

Child Care Food Program

**Informal Procurement Requirements Guide
for
Catered Meal Service**

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

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Table of Contents

Informal Procurement Process Flowchart..... 4

Introduction 5

 Methods of Procurement 5

 Competitive Procurement Requirements 5

 Children with Disabilities 6

Informal Competitive Procurement Procedure 8

 1. Review Procurement Requirements Guide and Sign Attestation 8

 2. Prepare Bid Request Documents 8

 3. Identify Caterers in Service Area 9

 4. Send Informal Bid Request Packet to Identified Caterers 10

 5. Evaluate Bids Received and Identify Preferred Caterer..... 10

 6. Determine if Bid Approval from CCFP Nutrition Team is Needed 11

 7. Award, Sign and Submit Catering Contract 11

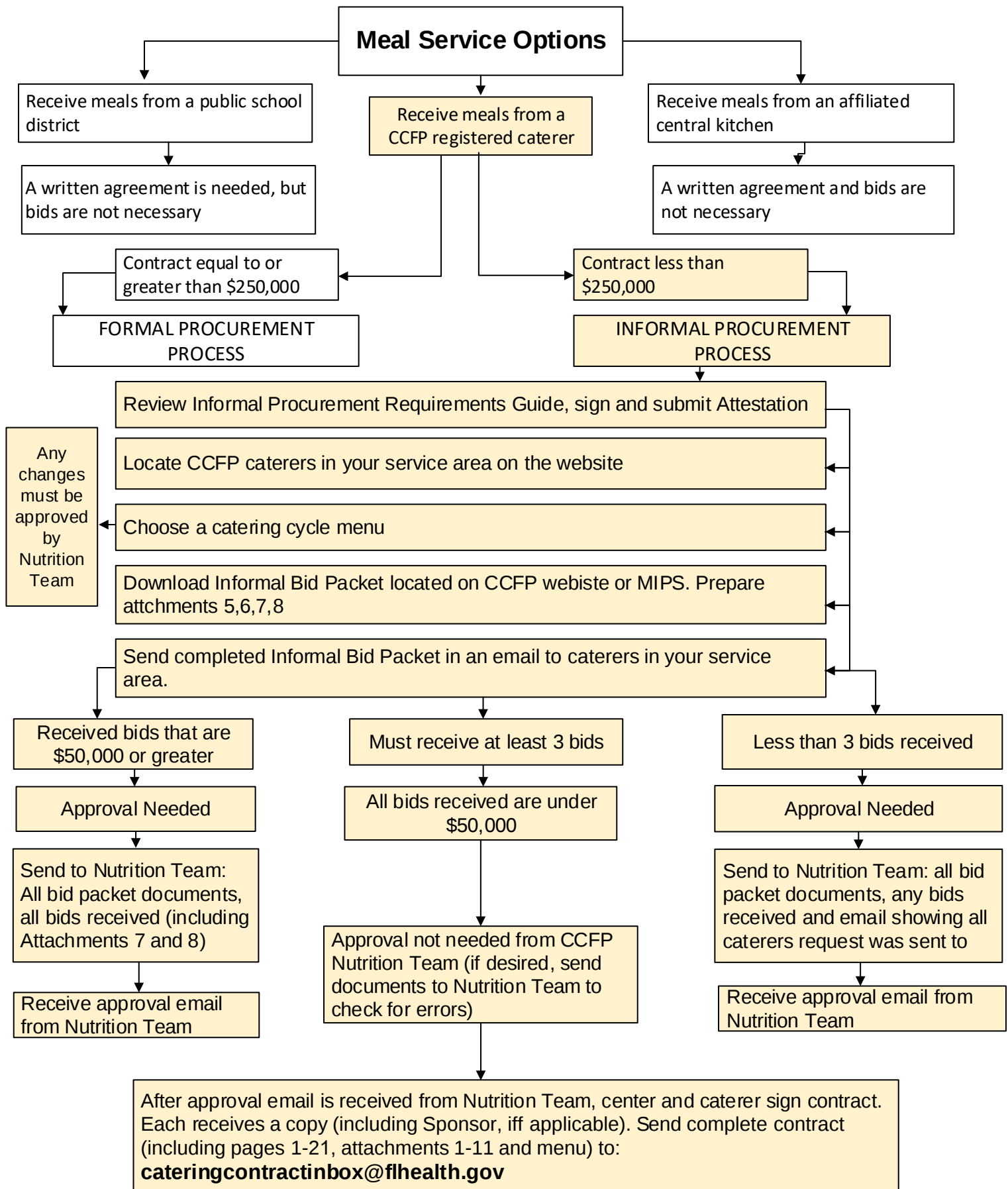
Informal Competitive Procurement Procedure Checklist 12

