



Child Nutrition Programs

Several programs and activities of the federal government provide nutrition assistance to school-age children. Under the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, the Summer Food Service Program, and the Special Milk Program, the government provides commodities and cash payments to reimburse participating schools and institutions for at least part of the cost of each meal served. Reimbursement rates vary by program, meal type, and participant's household income. Schools in the school breakfast and lunch programs—the two largest such programs—receive relatively small subsidies for meals served to students from households with income above 185 percent of the federal poverty level and larger subsidies for meals served to students from households with income below that level.

Federal child nutrition programs are funded mostly out of mandatory spending, with a small discretionary component. Annual appropriations for child nutrition programs generally cover the cost of providing benefits to all eligible applicants. However, CBO's baseline is constructed under the assumption that in the event of a shortfall, the Department of Agriculture would request an additional appropriation.

Child Nutrition Programs

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2022-2026	2022-2031
BUDGET INFORMATION													
Millions of dollars, by fiscal year													
Budget Authority^a	25,431	26,927	27,232	28,429	29,675	30,932	32,255	33,643	35,103	36,628	38,216	143,195	319,040
Outlays	24,816	26,444	27,163	28,224	29,462	30,716	32,027	33,405	34,854	36,367	37,945	142,009	316,607
Components of the Child Nutrition Programs													
National School Lunch Program													
Budget Authority	6,358	11,162	14,721	15,252	15,832	16,445	17,086	17,758	18,461	19,192	19,948	73,412	165,857
Estimated Outlays	6,197	10,959	14,683	15,141	15,717	16,329	16,964	17,631	18,329	19,054	19,805	72,829	164,612
School Breakfast Program													
Budget Authority	2,665	4,200	5,364	5,605	5,866	6,142	6,434	6,742	7,066	7,406	7,762	27,177	62,587
Estimated Outlays	2,598	4,124	5,350	5,564	5,824	6,099	6,388	6,694	7,015	7,353	7,707	26,961	62,118
Child and Adult Care Food Program													
Budget Authority	3,540	4,207	4,403	4,620	4,845	5,084	5,337	5,606	5,890	6,192	6,507	23,159	52,691
Estimated Outlays	3,450	4,131	4,392	4,586	4,810	5,048	5,299	5,566	5,848	6,148	6,460	22,967	52,288
Commodity Procurement													
Budget Authority	581	1,189	1,701	1,780	1,866	1,956	2,051	2,150	2,254	2,361	2,473	8,492	19,781
Estimated Outlays	566	1,167	1,697	1,767	1,852	1,942	2,036	2,135	2,238	2,344	2,455	8,425	19,633
Summer Food Service Program													
Budget Authority	10,826	5,581	597	613	630	648	666	685	705	725	746	8,069	11,596
Estimated Outlays	10,552	5,480	595	609	625	643	661	680	700	720	741	7,952	11,454
State Administrative Expenses													
Budget Authority	316	235	188	294	367	382	398	415	433	452	471	1,466	3,635
Estimated Outlays	309	231	188	292	364	379	395	412	430	449	468	1,454	3,608
Other Spending ^a													
Budget Authority	1,145	353	259	264	269	274	281	286	295	300	309	1,419	2,890
Estimated Outlays	1,145	353	259	264	269	274	281	286	295	300	309	1,419	2,890

Memorandum:

Most reimbursement rates are tied to the consumer price index for food away from home, which is projected to increase as follows:

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Percent	103.6	102.4	102.6	102.8	102.8	102.9	102.9	102.9	102.9	102.9

Components may not sum to totals because of rounding.

a. Other spending includes the Special Milk Program, the Food Service Management Institute, Team Nutrition, coordinated review, computer support and processing, child nutrition grants for the Northern Marianas and American Samoa, and other activities. It also includes discretionary projects funded in annual appropriation acts.