1. Congress
Creates laws that govern the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

2. USDA
Interprets laws and develops regulation.

3. State Agencies
Implement and expand regulations in their state.
Monitor and disburse reimbursement to sponsoring organizations and independent centers.

4. Sponsoring Organizations
Oversee and monitor providers to ensure they follow State and Federal guidelines.
Provide technical assistance and disburse reimbursement to providers.

5. Child and Adult Care Providers
Serve nutritious meals and snacks to those in their care.

Definitions
Law
Passed by both houses of Congress and signed by the president.

Regulation
Federal agencies develop more details and guidelines in the Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) to implement the law. The regulation is comprised of many different rules.

Rule
Regulations are created through a rule-making process, which includes a proposed rule, a comment period, and a final rule. Once the final rule is issued, it becomes part of regulation.

Guidance
Agencies publish supplementary materials that clarify existing rules. Guidance can be helpful and outline best practices, but they are not legally binding.