Bid Evaluation- Informal Procurement- *Optional* 14

Definitions 15

ATTESTATION 19

Informal Procurement Process Flowchart



Introduction

- Procurement (or purchasing) is the process of obtaining goods and/or services such as food and meals.
- Procurement procedures must ensure maximum open and free competition. All procurements made with CCFP funds must comply with the federal procurement requirements in 7 CFR 226 and 2 CFR 200.
- The CCFP is **not** a party to the Standard Catering Contract but provides fiscal reimbursement to the program participant for creditable catered meals. These reimbursements are subject to federal CCFP requirements. Consequently, the terms of the Standard Catering Contract, its execution, and validation of service are subject to CCFP Staff review for purposes of validating program funding and reimbursement.
- The contract will have no force or effect unless you are approved to participate in the CCFP. This means that a CCFP catering contract is not valid for a site that does not participate, or is not yet approved to participate, in the CCFP. Your continued participation in the CCFP is dependent on effective management and administration of the contract.
- The contract will have no force or effect unless the caterer is listed on the CCFP Caterer List, pursuant to Florida Administrative Code Rule 64F-17.004, before the date the contract is signed, and the caterer maintains all permits and licenses in good standing throughout the term of the contract. The caterer must inform the CCFP of any changes and/or updates to their current status.
- The Standard Catering Contract, all Attachments, Cycle Menus and Attestation can be found on the CCFP website and MIPS.
- Note that procurement procedures cover meals for children ages 1-5 and 6-18. This does **not** include any infant meals for ages 0-11 months.
- The Price Schedule combines 1- and 2-year-old children with the 3- to 5-year-old. All children between the ages of 1 and 5 **must** receive portion sizes based on the Meal Pattern for Children ages 3 to 5.

Methods of Procurement

When deciding on a method of procurement, you must calculate the total annual food purchases. This total applies to all food purchases where annual needs can be anticipated. **The Florida CCFP monetary threshold is \$250,000, below which informal competitive procedure may be followed.**

Federal Regulations allow two methods of Procurement:

1. **Informal Competitive Procurement:** Institutions/Facilities participating in the CCFP with a total annual meal service cost up to \$250,000 may use informal bid procedures for securing catered meal service contracts.
2. **Formal Competitive Procurement:** Institutions/Facilities participating in the CCFP with a total annual meal service cost at or above \$250,000 must use formal bid procedures for securing catered meal service contracts.

Competitive Procurement Requirements

Attestation: You **MUST** read the current year's Procurement Guide and submit the Attestation located on the final page before soliciting caterers for bids. You will send the completed Attestation with procurement procedure approval request to the CCFP Nutrition Team.

Basis for Award: Each bid submitted must be considered for responsiveness to the terms and conditions of the Standard Catering Contract. In general, a single award will be made to the responsive,

responsible caterer whose proposal will be most beneficial to the procuring party, price and other factors considered, while meeting all stated requirements of the Standard Catering Contract. This means that it is up to you to decide on the caterer you prefer to supply your meals.

The CCFP Nutrition Team will respond within ten working days of receiving your completed request for approval.

Noncompetitive Negotiation: Noncompetitive negotiation is only allowed when the examples listed below follow an unsuccessful attempt in obtaining a Catering Contract in a competitive manner. Note that proof of attempt must be sent to the Nutrition Team (i.e. screenshot of email sent to caterers in your service area)

- No response to bid
- Single response

Oversight and Conduct: Institutions/Facilities must provide oversight to ensure that Caterers perform in accordance with the terms, conditions, and specifications of the Standard Catering Contract pursuant to 7 CFR §226.22(m) and 2 CFR §200.318(b). Institutions/Facilities must have written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award and administration of the Standard Catering Contract pursuant to 7 CFR §226.22(d) and 2 CFR §200.318(c).

