

Nutrition Policies and Guidance for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)



Accommodating Special Diets IN CACFP ADULT DAY CARE CENTERS



March 2018

**Connecticut State Department of Education
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education
450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504
Hartford, CT 06103-1841**

ACCOMMODATING SPECIAL DIETS IN CACFP ADULT DAY CARE PROGRAMS

Connecticut State Department of Education • March 2018

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) *Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers* provides guidance on meal modifications for adult participants with special dietary needs CACFP adult day care centers. This guide provides information on the requirements for meal modifications for adult participants whose disability restricts their diet, based on the federal nondiscrimination laws and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations. It also addresses optional modifications for adult participants without disabilities who have other dietary needs.

Each section of the guide contains links to other sections when appropriate, and to websites with relevant information and resources. These can be accessed by clicking on the blue text throughout the guide.

Due to the complicated nature of some issues regarding feeding adult participants with special dietary needs, CACFP adult day care centers are encouraged to contact the CSDE for assistance on a case-by-case basis. For questions regarding this information, please contact the CSDE CACFP staff (see "[CSDE Contact Information](#)" on the next page).

The mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations does not imply approval or endorsement by the CSDE or the USDA.

The contents of this guide are subject to change. The CSDE will update this guide as the USDA issues additional policies and guidance for the CACFP. Please check the CSDE's [Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage for the most current version.

For more information on this guide, contact Susan S. Fiore, M.S., R.D., Nutrition Education Coordinator, at susan.fiore@ct.gov or 860-807-2075.

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CSDE CONTACT INFORMATION

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
APP	alternate protein product
APRN	advanced practice registered nurse
CACFP	Child and Adult Care Food Program
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CNP	Child Nutrition Programs
CSDE	Connecticut State Department of Education
DPH	Connecticut State Department of Public Health
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FNS	Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture
PHC	Public Health Code
PKU	phenylketonuria
QFO	qualified food operator
RD	registered dietitian
SOP	standard operating procedure
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture

1 – Overview

All CACFP adult day care centers must comply with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) nondiscrimination regulations ([7 CFR 15b](#)) and CACFP regulations ([7 CFR 226](#)) for accommodating participants with special dietary needs. The USDA requirements for special dietary accommodations are different for participants with and without disabilities. This guide summarizes the federal nondiscrimination laws and USDA regulations that determine these requirements, and includes recent USDA guidance that updates the requirements for meal modifications, as indicated in [USDA Memo CACFP 14-2017 SFSP 10-2017: Modifications to Accommodate Disabilities in CACFP and SFSP](#).

Due to the complicated nature of some issues regarding feeding participants with special dietary needs, CACFP adult day care centers are encouraged to contact the CSDE for assistance on a case-by-case basis. For more information, see “[CSDE Contact Information](#)” at the beginning of this guide.



NONDISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION

Federal nondiscrimination laws and regulations contain provisions that require CACFP adult day care centers to make reasonable meal modifications on a case-by-case basis for participants whose disability restricts their diet. These laws include:

- [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) (Section 504);
- the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) of 1990](#), including changes made by the [ADA Amendments Act of 2008](#); and
- the USDA nondiscrimination regulations ([7 CFR 15b](#)).

The USDA regulations for the CACFP ([7 CFR 226.20\(g\)](#)) require reasonable meal modifications for participants whose disability restricts their diet, based on a written medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. **Requests for a reasonable meal modification must be related to a participant’s disabling condition.** For information on what constitutes a disability and the requirements for meal modifications for participants with disabilities, see [section 2](#).

1 | OVERVIEW

Section 504, the IDEA, the ADA, and the ADA Amendments Act are laws that protect individuals with disabilities from discrimination.

- Section 504 prohibits discrimination on the basis of a disability in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance, such as the Child Nutrition Programs.
- The ADA guarantees equal opportunity and access for individuals with disabilities in employment, public accommodations, transportation, state and local governments, and telecommunications.
- The ADA Amendments Act prohibits discrimination based on disability in the provision of state and local government services, including services provided by public schools, and prohibits discrimination based on disability by private entities offering public accommodations, including private schools. Title II of the ADA Amendments Act prohibits discrimination based on a disability in the provision of state and local government services, such as public schools. Title III of the ADA Amendments Act prohibits discrimination based on a disability by private entities that provide public accommodations, including adult day care centers. The ADA Amendments Act greatly expands the concept of who is disabled. It requires that a disability must be viewed more broadly to encompass more impairments that limit a major life activity and therefore require an accommodation.
- The USDA nondiscrimination regulations prohibit discrimination against participants with disabilities in any USDA program or activity. The USDA nondiscrimination regulations 7 CFR 15b.26(d) requires recipients of federal financial assistance, such as CACFP adult day care centers, to serve special meals at no extra charge to participants whose disability restricts their diet.
- The USDA regulations for the CACFP ([7 CFR 226.20\(g\)](#)) require reasonable meal modifications for participants whose disability restricts their diet, based on a written medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. Requests for a reasonable meal modification must be related to an adult's disabling condition.

A participant whose disability restricts their diet may be protected from discrimination under the provisions of one or more of these laws.



REQUIREMENTS FOR MEAL MODIFICATIONS

The USDA regulations for the CACFP require that all meals served to participants must comply with the CACFP adult meal patterns. However, food substitutions and other reasonable modifications to the CACFP adult meal patterns may be necessary to meet the dietary needs of v who:

- qualify as having a disability under any of the federal nondiscrimination laws; or
- do not qualify as having a disability under any of the federal nondiscrimination laws but have other special dietary needs.

Examples of possible modifications include food restrictions, food substitutions, texture changes (e.g., pureed, ground, chopped, or thickened liquids), increased or decreased calories, and tube feedings. Modifications to the meal service may also involve ensuring facilities and personnel are adequate to provide necessary services.

In certain situations, disability accommodations may require additional equipment; separate or designated storage or preparation areas, surfaces, or utensils; and specific staff training and expertise. For example, some participants may require the physical assistance of an aide to consume their meal, while other participants may need assistance tracking their dietary intake, e.g., carbohydrate intake for participants with diabetes.

[Table 1](#) helps CACFP adult day care centers determine when meal modifications are required.

Participants with Disabilities

The USDA nondiscrimination regulations ([7 CFR 15b](#)) and CACFP regulations ([7 CFR 226.20\(g\)](#)) require that CACFP adult day care centers make reasonable modifications on a case-by-case basis for participants whose disability restricts their diet, when a recognized medical authority certifies the need. A “reasonable modification” is a change or alteration in policies, practices, and/or procedures to accommodate a disability that ensures participants with disabilities have equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from a program. The general guideline in making accommodations is that participants with disabilities must be able to participate in and receive benefits from programs that are available to participants without disabilities.

Meal modifications must be related to the disability or limitations caused by the disability, and require a medical statement from a state-licensed healthcare professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under state law. The Connecticut State Department of Public Health (DPH) defines recognized medical authorities as physicians, physician assistants, doctors of osteopathy, and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), i.e., nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, and certified nurse anesthetists who are licensed as APRNs.

All disability considerations must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For information on what constitutes a disability and the requirements for meal modifications, see [section 2](#).

Participants without Disabilities

The CACFP regulations ([7 CFR 226.20\(g\)](#)) allow, but do not require, meal modifications for participants whose special dietary needs do not constitute a disability, including those related to religious or moral convictions, general health concerns, and personal food preferences, such as a preference that a participant eats a gluten-free diet or organic foods because the participant or their family believes it is healthier. CACFP adult day care centers may choose to make these accommodations on a case-by-case basis.

All modified meals provided to participants without disabilities must comply with the CACFP adult meal patterns. For participants without disabilities, meals that do not meet the CACFP adult meal patterns cannot be claimed for reimbursement, even with a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority.

For information on the CACFP adult meal patterns, visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage and see the CSDE's guide, *Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers*.

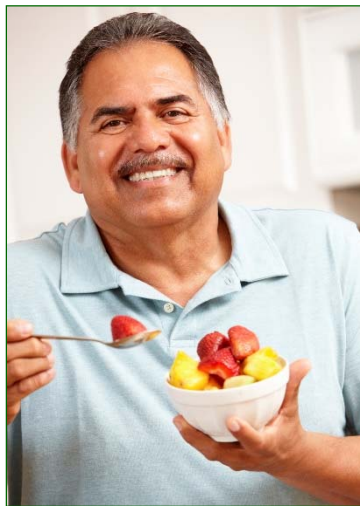
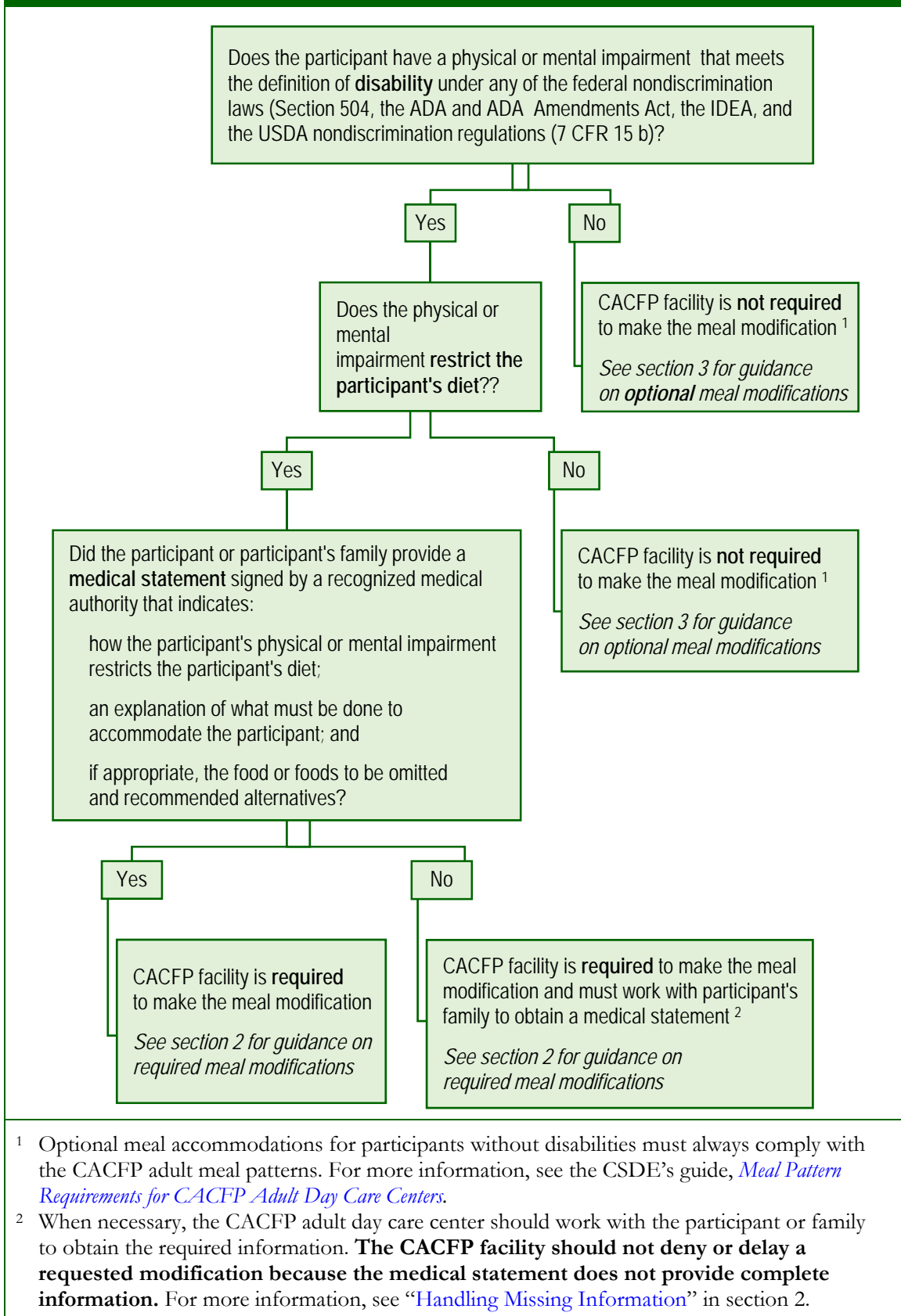


