



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 17, 2022

ECECD Summer Food Service Program for New Mexico Children Resumes

More than 550 locations statewide offering free meals through August

SANTA FE – Today, the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) Family Nutrition Bureau announced the return of the Summer Food Service Program at 570 meal site locations across the state. Administered by ECECD and funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the program provides nutritious meals at no cost to children and youth ages 18 and younger from June through August, filling a gap when school-based meal programs pause during the summer. In New Mexico, 1 in 5 children suffer from food insecurity.

“No child should have to worry about going hungry when the school year ends,” said ECECD Cabinet Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky. “The Summer Food Service Program ensures that all children in New Mexico can receive and benefit from healthy and nutritious meals throughout the summer months.”

Registration and enrollment are not required to participate in the Summer Food Service Program, which offers meals on a first-come, first-served basis. Each meal site serves lunch, while many sites serve both breakfast and lunch. All meals meet USDA-approved nutritional guidelines. At most locations, meals must be consumed on site in a group setting.

Summer Food Service Program meal sites are required to be in areas where at least 50% of the children qualify for free or reduced-price school meals. During the 2021-2022 school year, about 73% of public-school students in New Mexico qualified for free or reduced-priced meals. However, there are no family income requirements for participating in the Summer Food Service Program.

The cost of the Summer Food Service Program in New Mexico this year is expected to be about \$2 million. ECECD reimburses statewide sponsoring organizations for the administration and service of meals at approved meal sites.

To find a meal site, visit <https://summerfoodnm.org> or call 1-800-EAT-COOL (1-800-328-2665).

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Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham launched the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) in 2020, making New Mexico among the first states to consolidate all early childhood programs and services under a single cabinet-level agency. Under this administration, ECECD has led the nation by expanding access to free New Mexico PreK, overseeing the largest investment in early childhood infrastructure in state history,

and implementing cost-free child care for a majority of New Mexico families. Learn more about how ECECD supports children, families, and the early childhood professionals that serve our communities at nmececd.org. On Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram as [@NewMexicoECECD](https://www.instagram.com/NewMexicoECECD).