This means that you, the program operator, is responsible for ensuring contract terms are met so that you can successfully file claims for reimbursement.

Catering Record Retention: The Institution/Facility must maintain books and records pertaining to the Standard Catering Contract for a period of six years from the date of receipt of final payment under the contract, or in cases where an audit requested by any agency of the State of Florida, law enforcement or the U.S. Department of Agriculture remains unresolved, until the audit is resolved. The books and records of both the site and the caterer relating to the CCFP Standard Catering Contract must be available for inspection and audit, upon presentation of appropriate photo identification, by employees of the Florida Department of Health; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Florida Department of Financial Services, Division of Public Assistance Fraud.

You must maintain records sufficient to detail the history of procurement. These records must include, but are not limited to the following:

- Rationale for the method of procurement
- Caterer selection or rejection
- Documents to support award of Catering Contract
- Documentation of approval from Nutrition Team, if applicable
- Complete contract and all addendums, amendments, menu, and attachments
- Delivery records and meal change form confirmations
- Catered Meal Service Deficiency reports
- Invoices and proof of payments to caterer
- All other documentation to support meals claimed

Children with Disabilities

Federal law and USDA regulations further require Institutions/Facilities to make reasonable modifications to accommodate participants with disabilities.

At the direction of the Institution/Facility, the Caterer is required to provide meal modifications for children with disabilities when the disability restricts their diet. Meal modifications are made on a case-by-case basis by the

Institution/Facility, and only when supported by a written medical statement signed by a Florida licensed healthcare professional or Registered Dietitian.

Reimbursement for modified meals served to participants with disabilities that restrict their diet is at the same rate as meals containing no modification. These meal modifications do not have to meet the CCFP meal pattern requirements to be claimed for reimbursement if they are supported by an accurately completed medical statement.

Keep in mind that you are ultimately responsible to provide appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities when correct documentation for such meals is received.

Informal Competitive Procurement Procedure

You will use the Informal Procurement Procedure if your annual food budget below \$250,000. This process requires you to send the *Informal Bid Request Packet* to **all** caterers in your service area. You can find the *Informal Bid Request Packet* on the CCFP website and MIPS.

Complete the following steps:

1. Review Procurement Requirements Guide and Sign Attestation

You are expected to read through this document to understand the various processes involved when you seek to serve catered meals. Sign the **Attestation** and send with your procurement procedure approval request to the Nutrition Team.

2. Prepare Bid Request Documents

The **Informal Bid Request Packet** is made up of Attachments 5, 6, 7 and 8, and the chosen Cycle Menu. It can be found in MIPS and the CCFP website.

- All caterers will receive identical information recorded on these documents. If anything is different, the bidding process must be re-done.
- The selected menu is based on the needs of the children served. It is chosen by the site, not the caterer and included in the request for bids.
- Any changes to catered Cycle Menus or menus created by a site, need to be approved by the Nutrition team prior to sending bid requests.

Attachment 5 – Meal Services to Be Provided (from Standard Catering Contract):

Complete the following:

Meal Types: Bulk or Unitized

- You must select meal types and how food items shall be delivered by checking the appropriate boxes. *Bulk canned fruit must be in suitable food-grade storage container(s) with tight fitting lid(s). This cannot be cans.*

Milk Requirements

- You must select milk type(s) and size(s) of milk containers(s) to be delivered.
- The maximum number of children aged one consuming unflavored whole milk must be listed.
- The maximum number of children ages 6 and older must be listed if requesting flavored fat-free milk.

Sandwiches: Bulk or Pre-Assembled

- You must indicate if the caterer shall deliver sandwich foods such as cold sandwiches and wraps and hot burritos in bulk, or pre-assembled.
- Your site must be authorized to assemble sandwiches onsite and have adequate storage space to hold sandwiches at proper temperatures if requesting bulk delivery.

Disposable Meal Service Products

- You must identify if the caterer shall supply disposable meal service products by checking “yes” or “no”. If yes, must be included in contract price.
- The caterer may charge separately should additional quantities of disposable meal service products be requested that are outside the scope of this contract.