Table 1. Determining if Meal Accommodations Are Required



REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION FOR MEAL MODIFICATIONS

For participants with disabilities, modified meals that do not meet the CACFP adult meal patterns require a written medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. The medical statement must include three components:

- information about the participant’s physical or mental impairment that is sufficient to allow the CACFP adult day care center to understand how it restricts the participant’s diet;
- an explanation of what must be done to accommodate the participant’s disability; and
- if appropriate, the food or foods to be omitted and recommended alternatives.

The USDA does not require a medical statement for participants with disabilities if the modified meals meet the CACFP adult meal patterns, such as meals modified only for texture. However, the CSDE recommends obtaining a medical statement to ensure clear communication between participants, their families, medical professionals, and applicable program staff about the appropriate meal modifications for the participant. For more information, see “[Medical Statement Requirements](#)” in section 2.

Medical statements should provide sufficient information to allow CACFP adult day care centers to provide meals that are appropriate and safe for each participant and comply with the USDA requirements. When necessary, CACFP adult day care centers should work with the participant or family to obtain the required information. **However, CACFP adult day care centers should not deny or delay a requested meal modification because the medical statement does not provide sufficient information**, for example, the medical statement does not provide recommended alternatives or fully explain the needed modification for the participant. While obtaining additional information, the CACFP adult day care center should follow the portion of the medical statement that is clear and unambiguous to the greatest extent possible. For more information, see “[Handling Missing Information](#)” in section 2.

For participants without disabilities, optional modifications meet always meet the CACFP adult meal patterns. These meals are eligible for reimbursement regardless of whether the CACFP adult day care center obtains a medical statement. However, the CSDE recommends obtaining a medical statement to ensure clear communication between participants, families, medical professionals, and applicable adult day care center staff about the appropriate meal modifications for the participant.

MEAL PATTERNS

The CACFP adult meal patterns do not apply to modified meals for participants whose disability restricts their diet. **However, optional meal modifications for participants without disabilities must always comply with the CACFP adult meal patterns.** Meals that do not meet the CACFP adult meal patterns are ineligible for reimbursement. For information on the CACFP adult meal patterns, visit the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage and see the CSDE’s guide, *Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers*.

MEAL REIMBURSEMENT AND COST

CACFP adult day care centers cannot charge more for special meals served to participants with or without disabilities. Additional costs for substituted foods are allowable CACFP costs, but the USDA does not provide additional reimbursement. The USDA reimburses all CACFP meals at the same rate.

In most instances involving food substitutions, the costs of special food and food preparation equipment are allowable CACFP costs, and food service personnel will generally be responsible for providing the modified meal. For example, if a participant must have a pureed meal, it is reasonable to budget CACFP funds to purchase a blender or food processor and have the meal prepared by the food service staff.



For special procedures like tube feedings, proper administration generally requires the skills of specially trained personnel such as nurses or trained aides who regularly work with the participant. Adult day care centers may charge these costs to the CACFP or other non-CACFP funding sources, as appropriate.

PROCEDURES FOR MEAL MODIFICATIONS

The process of providing modified meals for participants with disabilities should be as inclusive as possible. It is essential that the CACFP adult day care center works together with the participant's or the participant's family to ensure the participant receives a safe meal and has an equal opportunity to participate in the CACFP.

Team Approach

The USDA strongly encourages CACFP adult day care centers to implement a team approach when providing modifications for participants with disabilities. Developing a team that includes individuals from the sponsoring organization or center and the Section 504 Coordinator (if one is available) will help ensure consistent decisions, implementation, and tracking of meal modifications. The most effective team may also include other individuals with training in this area, such as a nurse or registered dietitian. Any request for a modification related to the meal or meal service should be reviewed by the team and forwarded to the Section 504 Coordinator, if one is available. Any medical information obtained by the team must be kept confidential.

The team will work with the participant or family to review the request and develop a solution as quickly as possible. The USDA encourages the team to develop policies and practices that allow the CACFP adult day care center to quickly and consistently address the most commonly encountered disabilities. For more information on developing policies, see [section 5](#).

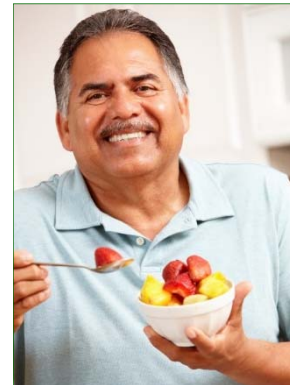
Communicating with Participants and Families

USDA nondiscrimination regulations ([7 CFR 15b.7](#)) require CACFP adult day care centers to notify participants and families of the process for requesting meal modifications and the individual responsible for coordinating modifications. Methods of initial and continuing notification may include:

- posting of notices;
- placement of notices in relevant publications;
- radio announcements; and
- other visual and auditory media.

As part of this notification, CACFP adult day care centers should explain when participants or their families need to submit supporting documentation for the modification request. For participants with disabilities, the USDA requires a medical statement for CACFP facilities to receive reimbursement for meal modifications that do not follow the CACFP adult meal patterns.

The CSDE strongly encourages CACFP adult day care centers to develop written policies for meal modifications that provide clear guidelines for families and staff. For more information, see “[Procedural Safeguards](#)” and “[Policies for Meal Modifications](#)” in section 5.



Communicating with Food Service Personnel

Close communication between health services staff and food service personnel is essential to ensure that participants receive appropriate meal modifications. CACFP adult day care centers must establish procedures for identifying participants with special dietary needs and providing this information to the staff responsible for feeding the participants.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) permits the disclosure of personal health information needed for patient care and other important purposes. Copies of participants’ medical statements can be shared with CACFP food service personnel for the purposes of accommodating special diets. CACFP food service personnel should have access to this information to allow them to make the appropriate dietary accommodations for each participant. The CSDE recommends that CACFP adult day care centers inform families about this sharing of information.

For some conditions, such as food allergies, it may be appropriate for CACFP adult day care centers to maintain information for food service personnel in the form of a list identifying the participants and the food restrictions, along with the appropriate substitutions designated by each participant’s medical statement. This list would be adequate to document the substitutions in the CACFP adult meal patterns if the adult day care center has the original signed medical statements on file. The CSDE evaluates documentation for meal modifications as part of the Administrative Review of the CACFP.

SUMMARY OF CACFP RESPONSIBILITIES

CACFP adult day care centers are responsible for providing meals to all participants, including those with disabilities. The following summarizes the responsibilities of CACFP personnel regarding modifications for meals in adult day care centers.

Meal Pattern Substitutions

- CACFP adult day care centers must make reasonable meal modifications on a case-by-case basis for participants whose disability restricts their diet, based on a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. For more information, see [section 2](#).
 - a. If modified meals for a participant with a disability meet the CACFP adult meal patterns, the USDA does not require CACFP adult day care centers to obtain a medical statement but strongly recommends that CACFP adult day care centers keep documentation on file acknowledging the participant’s disability. The CSDE recommends obtaining a medical statement to ensure clear communication between families and CACFP adult day care centers about the appropriate meal modifications for each participant.
- CACFP adult day care centers are encouraged, but not required, to provide meal modifications on a case-by-case basis for participants without disabilities who have special dietary needs. All meal modifications for participants without disabilities must comply with the CACFP adult meal patterns. For more information, see [section 3](#).
- CACFP adult day care centers must have documentation on file for all meal modifications that do not comply with the CACFP adult meal patterns. For more information, see “[Storage and Updates of Medical Statements](#)” in section 2.
 - The USDA does not require CACFP adult day care centers to obtain a medical statement for modified meals that meet the CACFP adult meal patterns, even if a participant has a disability. However, the CSDE recommends obtaining a medical statement to ensure clear communication between families and CACFP adult day care centers about the appropriate meal modifications for each participant.
 - CACFP adult day care centers should not deny or delay a requested modification because the medical statement does not provide complete information. For more information, see “[Handling Missing Information](#)” in section 2.
- Under no circumstances should food service personnel revise or change a diet prescription or medical order. CACFP adult day care centers must follow the instructions written by the recognized medical authority in the participant’s medical statement.

For guidance on determining when CACFP adult day care centers are required to make meal modifications, see “[Requirements for Meal Modifications](#)” and [table 1](#) in this section.

Accessibility

USDA nondiscrimination regulations (7 CFR 15 b.26(d)(2)) specify that where existing food service facilities are not completely accessible and usable, CACFP adult day care centers may provide aides or use other equally effective methods to serve food to participants with disabilities. The CACFP adult day care center is responsible for the accessibility of food service sites and for ensuring the provision of aides when needed.

As with additional costs for meal modifications, any additional costs for adaptive feeding equipment or aides are allowable CACFP costs. However, the USDA does not provide additional reimbursement.

Regulations also require that CACFP adult day care centers provide food services in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the participant with disabilities. For more information, see “[Appropriate Eating Areas](#)” in section 2.

