



Georgia Dept of Early Care and Learning

BRIGHT FROM THE START

2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive SE, Suite 754, East Tower, Atlanta, GA 30334
(404) 656-5957

Brian P. Kemp
Governor

Amy M. Jacobs
Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Reg Griffin

404-656-0239

reg.griffin@dec.al.ga.gov



Nonprofit Organizations needed statewide to serve free meals to Georgia's children this summer.

Feeding America estimates that the child food insecurity rate among the total population of children in Georgia has increased by 39% since 2018. Highest child food insecurity rates among Dooly, Hancock, Pulaski, Quitman, Screven, Stewart, Taliaferro, Telfair and Turner counties.

DECAL hosting a virtual information summit on February 16 to share information with eligible organizations interested in becoming a Summer Food Service Program sponsor.

Atlanta, Ga., (February 5, 2021) – The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is looking for eligible nonprofit organizations (called sponsors) to serve healthy meals at no cost to children this summer through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). Approved organizations receive partial reimbursement for serving meals that meet federal nutritional guidelines.

This SFSP played a critical role in feeding Georgia's kids throughout the pandemic, and the need for sponsors to provide access to meals will be greater than ever this summer. Feeding America, a network of foodbanks, estimates that among the total population of children in Georgia, the child food insecurity rate has increased by 39 percent since 2018.*

“With many parents out of work, we expect more kids—as many as one in four—will face hunger in the months ahead, especially when school is out for the summer,” said Nutrition Services Director Tamika Boone. “The SFSP is one solution that benefits the whole community

by helping to close the gap of food insecurities and providing local economies with federal reimbursement funds,” she added.

To help eligible organizations understand how the program operates, DECAL is hosting a virtual information summit on Tuesday, February 16. The summit is themed, “Together, we can feed Georgia’s Children.”

Sponsors are needed statewide, however, there is an especially high need for new sponsors in counties with a child food insecurity rate of greater than 30 percent. They include: Dooly, Hancock, Pulaski, Quitman, Screven, Stewart, Taliaferro, Telfair and Turner. *

Eligible organizations include units of government, private, nonprofit organizations; public or private nonprofit camps; public or private nonprofit universities or colleges and schools.

Sponsors receive training and support relating to the application process; setting up and operating a successful SFSP; and nutrition education. They also receive technical assistance while the program is operating.

For more information, about the SFSP or the Summit, contact Cindy Kicklighter, marketing & outreach manager, at cindy.kicklighter@decalfga.gov or (678) 841.3170.

For more information on becoming an SFSP sponsor, visit DECAL’s website at <http://decalfga.gov/SFSP/BecomingASponsor.aspx> or contact the SFSP team toll free at 1-855-550-SFSP (7377) or via e-mail at SFSP@decalfga.gov.

In accordance with federal law and USDA policy, DECAL is an equal opportunity provider and is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and USDA civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To

request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

###

About Bright from the Start

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia's children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia's Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages the voluntary quality enhancement programs.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to www.dec.state.ga.us.

***Feeding America: The impact of coronavirus on food insecurity**

<https://www.feedingamericaaction.org/the-impact-of-coronavirus-on-food-insecurity/>