Serving Utensils Needed

- You must identify if the caterer shall supply clean serving utensils (scoops and/or ladles and/or measuring-serving spoons of standard sizes, disposable or stainless) to ensure appropriate serving size of foods as specified by the CCFP Meal Pattern for Children, Attachment 1 and the Cycle Menu, Attachment 2

Attachment 6 – Delivery schedule (from Standard Catering Contract):

Complete the following:

Time of delivery

- Specify delivery time and ensure that it is no earlier than three hours before the CCFP approved start time of hot meal service (lunch and/or supper). This can be a range of time, such as “between 9-10am”.

Number of daily deliveries

- Breakfast will be delivered for the next day, unless otherwise requested by the site.
- List all locations separately.

Attachment 7 – Price Schedule (from Standard Catering Contract):

- A “boxed lunch” meal type is included for those centers in need of this type of meal for field trips.
- The Price Schedule combines 1- and 2-year-old children with the 3- to 5-year-old. All children between the ages of 1 and 5 **must** receive portion sizes based on the Meal Pattern for Children ages 3 to 5.

Complete the top portion and the following:

- Column 1 – Number (actual or estimated) of children (and ages) attending the site.
- Column 2 - Number of serving days in the year; (number of days the Institution/Facility will be open) Consider any closings for weekend days and holidays.

Attachment 8 – Conflict of Interest (from Standard Catering Contract):

Complete the top half of the form:

- The Institution/Facility must complete, sign and date the top half of the form.
- The caterer will need to complete, sign and date the bottom half when submitting bid.

The Institution/ Facility and caterer must not make any changes (amendments or addendums) to the bid without prior express written consent of the CCFP Nutrition team.

3. Identify Caterers in Service Area

Caterers must complete documentation and submit to the Nutrition team to be added to the CCFP caterer list, which is updated monthly. Only caterers from this list may submit bids for catered meals. The CCFP caterer list can be found in MIPS and the CCFP website.

- You **must obtain written bids from at least three caterers**, so it is suggested that you send the request for bids to **all** caterers in your service area.
- If you find that catering services are limited, proof that you have attempted to contact all caterers in the service area (e.g. copy of email requesting bids that shows all email addresses of caterers it was sent to), or emails from caterers stating they cannot submit a bid, will be sent to the Nutrition team.

4. Send Informal Bid Request Packet to Identified Caterers

Send the completed Informal Bid Request Packet, consisting of Attachments 5,6,7,8 and your chosen Cycle Menu, along with any addendums/amendments (these must be approved by the Nutrition team before sending bid request) to all caterers in the service area.

Refer to the following sample bid request below that can be adapted and sent with the Informal Bid Request Packet:

Sample Request for Bids:

Name of child care site: _____

Person to contact: _____

Location: _____

Response needed by: _____

Please review the menu and attachments included in this packet.

Complete columns 3, 4, and 5 of the Price Schedule (Attachment 7) and the bottom half of the

Conflict of Interest (Attachment 8). Scan and return to site's email: _____

Keep all documentation (bids, emails, etc.) as required documentation of the competitive procurement process.

5. Evaluate Bids Received and Identify Preferred Caterer

You must evaluate each submitted bid when selecting your preferred caterer.

You may use the recommended checklist below for each bid received. It is not required that you use this, as you may create your own evaluation checklist. A blank Bid-Evaluation Checklist for Informal Procurement can be found at the end of this document.

Name of Institution or Facility: Sally Child Care

Authorization No.: 1111 Date of Bid Review: 9/1/2024

Evaluation Checklist for Caterer Responsiveness		
Name of Caterer: Delicious Foods Catering		
	Yes	No
Caterer appears on the CCFP caterer list, serves county location of site.	X	
Caterer submitted bid by the deadline.	X	
Caterer accurately completed and signed Attachment 7, Price Schedule: • Columns 3 and 4 are completed. • Grand Total calculated correctly. • Caterer information at bottom of form is complete.	X	
Caterer has completed and signed bottom half of Attachment 8, Conflict of Interest Questionnaire.	X	

You must check the math on each bid to ensure the totals match what was submitted. *Below is an example of how this is done:*

Type of Meal	Estimated Total No. of Meals per Day	X (Multiplied by)	Estimated No. of Serving Days per Year	X (Multiplied by)	Unit Price per Meal	= (Equals)	Total unit meal price
Breakfast	150	X	260	X	90¢	=	\$ 35,100
Lunch	200	X	260	X	\$ 2.00	=	\$ 104,000
Snack	150	X	260	X	70¢	=	\$ 27,300
Add the total unit meal price column to ensure the accuracy of the grand total bid:							\$ 166,400

6. Determine if Bid Approval from CCFP Nutrition Team is Needed

Approval from the CCFP Nutrition team is required if:

- Initial bids from **any** of the caterers responding total \$50,000 or more.
- Less than three bids received.