Cooperation

CACFP food service personnel should work closely with participants, family members, and all other center and medical staff, and community personnel who are responsible for the health, well-being and education of participants with disabilities or with other special dietary needs, to ensure that the CACFP adult day care center makes reasonable modifications to allow their participation in the meal service. This cooperation is particularly important when accommodating participants whose disabilities require significant modifications or personal assistance. For more information, see “[Team Approach](#)” and “[Communicating with Families](#)” in this section.

RESOURCES FOR SPECIAL DIETS

The Institute of Child Nutrition’s *Special Needs Facts Sheets* provide guidance on meeting special dietary needs. For more resources, see [section 6](#) and the CSDE’s [Special Diets](#) resource list.

2 — Modifications for Participants with Disabilities

The USDA nondiscrimination regulations (7 CFR 15b) and CACFP regulations (7 CFR 226.20(g)) require that CACFP adult day care centers make reasonable modifications on a case-by-case basis for participants whose disability restricts their diet, when a recognized medical authority certifies the need. Meal modifications must be related to the disability or limitations caused by the disability and require a medical statement from a state-licensed healthcare professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under state law.

- A **reasonable modification** is a change or alteration in policies, practices, and/or procedures to accommodate a disability that ensures participants with disabilities have equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from a program. The general guideline in making accommodations is that participants with disabilities must be able to participate in and receive benefits from programs that are available to participants without disabilities.
- A **recognized medical authority** is a state-licensed health care professional authorized to write medical prescriptions under state law, and recognized by the State Department of Public Health. The Connecticut State Department of Public Health (DPH) defines recognized medical authorities as physicians, physician assistants, doctors of osteopathy, and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), i.e., nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, and certified nurse anesthetists who are licensed as APRNs.

All disability considerations must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Examples of conditions that might require meal modifications include, but are not limited to:

- autism;
- cancer;
- celiac disease;
- cerebral palsy;
- diabetes;
- food allergies;
- food intolerances, e.g., lactose intolerance and gluten intolerance;
- heart disease;
- metabolic disorders;
- phenylketonuria (PKU);
- seizure disorder;
- severe obesity; and
- certain temporary disabilities (see “[Temporary Disabilities](#)” in this section).



These examples of medical conditions are not all-inclusive and may not require meal modifications for all participants.

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

Each federal law specifies the definition of a person with a disability. The definitions under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the ADA (including the ADA Amendments Act), and the USDA nondiscrimination regulations are summarized below.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA, a “person with a disability” means any person who 1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, 2) has a record of such an impairment, or 3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

The [final rule](#) (28 CFR Parts 35 and 36) for the ADA Amendments Act includes examples of diseases and conditions that may qualify an individual for protection under Section 504 or the ADA, if the disease or condition meets the qualifying criteria for a physical or mental impairment under Section 504 or the ADA. This list is not all-inclusive.

- orthopedic, visual, speech, and hearing impairments;
- cerebral palsy;
- epilepsy;
- muscular dystrophy;
- multiple sclerosis;
- cancer;
- heart disease;
- diabetes;
- intellectual disability;
- emotional illness;
- dyslexia and other specific learning disabilities;
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder;
- Human Immunodeficiency Virus infection (whether symptomatic or asymptomatic);
- tuberculosis; and
- drug addiction and alcoholism. **Note:** An individual who is currently engaging in the illegal use of drugs, when an institution acts based on such use, is not a protected individual with a disability under either Section 504 or the ADA. This exclusion does not include individuals currently participating in, or who have successfully completed, a supervised drug rehabilitation program and are no longer engaging in such drug use.

The final rule for the ADA Amendments Act defines “major life activities” as including, but not being limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, sitting, reaching, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, writing, communicating, interacting with others, and working.

“Major life activities” also include the operation of a major bodily function including, but not limited to, functions of the immune system, special sense organs and skin, normal cell growth, and digestive, genitourinary, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, cardiovascular, endocrine, hemic, lymphatic, musculoskeletal, and reproductive systems. The operation of a major bodily function includes the operation of an individual organ within a body system.

The ADA Amendments Act specifically prohibits a “mitigating measure” from being used to deny an individual with a disability protection under Section 504. For example, if a participant’s diabetes can be controlled through insulin and diet, the participant may still qualify for protection because the mitigating measures (insulin) cannot be considered in determining qualification. However, the Section 504 team may use mitigating measures to determine the accommodations needed for the child.



USDA Nondiscrimination Regulations

While the USDA regulations use the term “handicapped” to refer to people with disabilities, this guide uses the terms “disability” and “disabilities” because they are consistent with the current language used in the definitions under Section 504, the ADA and ADA Amendments Act, and the IDEA.

The USDA nondiscrimination regulations 7 CFR 15b.3 provide the following definition for handicapped person:

“Handicapped Person” means any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment.

“Physical or mental impairment” means 1) any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genitourinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or 2) any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities. The term “physical or mental impairment” includes, but is not limited to, such diseases and conditions as orthopedic, visual, speech and hearing impairments; cerebral palsy; epilepsy; muscular dystrophy; multiple sclerosis; cancer; heart disease; diabetes; mental retardation; emotional illness; and drug addiction and alcoholism.

“Major life activities” means functions such as caring for one’s self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working.

“Has a record of such impairment” means has a history of, or has been misclassified as having, a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

“Is regarded as having an impairment” means 1) has a physical or mental impairment that does not substantially limit major life activities but that is treated by a recipient as constituting such a limitation; 2) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits major life activities only as a result of the attitudes of others towards such impairments; or 3) has none of the impairments defined in “physical and mental impairment” above, but is treated by a recipient as having such an impairment.

The USDA regulations require meal modifications for participants whose disability restricts their diet. This applies to all participants whose physical and mental impairments meet the definition of disability under any of the federal laws, including Section 504, the ADA and ADA Amendments Act, the IDEA, and the USDA nondiscrimination regulations. **Under the ADA Amendments Act, most physical and mental impairments will constitute a disability.**

DETERMINING WHAT CONSTITUTES A DISABILITY

The determination of whether a participant has a disability is based on the federal laws (Section 504, the ADA and ADA Amendments Act, and the USDA nondiscrimination regulations) and a recognized medical authority's diagnosis of the participant's medical condition. The medical statement indicates if the participant has a disability (physical or mental impairment) that restricts their diet.

CACFP adult day care centers can determine if a participant requires a meal modification by reviewing Question 10 in section B of the CSDE's *Medical Statement for Meal Modifications in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers* form. Question 10 asks if the participant has a physical or mental impairment that restricts their diet. If the answer is "Yes," the CACFP adult day care center must make the meal modification. If the answer is "No," the CACFP adult day care center may choose to make meal modifications on a case-by-case basis.

Under the ADA Amendments Act, most physical and mental impairments will constitute a disability. This includes conditions that impair immune, digestive, neurological, and bowel functions, as well as many others. **All disability considerations must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.**

- Under the ADA Amendments Act, a physical or mental impairment does not need to be life threatening to constitute a disability. It is sufficient that it limits a major life activity. For example, a food intolerance, such as lactose intolerance or gluten intolerance, may be considered a disability if it substantially limits digestion, a bodily function that is a major life activity. A participant whose digestion is impaired by a food intolerance may be a person with a disability, regardless of whether consuming the food causes the participant severe distress.
- If a participant's condition is not listed under the ADA's categories of diseases and conditions, it cannot be assumed that the condition is not a disability. The ADA's categories of diseases and conditions are not all-inclusive; there are more conditions that meet the definition of disability than are listed in the law.
- The determination of whether a physical or mental impairment constitutes a disability must be made without regard for whether mitigating measures may reduce the impact of the impairment. An impairment may be covered as a disability even if medication or another mitigating measure may reduce the impact on the impairment. For example, the fact that a participant may be able to control an allergic reaction by taking medication should not be considered in determining whether the allergy is a disability.
- General health concerns and personal preferences, such as a preference that a participant eats a gluten-free diet or organic foods because the participant or family believes it is healthier, are not disabilities and do not require meal modifications. This also applies to preferences for nondairy milk substitutes (such as rice milk and almond milk) that do not comply with the USDA's Nutrition Standards for Fluid Milk

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Substitutes. CACFP adult day care centers can never serve noncompliant milk substitutes to participants without disabilities, even with a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. For more information, see [section 3](#).

Based on the ADA Amendments Act, CACFP adult day care centers should not engage in weighing medical evidence against the legal standard to determine whether a particular physical or mental impairment is severe enough to qualify as a disability. **The primary concern is ensuring equal opportunity for all participants to participate in or benefit from the CACFP.**

MEDICAL STATEMENT REQUIREMENTS

For participants with disabilities, the USDA requires that the medical statement to request meal modifications must include three components:

- information about the participant’s physical or mental impairment that is sufficient to allow the CACFP adult day care center to understand how it restricts the participant’s diet;
- an explanation of what must be done to accommodate the participant’s disability; and
- if appropriate, the food or foods to be omitted and recommended alternatives.

In some cases, more information may be required. For example, if the participant requires caloric modifications or the substitution of a liquid nutritive formula to accommodate a disability, the recognized medical authority should include this information in the medical statement.

The CSDE’s medical statement form and instructions assist CACFP adult day care centers with obtaining the information required by the USDA.

- *Medical Statement for Meal Modifications in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers:* <http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/AdultMedical.pdf>
- *Guidance and Instructions: Medical Statement for Meal Modifications in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers:* <http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/AdultMedicalinstr.pdf>

If CACFP adult day care centers use an alternate form, it must contain the three components required by the USDA. The adult day care center’s medical statement cannot require a specific diagnosis by name or use the term “disabled” or “disability.”

CACFP adult day care centers must make appropriate meal modifications for participants with disabilities based on the medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. Under no circumstances should CACFP food service personnel diagnose health conditions, perform nutritional assessment, prescribe nutritional requirements, or interpret, revise, or change a diet order from a recognized medical authority.

Assessing Requests

CACFP adult day care centers may consider expense and efficiency when choosing the most appropriate approach to accommodate a participant's disability. The USDA does not require CACFP adult day care centers to provide the exact substitution or other modification requested in the participant's medical statement. However, CACFP adult day care centers must work with the participant or family to offer a reasonable modification that effectively accommodates the participant's disability and provides equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from the CACFP.

For example, the medical statement for a participant with an allergy to a specific ingredient found in a menu item may request a specific brand-name version as a substitute. Generally, the CACFP adult day care center is not required to provide the identified brand-name item, but they must offer a substitute that does not contain the specific allergen that affects the participant. For more information, see "[Specific Brands of Food](#)" in this section.

