this section only if such individual—

(i) is a member of a family with an income that is less than the maximum income limit prescribed under section 1758(b) of this title for free and reduced price meals;

(ii)

(I) receives supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 [7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.]; or

(II) is a member of a family that receives assistance under the State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act [42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.] that the Secretary determines complies with standards established by the Secretary that ensure that the standards under the State program are comparable to or more restrictive than those in effect on June 1, 1995; or

(iii)

(I) receives medical assistance under title XIX of the Social Security Act [42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.]; or

(II) is a member of a family in which a pregnant woman or an infant receives such assistance.

(B) For the purpose of determining income eligibility under this section, any State agency may choose to exclude from income—

(i) any basic allowance—

(I) for housing received by military service personnel residing off military installations; or

(II) provided under section 403 of title 37 for housing that is acquired or constructed under subchapter IV of chapter 169 of title 10 or any related provision of law; and

(ii) any cost-of-living allowance provided under section 405 of title 37 to a member of a uniformed service who is on duty outside the contiguous States of the United States.

(C) **Combat pay.**— For the purpose of determining income eligibility under this section, a State agency shall exclude from income any additional payment under chapter 5 of title 37, or otherwise designated by the Secretary to be appropriate for exclusion under this subparagraph, that is received by or from a member of

the United States Armed Forces deployed to a designated combat zone, if the additional pay—

(i) is the result of deployment to or service in a combat zone; and

(ii) was not received immediately prior to serving in a combat zone.

(D) In the case of a pregnant woman who is otherwise ineligible for participation in the program because the family of the woman is of insufficient size to meet the income eligibility standards of the program, the pregnant woman shall be considered to have satisfied the income eligibility standards if, by increasing the number of individuals in the family of the woman by 1 individual, the income eligibility standards would be met.

This document is only available to subscribers. Please [log in](#) or [purchase access](#).

[Purchase Login](#)