The following documentation must be sent to the Nutrition team for approval at:

CateringContractInbox@flhealth.gov:

1. Name of Institution or Facility, authorization number, contact information.
2. Copies of email(s) showing it was sent to **all** caterers in service area (if less than three bids received)
3. Any state approved amendments/addendums included with bid request to caterers (must include approval email from Nutrition team)
4. One copy of the Informal Bid Request Packet sent to all caterers (Attachments 5, 6, 7, 8, and chosen menu)
5. Copies of all bids received – completed Attachment 7, Price Schedule
6. Copies of completed Attachment 8 - Conflict of Interest Questionnaire
7. Email including brief explanation for evaluation of preferred caterer.

Approval is required before:

- You sign the contract; pursuant to 7 CFR §226.21(a)(7).
- Any CCFP reimbursement for associated catered meals may be claimed or paid.

The CCFP Nutrition team will provide an approval email within 10 working days after a completed request for procurement approval is received.

Please note: Sponsors must submit the required documentation listed above to the CCFP Nutrition team, on behalf of a site that procures its own Catering Contract.

7. Award, Sign and Submit Catering Contract

Once you receive the procurement approval email, contact the selected caterer, and execute (sign) the Contract.

- **Do not** execute (sign) Contract prior to obtaining bids or prior to obtaining CCFP Nutrition team approval if necessary (any bid totals \$50,000 or more, or less than three bids received).

Email a copy of the complete, executed Catering Contract (pages 1-21, chosen menu, Attachments 1-11) to the Nutrition team, cateringcontractinbox@flhealth.gov.

Informal Competitive Procurement Procedure Checklist

The checklist below is provided to ensure accuracy and completeness when following the informal procedure for obtaining catered meal service.

Step 1: Attestation	Yes	No
Reviewed Procurement Requirements Guide; signed, dated Attestation (included with bid approval request E-mailed to Nutrition team)		
Step 2: Obtain Bids for Catered Meals	Yes	No
Identified CCFP caterers from caterer list to solicit bids from.		
Chose State Cycle Menu (any changes were approved by the CCFP Nutrition team)		
Completed Attachment 5, Meal Services to be Provided.		
Completed Attachment 6, Delivery Schedule. Delivery time is not greater than 3 hours before hot meal service.		
Completed top portion and columns 1 & 2 of Attachment 7, Price Schedule.		
Completed top portion of Attachment 8, Conflict of Interest Questionnaire.		
E-mailed a copy of completed Attachments 5, 6, 7, 8 and chosen menu to caterers in service area to request bids.		
Received bids from at least three CCFP listed caterers.		
Step 3: Identify Preferred Caterer	Yes	No
Evaluated bids from caterers and identified the responsive, responsible caterer as the preferred bidder.		
Step 4: Seek Approval from CCFP Nutrition Team (if applicable)	Yes	No
Submitted the following documents to CCFP Nutrition team for procurement procedure approval (required when any of the bids received are \$50,000 or higher or less than three bids received): 1. Bid request packet sent to caterers (Attachments 5, 6, 7, 8, chosen menu) 2. Bids received (completed Attachment 7 and 8) 3. Copy of bid request email sent to all caterers in service area, showing email addresses sent to (include when less than three bids received)		
Received approval email from the CCFP Nutrition team for catered meal reimbursement.		
Step 5: Award, Prepare and Sign Standard Catering Contract	Yes	No
Contacted caterer to schedule time to meet, complete, and sign contract.		
Filled in Institution/Facility and caterer name – page 1.		
Checked box for “initial contract” –page 21		