When determining what constitutes an appropriate modification, CACFP adult day care centers should consider the mental capacity and physical ability of the participant. Some participants may need greater assistance with selecting and eating their meals, whereas others may be able to take a greater level of responsibility for some of their dietary decisions.

The USDA does not require CACFP adult day care centers to make modifications that would result in a fundamental alteration to the nature of the CACFP, such as expensive meal modifications that would make continued operation of the CACFP unfeasible. The expense of a modification is measured against the total resources available to the individual CACFP adult day care center.

When CACFP adult day care centers receive a very expensive meal modification request, they should first consider engaging in further dialogue with the participant or the participant's family. While CACFP adult day care centers are not required to provide the exact substitution or other modifications requested, they must work with the participant or family to offer a reasonable modification that effectively accommodates the participant's disability and provides equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from the CACFP.

Handling Missing Information

CACFP adult day care centers should not deny or delay a requested meal modification because the medical statement does not provide sufficient information, for example, the medical statement does not provide recommended alternatives or fully explain the needed modification for the participant. If the medical statement is unclear or lacks sufficient detail, the CACFP adult day care center must obtain appropriate clarification so the participant receives safe meals. When necessary, the CACFP adult day care center should work with the participant or family to obtain an amended medical statement.

While obtaining additional information, the CACFP adult day care center should follow the portion of the medical statement that is clear and unambiguous to the greatest extent possible. For example, if the medical statement indicates that a participant experiences respiratory

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distress when consuming eggs, but fails to identify recommended substitutes, the CACFP adult day care center should not serve eggs to the participant while awaiting additional information regarding appropriate substitutes.

While waiting for the participant or family to submit additional information or a revised medical statement for a participant with a disability, the USDA allows CACFP adult day care centers to claim reimbursement for modified meals that do not comply with the CACFP adult meal patterns. In this situation, the CACFP adult day care center must document the initial conversation when the participant or family first indicated the participant's need for a meal modification. The CACFP adult day care center should follow up with the participant or family if they do not receive the requested medical statement as anticipated, and maintain a record of this contact. The CACFP adult day care center should diligently continue to follow up with the participant or family until a medical statement is obtained or the request is rescinded.

Declining a Request

If the meal modification request is related to the participant's disabling condition, it is almost never appropriate for the CACFP adult day care center to decline the meal modification. The exception is a modification request that would fundamentally alter the nature of the USDA participant Nutrition Programs (see "[Assessing Requests](#)" on the previous page). Denying modifications under the fundamental alteration exception should not result in the denial of access to the CACFP or other benefits or services. **Before using this exception, CACFP adult day care centers should contact the CSDE for assistance with any concerns that a requested modification would fundamentally alter the nature of the CACFP.**

While CACFP adult day care centers are not required to provide the exact substitution or other modification requested, they must work with the participant or family to offer a reasonable modification that effectively accommodates the participant's disability and provides equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from the CACFP. Generally, the emphasis should be working the participant or family to develop an effective approach for the participant.

When considering a denial, the CACFP adult day care center must first ensure that the decision is being made according to policy at the sponsor, state, and federal levels. A small agency should coordinate these actions with their sponsoring organization, which has procedural safeguards and grievance procedures in place. **Any final decision regarding the modification request must be provided to the participant's family in writing.** For more information, see "[Procedural Safeguards](#)" in section 5.

Stopping a Request

If a participant no longer needs a meal modification, the USDA does not require CACFP adult day care centers to obtain written documentation from a recognized medical authority rescinding the original medical order prior to ending a meal modification. However, the USDA recommends that CACFP adult day care centers maintain documentation when ending a meal accommodation. For example, before ending the modification, the CACFP adult day care center could ask the participant or family to sign a statement indicating that their participant no longer needs a meal modification.

Storage and Updates of Medical Statements

The CACFP adult day care center should maintain all medical statements in a confidential manner with each participant's medical records, such as the yearly physical form. The USDA regulations do not specify time limits on medical statements or require CACFP adult day care centers to obtain updated medical statements on a regular basis. For information on the requirements for records retention, see [CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 08C-7 and 08H-07](#).

Since participants' special dietary needs may change over time, the CSDE strongly recommends that CACFP adult day care centers develop a plan for ensuring that the dietary information on file is current. For example, a CACFP adult day care center's policy could request an updated medical statement whenever a participant:

- has a physical;
- requires a new meal modification; or
- requires a change to an existing meal modification.



Any changes to diet orders for participants with disabilities must be in writing on a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. CACFP adult day care centers may require updates as necessary to meet their responsibilities. When establishing these requirements, the USDA recommends carefully considering the burden obtaining additional medical statements could create for participants or their families.

TEMPORARY DISABILITIES

The requirements for providing meal modifications for participants with disabilities apply regardless of the duration of the disability. If a disability is episodic and substantially limits a major life activity when active, CACFP adult day care centers must provide a reasonable modification based on the participant's medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. Whether a temporary impairment is a disability must be determined on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration both the duration (or expected duration) of the impairment and the extent to which it actually limits a major life activity of the affected individual.

If the condition is temporary, but severe and lasts for a significant duration, CACFP adult day care centers must provide a reasonable modification for the duration of the condition. An example of a temporary disability is a participant who had major oral surgery due to an accident and is unable to consume food for a significant period of time unless the texture is modified. The CACFP adult day care center must make the meal modification, even though the participant is not "permanently" disabled. Temporary illness or injury, such as a cold, the flu, or a minor broken bone, are generally not considered conditions that require reasonable meal modifications.

SPECIFIC BRANDS OF FOOD

The USDA does not require CACFP adult day care centers to provide the exact substitution or other modification requested in the participant’s medical statement, such as a specific brand of food. In most cases, a generic brand is sufficient.

For example, a participant’s medical statement for a food allergy might request a specific brand of food as a substitute. The CACFP adult day care center is generally not required to provide the requested brand of food, but must offer to provide a substitute that does not contain the specific allergen that affects the participant. The meal substitution can include any brand or type of food that meets the participant’s special dietary needs. For example, if the medical statement lists a specific brand of gluten-free chicken patty, appropriate substitutes might include a different gluten-free brand or a different gluten-free food item, such as:

- a different brand of gluten-free chicken patty that meets the participant’s special dietary needs;
- another type of chicken that meets the participant’s special dietary needs, e.g., gluten-free grilled or baked chicken; or
- another type of food that meets the participant’s special dietary needs, e.g., gluten-free hamburger or sliced turkey.



The CACFP adult day care center must work with the participant or family to offer a reasonable modification that effectively accommodates the participant’s disability and provides equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from the CACFP. CACFP adult day care centers may consider expense and efficiency in choosing an appropriate approach to accommodate a participant’s disability. For more information, see “[Assessing Requests](#)” in this section.

NUMBER OF ALTERNATE MEALS

The USDA regulations do not require a specific number of alternate meals to meet the dietary needs of participants with disabilities. CACFP adult day care centers are obligated to offer participants with disabilities a medically appropriate and reasonable meal modification based on the medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. Each request must be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine the specific and appropriate modification.



In certain cases, a participant may have a restricted diet that requires the same modified meal each day. However, most participants will be able to eat a variety of modified meals over the week. Depending on the participant’s individual medical condition and the recognized medical authority’s instructions, a reasonable modification could be offering:

- the same modified meal that meets the participant’s specific dietary needs each time the participant eats CACFP meals; or
- a cycle menu of modified meals that meet the participant’s specific dietary needs, based on input from the participant or the participant’s family, medical professionals, and other appropriate individuals.

Whenever possible, the USDA encourages CACFP adult day care centers to offer participants with disabilities a variety of options over the week that is similar to the weekly variety of options offered to participants without disabilities. To improve nutrition and increase variety, the CSDE encourages CACFP adult day care centers to develop a cycle menu of modified meals that meet specific dietary needs, such as a five-day cycle menu for a gluten-free diet or a two-week cycle menu for a specific food allergy. Before using the same cycle menu for multiple participants with the same medical condition, CACFP adult day care centers should check with the participant or family to ensure that the modified meals meet their participant's specific dietary requirements.

DIFFERENT PORTION SIZES

For participants with disabilities, if the medical statement requires portion sizes that are different from the minimum quantity requirements in the CACFP adult meal patterns, the CACFP adult day care center must provide the specified portions. Examples include:

- an additional amount of a specific meal pattern component in the meal, such as a second serving of meat/meat alternates or grains;
- requiring a smaller amount of food than the minimum portion size required in the CACFP adult meal patterns, such as 1 ounce of meat/meat alternates at lunch instead of the required 2 ounces of meat/meat alternates;
- requiring that a participant receives two of the same meal, e.g., two lunches. **Note:** While the CACFP adult day care center must provide the two meals prescribed by the recognized medical authority, USDA regulations allow CACFP adult day care centers to claim only one lunch per participant per day.

The recognized medical authority must specify any requirements for different portion sizes in the participant's medical statement.

TEXTURE MODIFICATIONS

The USDA does not require medical statements when meals require only texture modifications, such as chopped, ground, or pureed foods. CACFP adult day care centers may apply stricter guidelines and require that a medical statement must be on file concerning the needed texture modifications. This serves as a precaution to ensure safe and appropriate meals for the participant, protect the CACFP adult day care center, and minimize misunderstandings.

Unless otherwise specified by the recognized medical authority, meals modified for texture should consist only of the same food items and quantities specified in the regular CACFP menus. Meals that consist only of texture modifications must meet the CACFP adult meal patterns

As with other dietary substitutions, no additional USDA reimbursement is available for texture-modified meals. If a participant must have a pureed meal, it is reasonable to use CACFP funds to purchase a blender or food processor and to have the meal prepared by food service personnel.



TUBE FEEDINGS

For participants with disabilities who require tube feedings, the USDA recommends using commercial nutritive formulas prescribed by a recognized medical authority and specially designed for tube feedings. Formula prepared on site may be subject to spoilage, and may not always have the correct consistency or nutritive content.

With appropriate documentation on the medical statement, adult day care centers can use CACFP funds for the cost of tube feeding formulas that are required as meal substitutions. However, food service personnel are not responsible for physically feeding the participant.

ADMINISTERING FEEDINGS

While the CACFP adult day care center is responsible for providing modified meals for a participant with disabilities, food service personnel are not responsible for physically feeding the participant. CACFP adult day care centers should be aware of the potential liability if staff members without sufficient training and direction are performing tasks or activities such as developing or modifying a diet order prescribed by a recognized medical authority or administering tube feedings. Proper administration of this type of feeding generally requires the skills of specially trained personnel, such as nurses or trained aides who regularly work with the participant.

