



Media Contact:
Nichole Tillman, 215-888-2869

PHA's Summer Food Program Ready to Roll Again

(Philadelphia, PA – June 16, 2015) – The Philadelphia Housing Authority's (PHA) Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) will once again offer breakfast and lunch, in addition to comprehensive summer youth enrichment activities.

The SFSP program begins on **Monday, June 27 and runs until Friday, August 26.** SFSP will be held at 19 PHA sites throughout the City and provide 40 part-time jobs for PHA clients and local residents. Hours of operation are Monday thru Friday **8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

The agency's Community Operations and Resident Development department (CORD) manages this highly successful program, which takes the place of the school lunch program and provides young people with access to good, nutritional meals. Last year, SFSP reached new heights when it provided over 68,600 meals to children ages 3 to 18 from public housing sites and the surrounding neighborhoods.

"Many families in Philadelphia depend upon the Summer Food Service Program," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. "It's important that our young people have access to good, nutritional meals. That is why PHA is pleased to sponsor this program with a contribution over \$350,000 of its own funds to the program this year."

PHA is one of several large sponsors of the program in the City, which provides breakfast and lunch to youth. Children who do not live near a participating PHA site can still go to a neighboring site or one of 150 sites operated by the City's Department of Parks and Recreation, which will offer similar meals.

Each year the program provides employment opportunities for PHA residents. These jobs include program monitors, site supervisors, food services workers, a field supervisor, and an accountant. Overall, in 2015, the program provided 40 jobs for PHA clients and local residents.

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Philadelphia is the poorest big city in America with a poverty rate of 26 percent according to the Census Bureau. Nearly 37 percent of the city's children live in poverty. The federal poverty line for a family of four is \$24,300. Over 12 percent of people living here are in deep poverty, meaning they take in \$12,150 annually or less. That's 186,000 people with 60,000 of that group being children.

The housing authority plans to host the program at the following sites this year: Abbottsford Homes, Arch Homes, Bartram Village, Cambridge/John F. Street Center, Champlost, Fairhill, Haddington Homes, Harrison Plaza, Hill Creek, Johnson Homes, Morton Homes, Norris Apartments, Oxford Village, Paschall Village, Raymond Rosen, Spring Garden, West Park Apartments, Whitehall, and Wilson Park.

Residents, including those who were formerly served at Blumberg and Queen Lane Apartments, can go online to the USDA website at (www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks) to locate the Summer Food locations closest to them. Residents can also look for the site nearest to them at (www.phila.gov/youthprograms/meals/Pages/default.aspx), (www.hungercoalition.org/summermeals), or by texting "FOOD" or "MEALPA" to 877-877, or calling 1-855-252-MEAL.

SFSP is a reimbursement-based grant program funded by the United States Department of Agriculture, through Pennsylvania's Department of Education. The intent of this program is to provide free breakfast, lunch, and/or snacks to children 18-years-old and under. For more information about participating in PHA's Summer Food Service Program, call 215-684-3959.

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The Philadelphia Housing Authority is the nation's 4th largest housing authority, serving nearly 80,000 residents. PHA is also a major real estate developer. Learn more at www.pha.phila.gov.