Award, Prepare and Sign Standard Catering Contract (<i>continued</i>)	Yes	No
Both parties signed Contract signature page – page 21		
Removed the Attachment 2 page submitted to caterer for bids and inserted Cycle Menu of choice.		
Included completed Attachment 5 (sent to caterer as part of bid request)		
Included completed Attachment 6 (sent to caterer as part of bid request)		
Included Attachment 7, Price Schedule (completed by both parties)		
Included completed Attachment 8, Conflict of Interest Questionnaire (top half completed by Institution/Facility, bottom half completed by caterer)		
Provided a copy of the entire (pages 1-21, attachments 1-11, chosen menu) completed and signed contract to the caterer.		
Submitted a copy of the entire Contract (pages 1-21, attachments 1-11, chosen menu) to the CCFP Nutrition Team, cateringcontractinbox@flhealth.gov		
Filed original Contract on-site for future CCFP monitoring reviews.		
Notified remaining caterers that submitted a bid with the outcome of the award.		

Bid Evaluation- Informal Procurement- *Optional*

Name of Organization/Site: _____

Authorization Number.: _____ Date of Bid Review: _____

Evaluation Checklist for Caterer Responsiveness		
Name of Caterer:		
	Yes	No
Caterer appears on the CCFP caterer list, serves county location of site		
Caterer submitted bid by the deadline		
Caterer accurately completed and signed Attachment 7, Price Schedule: • Columns 3 and 4 are completed • Grand total calculated correctly • Caterer information at bottom of form is complete		
Caterer has completed and signed bottom half of Attachment 8, Conflict of Interest Questionnaire.		

Definitions

1. Addendum: An agreed upon addition of a contract signed by all parties to the original contract which details the specific terms, clauses and sections and definitions to be changed in the contract, but otherwise leaves it in full force.
2. Amendment: A formal or official change made to the Catering Contract which can add, remove, or update parts of the agreement, which may modify the terms of the contract.
3. Approved Food Sources: Food purchased from an entity that is under the regulatory authority of a state or federal agency.
4. Bid: A formal or informal offer to perform catering service in accordance with the specifications and conditions of the governing contract for a set, stated price.
5. Bulk food (bulk): Ready-to-eat foods that will be portioned by Institution or Facility before serving.
6. Child care center: Any public or private nonprofit Institution or Facility (except day care homes), or any for-profit center that is licensed or approved to provide nonresidential child care services to enrolled children, primarily of preschool age, including but not limited to day care centers, neighborhood centers, Head Start centers, and organizations providing day care services for children with disabilities. Child care centers may participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program authorized by Section 17 of the National School Lunch Act (the Program) as independent centers or under the auspices of a sponsoring organization.
7. Child Care Food Program (CCFP): The portion of the Child and Adult Care Food Program enacted in Section 17 of the National School Lunch Act authorizing assistance to states through grants-in-aid and other means to initiate, maintain, and expand non-profit food service programs for children in nonresidential institutions that provide care. The CCFP is intended to enable such institutions to integrate a nutritious food service with organized care services for enrolled participants. Reimbursement payments for allowable costs are made under the CCFP by the state to the Institution that in turn is required to pay for meals received.
8. Competitive sealed bid (formal competitive procedure): A method of procurement whereby two or more sealed bids are publicly solicited, and a firm fixed-price contract is awarded to the responsive, responsible bidder whose bid, conforming to all the material terms and conditions of the solicitation, is the preferred caterer, based upon Child Care Food Program (CCFP) criteria.
9. Contract: A legally enforceable agreement duly executed by the authorized representative of the Institution or Facility and the Caterer that calls for the provision of meals, supplies and services by the Caterer in accordance with all the conditions and specifications in the contract for a price to be paid by the Institution. The contract is solely between the Institution or Facility and the Caterer. The CCFP is in no way liable as an active participant in or a party to the Catering Contract between the Caterer and Institution.
10. Cycle menu: A standard list of food items organized into daily meals meeting the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) meal pattern. Cycle Menus are provided in specific sequence and arrangement to vary the diet of CCFP participants and remain in compliance with the USDA meal pattern standards.