MEAL SERVICES OUTSIDE OF CACFP

The general guideline in making accommodations is that participants with disabilities must be able to participate in and receive benefits from programs that are available to participants without disabilities. A CACFP adult day care center is not required to provide meal services to participants with disabilities when the meal service is not normally available for all participants. For example, a CACFP adult day care center that does not serve breakfast is not required to provide breakfast for participants with disabilities.

With appropriate documentation on a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority, CACFP adult day care centers are required to provide reasonable modifications that may include special foods or nutrition supplements as part of reimbursable meals for participants with disabilities. However, CACFP adult day care centers are not required to pay for other servings of special foods or nutrition supplements throughout the day **outside** of CACFP meals and snacks.



NUTRITION INFORMATION

The USDA considers providing nutrition information for foods served in CACFP meals to be a component of reasonable accommodations for special diets. The CACFP adult day care center is responsible for making nutrition information for CACFP meals available to participants, families, health consultants, and others, as needed. An example of a reasonable accommodation is maintaining a binder of nutrition labels for foods served in CACFP meals, and making it available in the office for staff, participants, and families to review. This enables participants, in consultation with medical professionals, to determine the appropriate meals for their specific dietary concerns.

For example, if a participant has a life-threatening food allergy, the CACFP adult day care center must provide information on the ingredients for foods served in CACFP meals. This information allows the participant, family, and appropriate medical personnel to determine which meals are safe for the participant to eat, and which meals the CACFP adult day care center must modify to prevent an allergic reaction.

It is important to have good communication between the CACFP adult day care center, participants, and families. Everyone involved in planning and providing for the participant's meals shares responsibility for ensuring reasonable accommodations of the participant's needs. This includes the participant, family members, medical professionals, program administrators, and food service personnel.

When the CACFP adult day care center obtains meals through a vended food service contract, the food service contract should address the requirement for providing nutrition information for CACFP meals. For more information, see "[Vended Meals](#)" in section 4.

CARBOHYDRATE COUNTS

CACFP adult day care centers are responsible for providing a carbohydrate count to the family of a diabetic participant for each food item served in one daily reimbursable choice at each meal, e.g., breakfast, lunch, and snack. If the daily menu includes multiple meal or snack choices, CACFP adult day care centers are not required to provide carbohydrate counts for each meal option.



The CACFP food service program is responsible for providing information on the initial weights or measures of the planned food for the chosen meal. However, food service personnel are not responsible for weighing or measuring leftover food after the participant has consumed the meal, or determining the proper amount of carbohydrates needed or consumed. These tasks are the responsibility of the adult day care center's health consultant or other designated medical personnel.

The USDA specifies that food service personnel can never diagnose health conditions, perform nutritional assessment, prescribe nutritional requirements, or interpret, revise, or change a diet order. If food service personnel have questions about a participant's diet order, prescribed meal substitutions, or any other required modifications, they should consult the

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appropriate medical personnel who work with the participant, such as the health consultant and the participant’s physician or registered dietitian.

For resources on diabetes, see the [American Diabetes Association](#) website and “Diabetes” in the CSDE’s [Special Diets](#) resource list.

FOOD ALLERGY

A food allergy is a hypersensitivity from an abnormal response of the body’s immune system to food or food additives that the body would otherwise consider harmless. Under the ADA Amendments Act, a food allergy does not need to be life-threatening or cause anaphylaxis to be considered a disability. A non-life-threatening food allergy may be considered a disability and require a meal modification if it impacts a major bodily function or other major life activity, such as digestion, respiration, immune response, and skin rash. If a recognized medical authority determines that a food allergy is a disability for a particular participant, the CACFP adult day care center must make the appropriate meal modifications based on the participant’s medical statement.

The CACFP adult day care center must provide the participant with a safe meal and a safe environment to consume the meal. Food service personnel must ensure that modified meals meet each participant’s prescribed guidelines and are free of all ingredients suspected of causing an allergic reaction. The CACFP adult day care center must use proper storage, preparation, and cleaning techniques to prevent exposure to allergens through cross contamination.

Sometimes it is advisable to prepare a separate meal from scratch using ingredients allowed on the special diet rather than serving a meal using processed foods. The general rule in these situations is to exercise caution at all times. If a food’s ingredients are unknown, CACFP adult day care centers cannot serve the food to participants who are at risk for allergic reactions.

For information on food allergy resources, see the “Food Allergies” in the CSDE’s [Special Diets](#) resource list and the USDA’s [Food Safety Resources](#) webpage.



FOOD INTOLERANCE

A food intolerance is an adverse food-induced reaction, such as lactose intolerance, that does not involve the body's immune system. Under the ADA Amendments Act, a food intolerance may be considered a disability if it substantially limits digestion, a bodily function that is a major life activity. For example, a participant whose digestion is impaired by lactose intolerance or gluten intolerance may be a person with a disability, regardless of whether consuming milk or gluten-containing foods causes the participant severe distress. If a recognized medical authority determines that a food intolerance is a disability for a particular participant, the CACFP adult day care center must make the appropriate meal modifications based on the participant's medical statement. CACFP adult day care centers must review each participant's situation on a case-by-case basis.

GLUTEN SENSITIVITY

Gluten sensitivity (also called gluten intolerance) is a condition with symptoms similar to those of celiac disease that improve when gluten is eliminated from the diet. Individuals who have been diagnosed with gluten sensitivity do not experience the small intestine damage found in celiac disease.

Gluten sensitivity is a diagnosis of exclusion that requires ruling out celiac disease and wheat/gluten allergy, followed by a period of dietary gluten exclusion to see if the patient gets better, then a gluten challenge to see how the patient reacts.

Under the ADA Amendments Act, a food intolerance or sensitivity may be considered a disability if it substantially limits digestion, a bodily function that is a major life activity. A participant whose digestion is impaired by gluten sensitivity may be a person with a disability, regardless of whether consuming gluten-containing foods causes the participant severe distress. If a recognized medical authority determines that gluten sensitivity is a disability for a particular participant, the CACFP adult day care center must make the appropriate meal modifications based on the participant's medical statement. CACFP adult day care centers must review each participant's situation on a case-by-case basis.

CELIAC DISEASE

Celiac disease is a genetic autoimmune digestive disease that damages the small intestine and interferes with the absorption of nutrients from foods. Individuals with celiac disease cannot tolerate gluten, a protein found in wheat, rye, and barley. The treatment for celiac disease is to avoid all foods that contain gluten, including wheat, rye, barley, and any foods made with these grains.

Under the ADA Amendments Act, celiac disease qualifies as a disability because it limits the major life activity of digestion. If a participant has celiac disease, the CACFP adult day care center must make the appropriate meal modifications based on the participant's medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority.

Many processed foods contain gluten unless they are labeled “gluten-free” or are made with corn, rice, soy, or other gluten-free grains. Foods that are likely to contain gluten include:

- breads and bread products, e.g., pizza crust and muffins;
- pasta and couscous;
- grain-based desserts, such as cookies, cakes, and pies;
- breakfast cereals;
- crackers and snacks, e.g., pretzels, snack mix, pita chips, and croutons;
- seasoned snack foods, e.g., potato and tortilla chips;
- processed luncheon meats;
- soups and soup bases; and
- salad dressings and sauces, including soy sauce.

Table 2 shows examples of foods to avoid and allow with celiac disease. For more information and resources, see “Celiac Disease” in the CSDE’s [Special Diets](#) resource list.



Table 2. Examples of Foods to Avoid and Allow with Celiac Disease

This chart provides general guidance on foods with and without gluten. When making meal modifications for participants with celiac disease, the CACFP adult day care center must make the appropriate meal modifications based on the participant's medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. CACFP adult day care centers must review each participant's situation on a case-by-case basis.

AVOID	ALLOW ¹
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Barley (malt, malt flavoring, and malt vinegar are usually made from barley) ■ Rye ■ Triticale (a cross between wheat and rye) ■ Wheat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dextrin ○ Durum flour ○ Farina ○ Graham flour ○ Kamut ○ Modified food starch ○ Semolina ○ Spelt ○ Wheat germ ○ What bran ■ Processed foods unless labeled "gluten-free" or made with corn, rice, soy, or other gluten-free grain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Beans, seeds, and nuts in their natural, unprocessed form ■ Fresh eggs ■ Fresh meats, fish, and poultry (not breaded, batter-coated, or marinated) ■ Fruits and vegetables ■ Most dairy products ■ Gluten-free grains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Amaranth ○ Arrowroot ○ Buckwheat ○ Corn flour and cornmeal ○ Flax ○ Gluten-free flours (rice, soy, corn, potato, bean) ○ Hominy (corn) ○ Millet ○ Oats ² ○ Quinoa ○ Rice ○ Sorghum ○ Soy ○ Tapioca ○ Teff

¹ If not processed or mixed with gluten-containing grains, additives, or preservatives.

² Must be labeled "gluten-free." Pure oats are a gluten-free food, but most commercially processed oats have been contaminated during the growing, harvesting, or processing stages.

AUTISM

Autism is considered a disability, and may require a reasonable meal modification if it substantially limits a major life activity such as eating. Having an autism diagnosis does not automatically qualify a participant for meal modifications. Participants with autism may not have a medical dietary condition. However, a participant's autism sometimes results in food behaviors and preferences that require specific meal modifications. For example, some participants with autism will only eat certain foods due to their repetitive and ritualistic behavior patterns. Any physical or mental impairment that prevents a participant from consuming a meal is considered a disability.

For some autistic participants, it is reasonable to view the autism diagnosis as a dietary restriction that is part of their disability. If a recognized medical authority determines that a dietary restriction is part of a participant's autism diagnosis, the CACFP adult day care center must provide appropriate accommodations based on the participant's medical statement.

CACFP adult day care centers must review each participant's situation on a case-by-case basis, as one participant's autism diagnosis may not have the same issue in another participant's autism diagnosis.

MILK SUBSTITUTES FOR DISABILITIES

When a participant has a medically documented disability that requires a milk substitute or a type of milk that is different from the CACFP adult meal pattern requirements, the CACFP adult day care center must provide an appropriate substitute based on the participant's medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. The medical statement must include three components:

- information about the participant's physical or mental impairment that is sufficient to allow the CACFP adult day care center to understand how it restricts the participant's diet;
- an explanation of what must be done to accommodate the participant's disability; and
- if appropriate, the food or foods to be omitted and recommended alternatives, e.g., the milk substitute or a type of milk that must be substituted.

