

# Press Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Over 600 Sites Offering Free Meals for New Mexico Youth This Summer

**Santa Fe, NM** – The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), which addresses the critical gap in food security for children aged 1-18 during the summer months and is administered by the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD), has begun food service for the 2024 service term. The SFSP ensures that children across New Mexico have access to nutritious meals while schools are out for the summer break. Over 600 locations statewide will provide free meals through August on a first-come, first-served basis. No registration or enrollment is required to participate.

“We invite every New Mexican family to take advantage of this incredible program,” said **ECECD Cabinet Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky**. “The Summer Food Service Program is free for all New Mexicans, regardless of income, and an easy way for families to ensure their children have nutritious meals during the busy summer months. With over 600 meal sites statewide, you are sure to find a location convenient to you.”

The free Summer Food Service Program fills a critical nutrition gap for many children during summer months when school cafeterias are closed. Prior to Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham signing the [Healthy Hunger-Free Students Bill of Rights Act](#) in 2023, which established universal free school lunches for all New Mexico school children, more than 70 percent of New Mexico's public school students qualified for free or reduced-price meals during the academic year.

All children aged 1-18 are eligible to participate. Anyone over 18 who has a mental or physical disability (as determined by a State or local educational agency) and participates during the school year in a public or private non-profit school program (established for the mentally or physically disabled) is also eligible to receive free meals through the SFSP.

The SFSP is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and is administered by ECECD. It is aligned with Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham's broader commitment to combat child hunger and support healthy development for children and youth.

Hours and days of service vary across locations. Select meal sites have begun operations, to find more information, including days and hours of meal service, and to find meal sites near you, visit [summerfoodnm.org](http://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](https://nmececd.org). On Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram as [@NewMexicoECECD](https://www.instagram.com/NewMexicoECECD).*