11. Executed contract: A contract that has been signed and dated by both parties (authorized representatives of the Institution or Facility and Caterer). In those instances where the bid price for service under the original contract equals or exceeds \$50,000, if such contract is intended to support claims for CCFP meal reimbursement, it may not be executed until it is approved by the CCFP State office and must be so approved prior to the parties executing and commencing service under that contract for CCFP meal disbursements.
12. Facility: A sponsored child care center.
13. Fixed-price contract: A contract in which the Caterer is paid at a set or fixed rate per meal for a specific period of time.
14. Florida Department of Health (Department): The principal administrative unit that protects and promotes the health of all people in Florida through organized state and community efforts, including cooperative agreements with counties.
15. Food Grade Storage Container: A container made of materials and products that have been determined suitable and safe to come into contact with food and beverages by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The material undergoes extensive testing to insure it doesn't affect the color, odor, taste, or safety of the food or leach substances into the food. It is important to note that a food-grade material is only considered food-safe if it is utilized per its intended use.
16. Food service management company: Also known as caterer — An organization other than a public or private nonprofit school, with which an Institution or Facility may contract for preparing and, unless otherwise provided for, delivering meals, with or without milk for use in the CCFP
17. Highly susceptible population: As defined in the FDA Food Code and adopted by reference in Florida Administrative Code Rule 61C-1.001, means persons who are more likely than other people in the general population to experience foodborne disease because they are preschool age children and obtaining food at a facility that provides services, such as child day care center.
18. Informal competitive procedure: A method of obtaining catered meal service by requesting price quotations for meals.
19. Institution: A sponsoring organization, child care center, at-risk afterschool care center, outside school hours care center, or emergency shelter which enters into an agreement with the Department of Health to assume final administrative and financial responsibility for Program operations.
20. Licensing or permitting authority: Includes the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulations (DBPR) which regulates restaurants, most mobile food vehicles, and most public food service events; the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) that generally regulates whole-sale food operations, convenience stores, grocery stores, food processing operations, food storage or warehouse operations, and non-alcoholic beverage operations; and the Florida Department of Health which regulates food service establishments such as food service operations located in institutional settings (schools, assisted living facilities, detention facilities, adult day care, etc.), civic and fraternal organizations, bars and lounges that do not prepare food, and theatres, to help ensure their products are not a source of foodborne illness.
21. Noncompetitive negotiation: Procurement through solicitation of a proposal from only one or a very limited number of sources or after solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined to be inadequate.
22. Potentially hazardous food: Any food that requires time-temperature control (refrigeration or hot holding) and contains in whole or in part: milk, milk products, eggs, meat, poultry, fish, cooked plant food (rice, beans, vegetables, and baked potatoes), tofu, other soy -protein products, mushrooms, cut melon, and cut tomatoes.

- 23. Pre-assembled: Foods that are delivered as ready to eat items and do not require the Institution or Facility to assemble onsite, such as sandwiches, wraps, tacos, etc.
- 24. Preferred Caterer: The selected caterer as established by the procuring party, based on criteria such as meal services to be provided, delivery promptness, lowest bid, and other factors deemed necessary.
- 25. Responsive bidder: A Caterer that appears on the CCFP Caterer List who has submitted a response to an Invitation to Bid for catering services.
- 26. Responsive potential Caterer: A Caterer that appears on the CCFP Caterer List who has submitted a response to a solicitation for a bid for catering services.
- 27. Sponsoring organization: As defined by 7 C.F.R. § 226.2, a public or nonprofit private organization that is entirely responsible for administration of the CCFP in one or more day care homes; a child care center, emergency shelter, at-risk afterschool care center, or outside-school hours care center that is a legally district entity from the sponsoring organization; two or more child care centers, emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, or outside-school-hours care center; or any combination of child care centers, emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, outside-school-hours care centers, and day care homes; or an organization that is entirely responsible for administration of the CCFP in any combination of two or more child care centers, at-risk afterschool care centers, or outside-school-hours care centers, which are part of the same legal entity as the sponsoring organization.
- 28. Thermal transport container: Insulated food transport containers suitable to transport hot or cold food safely at proper temperatures for at least four hours without electricity.
- 29. Unitized food: Ready-to-eat, pre-portioned foods.

Child Care Food Program
ATTESTATION

2025-2026 Informal Procurement Requirements for Catered Meal Service

By signing below, I certify that I have read and understood the 2025-2026 Informal Procurement Requirements Guide for Catered Meal Service. I also certify that I have followed proper competitive procurement procedures as required by the Child Care Food Program.

Organization Name:		
Authorization Number:		
Check if Sponsored Site:	YES	NO
CCFP Program Manager:		
	<i>Printed Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Date:		
Other Organization Official if Applicable:		