If cow's milk causes any digestive problems, the condition is considered a disability under the ADA Amendments Act, and requires a substitute. For participants with disabilities, CACFP adult day care centers can claim reimbursement for meals that contain other beverages in place of milk, such as juice, water, or nondairy beverages that do not meet the USDA nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes. The required milk substitute must be indicated on the participant's medical statement. **Note:** Juice, water, and milk substitutes that do not comply with the USDA nutrition standards are not allowed for participants *without* disabilities.

Fat Content

If a participant has a medically documented disability that requires milk with a fat content that is different from the requirements of the CACFP adult meal patterns, the CACFP adult day care center must provide an appropriate substitute based on the participant's medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. [Table 3](#) indicates when milk with a different fat content is allowed. **Note:** Reimbursable meals for participants *without* disabilities must include the appropriate fat content for each age group required by the CACFP meal patterns.

Nondairy Milk Substitutes

For participants with a medically documented disability that requires a milk alternative such as soy milk, the CACFP adult day care center must provide an appropriate substitute based on the participant's medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. The CACFP adult day care center is not required to provide a specific brand of milk substitute, but must work with the participant or family to offer a reasonable modification that effectively accommodates the participant's disability and provides equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from the CACFP.

Nondairy milk substitutes for participants with disabilities are not required to comply with the USDA nutrition standards for milk substitutes. **Note:** All nondairy milk substitutes for participants *without* disabilities must comply with the USDA's nutrition standards for milk substitutes (see [table 4](#) in section 3).



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Table 3. Determining if Milk with a Different Fat Content is Allowed

Type of Milk	Allowable Substitution?	
	Participant with Disability ^{1, 2}	Participant without Disability ²
Whole milk, unflavored	Yes	No
Whole milk, flavored	Yes	No
Reduced-fat (2%) milk, unflavored	Yes	No
Reduced-fat (2%) milk, flavored	Yes	No
Low-fat (1%) (2%) milk, flavored	Yes	No

¹ The medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority must include three components: information about the participant’s physical or mental impairment that is sufficient to allow the CACFP adult day care center to understand how it restricts the participant’s diet; an explanation of what must be done to accommodate the participant’s disability; and if appropriate, the food or foods to be omitted and recommended alternatives, e.g., the specific fat content of milk that must be substituted.

² Requests for any types of milk that do not comply with the CACFP adult meal patterns can only be made for participants whose disability restricts their diet, based on a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. For more information, see “[Milk Substitutes without Disabilities](#)” in section 3.

³ The CACFP adult meal patterns require unflavored low-fat, unflavored fat-free, or flavored fat-free milk. This includes lactose-free and lactose-reduced milk. The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving only unflavored milk..

APPROPRIATE EATING AREAS

Federal civil rights legislation, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the IDEA, and Titles II and III of the ADA, requires that in providing nonacademic services, including meals, institutions must ensure that participants with disabilities participate along with participants without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate.

USDA regulations (7 CFR 15b.26(d)) require that CACFP adult day care centers must provide all meal services in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the disabled participant. Exclusion of any participant from the CACFP environment is not considered an appropriate or reasonable modification. For example, a participant cannot be excluded from the area where meals are served and required to sit in another room during the meal service. However, it may be appropriate to require participants with very severe food allergies to sit at a separate table to control exposure.

3 — Modifications for Participants without Disabilities

CACFP adult day care centers have the option to make meal modifications on a case-by-case basis for participants whose special dietary needs do not constitute a disability, including those related to religious or moral convictions, general health concerns, or personal preferences, such as a preference that a participant eats a gluten-free diet or organic foods because a participant or their family believes it is healthier. However, the USDA does not require these accommodations.



Modified meals served to participants without disabilities must comply with the CACFP adult meal patterns. For more information, visit the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage and see the CSDE’s guide, *Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers*.

The USDA does not require a medical statement for modified meals that meet the CACFP adult meal patterns. These meals are eligible for reimbursement regardless of whether the CACFP adult day care center obtains a medical statement. However, the CSDE recommends obtaining a medical statement for optional meal modifications to ensure clear communication between participants, families, and all appropriate CACFP staff about the appropriate meal modifications for the participant. CACFP adult day care centers can use the CSDE’s medical statement form to collect information for making meal modifications for participants without disabilities.

- *Medical Statement for Meal Modifications in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers:* <http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/AdultMedical.pdf>
- *Guidance and Instructions: Medical Statement for Meal Modifications in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers:* <http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/AdultMedicalinstr.pdf>

MILK SUBSTITUTES WITHOUT DISABILITIES

The CACFP adult meal patterns require unflavored low-fat (1%), unflavored fat-free, or flavored fat-free milk. **For participants without disabilities, reimbursable meals cannot include milk that does not comply with these requirements, even with a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority.** The CACFP adult meal patterns do not allow other types of milk unless a participant has a medically documented disability that requires another type of milk. For more information, see “[Milk Substitutes for Disabilities](#)” in section 2.

CACFP adult day care centers may choose, but are not required, to offer one or more allowable milk substitutes for participants whose special dietary needs do not constitute a

3 | PARTICIPANTS WITHOUT DISABILITIES

disability. The two types of allowable substitutes for participants without disabilities are:

- lactose-reduced or lactose-free milk (unflavored low-fat, unflavored fat-free, or flavored fat-free); or
- a nondairy beverage that meets the USDA nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes (see [table 4](#)).

Lactose-reduced and Lactose-free Milk

Lactose-reduced milk has part of the lactose removed, while lactose-free milk has all of the lactose removed. Like regular milk, these types of milk come in a variety of flavors and fat contents, such as fat-free (skim), low-fat, and whole.



Lactose-reduced and lactose-free milk credit as the milk component in the CACFP adult meal patterns. CACFP adult day care centers can substitute lactose-reduced and lactose-free milk for regular milk, without a written statement from a participant or family. The CSDE encourages CACFP adult day care centers to make lactose-reduced or lactose-free milk (unflavored low-fat, unflavored fat-free, or flavored fat-free) available to participants as needed.

Nondairy Milk Substitutes

The USDA regulations allow CACFP adult day care centers to offer nondairy milk substitutes that meet the USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes. The USDA does not provide additional reimbursement for CACFP adult day care centers that choose to provide these substitutions.

The USDA nutrition standards require that milk substitutes must be nutritionally equivalent to fluid milk and provide specific levels of calcium, protein, vitamins A and D, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, riboflavin, and vitamin B₁₂. This ensures that participants without disabilities who require a substitute for cow's milk for cultural, ethnic, religious, or medical reasons receive the important nutrients found in milk.

Table 4 summarizes the USDA nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes. Certain brands of soy milk are the only available nondairy milk products that currently meet the USDA nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes. Almond milk, rice milk, and other nondairy milk products do not currently meet these standards. Flavored nondairy milk substitutes can be served, but the USDA's *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving only unflavored milk.

Identifying Acceptable Milk Substitutes

The Nutrition Facts label does not usually include all of the nutrients required to identify a product's compliance with the USDA nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes. If any nutrients are missing, CACFP adult day care centers must contact the manufacturer to obtain a product specification sheet that documents the product's compliance with each nutrient in the USDA nutrition standards for milk substitutes.

Menu planners can use the USDA protein standard to screen nondairy products and determine whether they might meet the USDA nutrition standards. The USDA requires that fluid milk substitutes contain 8 grams of protein per cup (8 fluid ounces). If the product's

Nutrition Facts label lists less than 8 grams of protein per 1-cup serving, the product does not meet the USDA’s nutrition standards.

If the product’s Nutrition Facts label lists at least 8 grams of protein per 1-cup serving, the product *might* comply with the USDA’s nutrition standards. CACFP adult day care centers must obtain additional information from the manufacturer to determine if the product also meets the standards for calcium, vitamin A, vitamin D, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, riboflavin, and vitamin B12 (see [table 4](#)).

The CSDE’s handout, *Allowable Milk Substitutes for Adults without Disabilities in the CACFP*, contains a list of allowable milk substitutes. CACFP adult day care centers are encouraged to submit product nutrition information to the CSDE so that new acceptable milk substitutes can be added to the list.

Table 4. USDA Nutrition Standards for Fluid Milk Substitutes	
Minimum Nutrients per Cup (8 fluid ounces)	
Calcium	276 milligrams (mg) or 30% Daily Value (DV) ¹
Protein	8 grams (g)
Vitamin A	500 international units (IU) or 10% DV
Vitamin D	100 IU or 25% DV
Magnesium	24 mg or 6% DV
Phosphorus	222 mg or 20% DV ¹
Potassium	349 mg or 10% DV ¹
Riboflavin	0.44 mg or 25% DV ^{1*}
Vitamin B-12	1.1 micrograms (mcg) or 20% DV ¹
¹ The FDA labeling laws require manufacturers to round nutrition values to the nearest five percent. The actual minimum DV is 27.6% for calcium, 22.2% for phosphorus, 9.97% for potassium, 25.88% for riboflavin, and 18.33% for vitamin B12.	

Required Documentation for Milk Substitutes

Participants or families may request a nondairy milk substitute in writing without providing a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. For example, a vegetarian participant can submit a written request asking the CACFP adult day care center to substitute an allowable brand of soy milk for cow’s milk. The written request must identify the medical or other special dietary need that restricts the participant’s diet. **Note:** Any other menu substitutions for vegetarian diets must meet the CACFP adult meal patterns. For more information, see “[Vegetarians](#)” in section 4.

The soy milk offered by the CACFP adult day care center must meet the USDA nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes (see [table 4](#)). Participant or family requests for milk substitutes must be maintained on file with the participant’s medical records. For more information, see “[Storage and Updates of Medical Statements](#)” in section 2.

3 | PARTICIPANTS WITHOUT DISABILITIES

The provision allowing a statement from participants or families applies only to milk substitutes for participants *without* disabilities. It does not apply to any other substitutions of foods or beverages in CACFP meals for participants without disabilities. For information on milk substitutes for participants with disabilities, see “[Milk Substitutes for Disabilities](#)” in section 2.

Variety of Milk Substitutes

CACFP adult day care centers may choose how many types of milk substitutes to offer to participants without disabilities. If more than one substitute is offered, the CACFP adult day care center must inform all participants or families of the options and allow all participants or families to choose one. For a reimbursable meal, all milk substitute options offered by the CACFP adult day care center must be:

- lactose-reduced or lactose-free milk (unflavored low-fat, unflavored fat-free, or flavored fat-free); or
- a nondairy beverage that meets the USDA nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes (see [table 4](#)).

Availability of Milk Substitutes

If a CACFP adult day care center chooses to make allowable milk substitutes available, they must be available for all participants when requested by the participant or family. If the CACFP adult day care center grants a request for any substitute, then all requests for that substitute must be granted. For example, if the CACFP adult day care center chooses to provide an allowable brand of soy milk at a participant’s request, then an allowable brand of soy milk must be available to all participants who make any request for fluid milk substitutes. All soy milk products must meet the USDA’s nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes (see [table 4](#)).

Juice and Water

CACFP adult day care centers can never offer juice or water as milk substitutes for participants without disabilities, even with a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. If a CACFP adult day care center chooses to make milk substitutes available, they must include at least one choice of either lactose-free or lactose-reduced milk with the appropriate fat content, or a nondairy beverage that meets the USDA nutrition standards for milk substitutes (see [table 4](#)). These are the only options allowed for milk substitutes for participants without disabilities.



CACFP adult day care centers cannot serve juice or water as fluid milk substitutes for participants without disabilities, even if the participant or family provides a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. Table 5 shows examples of whether milk substitutes are allowable for participants without disabilities.

Coffee, Tea and Soda

CACFP adult day care centers cannot serve coffee, tea or soda as fluid milk substitutes for participants without disabilities, even if the participant or family provides a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority.

Liquid Nutrition Supplements

CACFP adult day care centers may have participants that need meal supplementation with liquid nutrition products such as Ensure. Centers may serve these products in **addition** to the required CACFP meal components if the participant or family provides a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. However, these supplements cannot be substituted for the milk component. All meal substitutions for participants without disabilities must comply with the CACFP meal pattern requirements, including milk substitutions.

Milk Substitute	Allowable?
Unflavored whole milk	No. The CACFP adult meal patterns require unflavored low-fat, unflavored fat-free, or flavored fat-free milk. ¹
Unflavored reduced-fat (2%) milk	No. The CACFP adult meal patterns require unflavored low-fat, unflavored fat-free, or flavored fat-free milk. ¹
Lactose-free or lactose-reduced milk, unflavored low-fat (1%)	Yes.
Lactose-free or lactose-reduced milk, flavored low-fat	No. The CACFP adult meal patterns require unflavored low-fat, unflavored fat-free, or flavored fat-free milk for ages 6 and older.
Lactose-free or lactose-reduced milk, unflavored fat-free	Yes.
Lactose-free or lactose-reduced milk, flavored fat-free	Yes.
An unflavored nondairy milk substitute (such as rice or almond milk) that does not meet the USDA nutrition standards	No. All nondairy milk substitutes must meet the USDA nutrition standards (see table 4).
An unflavored nondairy milk substitute (such as soy milk) that meets the USDA nutrition standards	Yes.
A flavored nondairy milk substitute (such as soy milk) that meets the USDA nutrition standards	Yes.
Juice	No. CACFP adult day care centers can never offer juice as a milk substitute for participants without disabilities.
Water	No. CACFP adult day care centers can never offer juice as a milk substitute for participants without disabilities.
Coffee, tea or soda	No. The CACFP adult meal patterns do not allow coffee, tea or soda as a milk substitute.
Liquid nutrition supplements, e.g., Ensure	No. The CACFP adult meal patterns do not allow liquid nutrition supplements as a milk substitute.



4 — MODIFICATIONS FOR OTHER REASONS

This section addresses meal modifications for reasons other than medical needs, including religion and personal food preferences. With the exception of sponsors of Jewish and Seventh-day Adventist institutions, the USDA regulations do not require CACFP adult day care centers to make meal modifications for individual food preferences such as vegetarianism religious, ethnic, moral, or other reasons. However, the USDA encourages CACFP adult day care centers to provide a variety of foods that participants can select, which helps to accommodate individual food preferences.

RELIGIOUS REASONS

The USDA has granted institutions exemptions from the CACFP adult meal patterns when evidence shows that the variations are nutritionally sound and necessary to meet ethnic, religious, economic, or physical needs. USDA exemptions include sponsors of Jewish and Seventh-day Adventist institutions.

The USDA grants these exemptions for entities (schools, institutions, and sponsors) not individuals. CACFP facilities may choose to address the needs of individuals by substituting different food items within the same meal pattern component. For example, a participant who does not eat pork for religious reasons could be served another meat/meat alternate (such as cheese, yogurt, or peanut butter), and still be provided a reimbursable meal.



A summary of the USDA provisions for Jewish and Seventh-day Adventist institutions follows.

Jewish Sponsors

[FNS Instruction 783-13 \(Rev. 3\)](#) summarizes the requirements for variations in meal patterns for Jewish schools, institutions, and sponsors. During the religious observance of Passover, Jewish institutions are exempt from the whole grain-rich (WGR) requirement of USDA regulations. Jewish institutions may substitute unenriched matzo for WGR products only during that period. At all other times of the year, matzo served as a grain component must be WGR or whole grain.

The USDA also allows flexibilities for Jewish institutions regarding the meal pattern requirement to offer milk with all meals. Jewish institutions may choose from four alternative options. These options apply only to meals containing meat or poultry when participants do not have the opportunity to refuse milk or meat/poultry through OVS.

1. Serve an equal amount of nondairy milk substitute (for medical or special dietary needs) that is nutritionally equivalent to fluid milk. For information on the USDA nutrition standards for milk substitutes, see [table 4](#) in section 3.

4 | OTHER MODIFICATIONS

2. Serve an equal amount of full-strength juice in place of milk with lunch or supper. When substituting juice for milk, juice cannot contribute to the requirements for fruits or vegetables.
 - CACFP adult day care centers operating five days per week may substitute juice for milk twice per week for lunches and twice per week for suppers, but no more than once each day.
 - CACFP adult day care centers operating seven days per week may make three substitutions per week for lunches and three substitutions per week for suppers, but no more than once each day.
3. Serve milk at an appropriate time before or after the meal service period, in accordance with applicable Jewish Dietary Laws.
4. If applicable, serve the snack's juice component at breakfast, lunch, or supper, and serve the corresponding meal's milk component as part of the snack.



Milk must be offered or served in all other meals according to regulations, since Jewish Dietary Laws allow other meat alternates (such as fish, egg, beans and peas, nuts, seeds, and nut/seed butters) to be consumed with milk at the same meal.

Jewish institutions have the discretion to select one of the above options as an alternative to standard regulatory meal requirements. For review and audit purposes, institutions electing to use these options must inform the CSDE in writing prior to implementation, and must maintain a record of which option they have chosen. For information on contacting the CSDE, see “[CSDE Contact Information](#)” at the beginning of this guide.

Jewish Dietary Laws also pose challenges to serving the dark green vegetable subgroup required in the NSLP. Jewish institutions facing this challenge may be exempt from the requirement to serve the dark green vegetable subgroup, but must serve the same total amount of vegetables. Vegetables served in place of dark green vegetables must come from the red/orange or beans/peas subgroups. The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* indicates that the American diet does not include a sufficient amount of these two subgroups.

Seventh-day Adventist Sponsors

Seventh-day Adventist institutions, like all other schools and institutions, may use alternate protein products (APP) such as vegetable burgers and other meatless entree items to meet the requirements for the meat/meat alternates component. The USDA allows the use of APP to provide more flexibility in menu planning.



APPs are food ingredients that may be used alone or in combination with meat, poultry, or seafood. They are processed from soy or other vegetable protein sources and may be dehydrated granules, particles, or flakes. Some examples include soy flours, soy concentrates, soy isolates, whey protein concentrate, whey protein isolates, and casein. APPs may be used in the dry (nonhydrated), partially hydrated, or fully hydrated form.

[Appendix A](#) of the CACFP regulations (7 CFR 226) requires that APP must comply with specific criteria to credit toward the meat/meat alternates component of the CACFP adult meal patterns. Table 6 summarizes the APP requirements.

Table 6. USDA APP Requirements ¹

1. The APP is processed so that some portion of the nonprotein constituents of the food is removed. (This refers to the manufacturing process for APP.) AAP must be safe and suitable edible products produced from plant or animal sources.
2. The biological quality of the protein in the APP must be at least 80 percent that of casein (milk protein), determined by performing a Protein Digestibility Corrected Amino Acid Score (PDCAAS).
3. The APP contains at least 18 percent protein by weight when fully hydrated or formulated. ("When hydrated or formulated" refers to a dry APP and the amount of water, fat, oil, colors, flavors or any other substances that have been added.)

¹ The APP requirements are defined by [Appendix A](#) of the CACFP regulations (7 CFR 226).

Menu planners cannot determine this information by reading the product's label. The USDA's Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) and the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) labeling laws require manufacturers to list product ingredients, but percent labeling is voluntary. For example, the ingredients may list whey protein concentrate and hydrolyzed soy protein but will not indicate the percentage of these protein ingredients by weight. Consequently, CACFP adult day care centers are responsible for obtaining documentation from the manufacturer for any APP used to meet the requirements of the meat/meat alternates component.

The manufacturer can provide documentation of the above criteria in a variety of forms, such as a product specification sheet or a letter signed by a company official attesting the product meets the USDA requirements. Products that have Child Nutrition (CN) labels provide information on how to credit APP foods toward the USDA meal patterns.

For more information on crediting APP, see the CSDE's guide, [Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#). For information on CN labels, see the CSDE's handout, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the CACFP](#).

VEGETARIANS

With the exception of Seventh-day Adventist sponsors, vegetarianism does not qualify for meal modifications. To receive USDA reimbursement, meals and snacks served to vegetarian participants must include the required CACFP meal pattern components. The CACFP adult day care center must provide these components. Meals and snacks containing family-provided components are not reimbursable, unless they are for a documented medical need and the

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CSDE has preapproved them. For more information, see “[Family-provided Foods](#)” in this section.

CACFP adult day care centers are encouraged to work with families to identify foods that participants can eat, while considering cost constraints and program logistics such as food service production capabilities. CACFP adult day care centers can offer a variety of vegetarian choices each week, such as macaroni and cheese, spaghetti with tomato sauce and cheese wedge, cheese pizza, vegetable bean soup, chili, grilled cheese sandwiches, meatless lasagna, bean tacos, and bean burritos.



CACFP adult day care centers may also incorporate a variety of vegetable-based entree products in CACFP menus, such as meatless hotdogs and vegetable burgers, if they meet the specified APP criteria. For more information, see “[Seventh-day Adventist Sponsors](#)” in this section, and the CSDE’s guide, *Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Programs*.

FOOD PREFERENCES

USDA regulations do not require CACFP adult day care centers to make meal modifications based on food choices or personal preferences of a participant or family. Personal food preferences, such as a preference that a participant eats a gluten-free diet or organic foods because a participant or their family believes it is healthier for the participant, are not disabilities and do not require modifications.

CACFP adult day care centers may choose to accommodate participants’ personal food preferences on a case-by-case basis. Any meal modifications for personal food preferences must comply with the CACFP adult meal patterns.

Modified meals that meet the CACFP adult meal patterns are eligible for reimbursement regardless of whether the CACFP adult day care center obtains a medical statement. However, the CSDE recommends obtaining a medical statement to ensure clear communication between the participant, families, and CACFP adult day care centers about the appropriate meal modifications for each participant.

VENDED MEALS

CACFP adult day care centers must always ensure that any benefits available to the general adult day care population are equally available to participants with disabilities. Consequently, CACFP adult day care centers must make accommodations for participants with disabilities regardless of whether the CACFP adult day care center operates the food service program or contracts with a food service management company (FSMC).

When a FSMC operates the CACFP food service or the adult day care center obtains meals from a vendor, the adult day care center must address the issue of meal modifications. The CSDE recommends that the contract developed with the FSMC or vendor specifies the CACFP adult day care center’s requirements for meal modifications. CACFP adult day care centers that do not have any need for special dietary accommodations at the time a bid is prepared should still include sufficient information in the bid to ensure that the FSMC or vendor is aware that meal modifications may be required during the term of the contract.

The CACFP adult day care center, not the FSMC or vendor, is ultimately responsible for complying with the USDA regulations for the CACFP, including meal modifications for participants whose disability restricts their diet.

For detailed guidance on contracting with FSMCs, see [USDA Memo SP 40-2016 CACFP 12-2016 SFSP 14-2016: Updated Guidance: Contracting with Food Service Management Companies](#). For more information, visit the CACFP section of the CSDE's [Food Service Management Company Contracts](#) webpage.

FAMILY-PROVIDED FOODS

Situations may arise when families want to provide foods or beverages as a substitution for a CACFP meal component or an entire meal. **Family-provided components are not allowed for participants with disabilities who have special dietary needs.** The CACFP adult day care center must provide all meal modifications based on in the participant's medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority.

The basic premise for all USDA Child Nutrition Programs is to reimburse participating institutions for the costs associated with providing wholesome, nutritious meals to participants. If the CACFP adult day care center does not incur costs, the USDA does not pay reimbursement.

However, with specific documentation (i.e., a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority), the USDA allows reimbursement for CACFP meals for participants **without** disabilities when the family supplies a particular food or beverage item for medical reasons, if the participant receives all required CACFP meal pattern components. For a meal to be claimed for reimbursement, the CACFP adult day care center must:

- submit a specific written request to the CSDE (see "[CSDE Contact Information](#)" at the beginning of this guide);
- detail the participant's medical issue in the request and attach a copy of the medical statement signed by the participant's recognized medical authority; and
- outline the food or beverage item to be provided by the family with a statement of assurance that the CACFP adult day care center will serve all other menu items.

The CSDE will review the request and, if approved, will issue a written response for the acceptable family-provided meal component. The CACFP adult day care center must maintain this approval on file with the participant's other medical records (see "[Storage and Updates of Medical Statements](#)" in section 2). Each approval may be used only for the participant for whom the request has been granted.

Some programs never allow families to provide food from home because of food safety issues, and the liability that might arise if a participant gets a foodborne illness. CACFP adult day care centers must keep in mind that Connecticut's Public Health Code 19-13-B42 applies to all foods served in adult day care centers, regardless of whether they are prepared on site or brought from home. CACFP adult day care centers must develop policies and procedures to ensure the safety of foods brought from home to be served in the adult day care environment. For more information, see "[Public Health Code 19-13-B42](#)" on the next page, and the CSDE's [Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

4 | OTHER MODIFICATIONS

CACFP adult day care centers must ensure that reimbursable meals include all components, and that any modifications are based on appropriate documentation. Meals that do not meet CACFP meal pattern requirements are not reimbursable. Meals for participants without disabilities that contain family-provided components are reimbursable only if the center has **prior written approval from the CSDE** for the specific modifications for an individual participant.

Note: Effective October 1, 2017, the final rule allows CACFP adult day care centers to claim reimbursement for meals that contain one meal component provide by a participant or their family for participants without disabilities who have medical or special dietary needs. The USDA will be developing additional policy guidance on the implementation requirements for this provision. As of the date of this publication, the USDA has not released this policy guidance. Until the USDA guidance is released, CACFP adult day care centers cannot claim reimbursement for meals that contain a family-provided meal component for participants without disabilities.

Public Health Code 19-13-B42

The regulations of [Connecticut Public Health Code \(PHC\) 19-13-B42](#) for food service establishments require that all foods and beverages must be from an **approved source**. The Connecticut State Department of Public Health (DPH) has advised local health departments that all foods in food service establishments, including adult day care centers, must originate from inspected, regulated sources and be transported properly at required temperatures. Foods sent into the adult day care center from a private home have not originated from an approved source.

The food service department cannot ensure the safety of food brought from home from either potential food allergens or microbial contamination. CACFP adult day care centers face potential liability issues if they serve foods to participants that have not been:

- directly received from a regulated source, such as an approved food service vendor; or
- stored, cooked and served by trained food service personnel under the direction of a qualified food operator (QFO).

Connecticut PHC Section 19-13-B42(s)(4) requires at least one QFO, who is in a supervisory position, and a designated alternate person to be in charge at all times when the QFO cannot be present, in each food service establishment that prepares and/or serves exposed potentially hazardous foods prepared using hot processes. Each local health jurisdiction is responsible for classifying its local food service establishments.

A QFO is a food service professional in a full-time supervisory capacity on site who has demonstrated knowledge in the safe preparation and service of food, as defined by DPH regulations. The QFO's responsibilities include operating the food service establishment in compliance with all the provisions of Public Health Code 19-13-B42; training food preparation personnel in safe food preparation practices; maintaining written documentation of training; and directing and inspecting the performance of food service workers. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Qualified Food Operator \(QFO\) Responsibilities for Connecticut Child Nutrition Programs](#).

5 — POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CACFP adult day care centers must comply with federal and state laws for developing and implementing written policies and procedures for special diets. USDA regulations require CACFP adult day care centers to provide notice of nondiscrimination and accessible services. They also require CACFP adult day care centers with 15 or more employees to designate at least one person to coordinate compliance with disability requirements. The CSDE recommends that CACFP adult day care centers also develop a written policy addressing meal modifications in the CACFP. This section summarizes these requirements and recommendations.

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

The USDA encourages CACFP adult day care centers to implement procedures for participants and families to request modifications to the meal service for participants with disabilities and resolve grievances. These procedures should include providing a written final decision on each request.

CACFP adult day care centers should notify participants and families of the procedure for requesting meal modifications. At a minimum, CACFP adult day care centers must provide notice of nondiscrimination and accessible services, as outlined in the USDA nondiscrimination regulations (7 CFR 15b.7). CACFP adult day care centers and sponsors should also ensure that center staff understands the procedures for handling requests for meal modifications.

CACFP Facilities with 15 or More Employees

CACFP adult day care centers that employ 15 or more individuals must designate at least one person to coordinate compliance with disability requirements, as required by the USDA nondiscrimination regulations (7 CFR 15b.6). This position is often referred to as the Section 504 Coordinator.

The Section 504 Coordinator, who is responsible for addressing requests for accommodations in the center, may also be responsible for ensuring compliance with disability requirements related to meals and the meal service. The USDA does not require a separate Section 504 Coordinator who is only responsible for meal modifications. The USDA recommends that CACFP adult day care centers employing less than 15 individuals have someone on staff who can provide technical assistance to centers and family day care homes when they are making meal modifications for participants with disabilities.

CACFP adult day care centers that employ 15 or more individuals must also establish grievance procedures that incorporate appropriate due process standards and that provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints, as required by the USDA nondiscrimination regulations (7 CFR 15b.6). The USDA recommended procedures include:

- allowing participants or their representatives to submit a grievance (complaint with any supporting documentation) for consideration by the CACFP adult day care center;

- providing that a prompt decision by the CACFP adult day care center be rendered to the participant or the participant’s representative regarding the grievance; and
- ensuring that the decision includes the official USDA nondiscrimination statement, which advises the participant how to file a complaint with the USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The CSDE’s document, *CACFP Civil Rights Requirements*, contains the official USDA nondiscrimination statement.

POLICIES FOR MEAL MODIFICATIONS

In addition to the requirements for procedural safeguards and food allergy management plans, the CDSE strongly encourages CACFP adult day care centers to develop a written policy addressing meal modifications in the CACFP. The policy should be integrated with all applicable adult day care center policies, such as the procedural safeguards process.

Written policies are important because they:

- provide clear guidelines for participants, families, and staff;
- ensure consistent practices at all sites and among all staff members;
- document compliance with federal and state requirements and best practices;
- educate participants and families regarding the CACFP adult day care center’s practices and procedures;
- provide a basis to evaluate program activities and staff members; and
- demonstrate the CACFP adult day care center’s commitment to participants’ health and well-being.

Policies are an important tool to notify the adult day care center community (including participants, families, program staff, and administrators) of the availability of meal accommodations, and explain applicable requirements and procedures, including:

- federal requirements to ensure that modified meals are reimbursable;
- the process for participants and families to request special dietary accommodations;
- required information for making accommodations, e.g., submission of medical statement and supporting documentation, such as diet plans;
- standard operating procedures (SOPs) for accommodating special diets, e.g., preparing foods for different types of special diets and cleaning procedures to prevent food allergen contamination;
- communication procedures between food service personnel, adult day care center staff, and families; and
- monitoring to ensure that meal modifications are appropriate and meet individual dietary needs.

SOPs are detailed explanations of how to implement a policy through specific practices or tasks. They standardize the process and provide step-by-step instructions that enable everyone to perform the task in a consistent manner. This ensures that all CACFP personnel follow the same procedures each time. SOPs for special diets might include:

- procedures for preparing foods for different types of special diets, such as texture modifications;
- cleaning procedures for preventing food allergen contamination; and
- training procedures for all staff including substitutes.

Since meal modifications are only required for participants with disabilities, CACFP adult day care centers will make decisions regarding meal modifications for participants without disabilities. The written policy should address how the CACFP adult day care center will handle these meal modifications and identify any local procedures.

Strategies for Policy Development

The strategies below can assist CACFP adult day care centers with developing policies for accommodating special diets. Priority areas include assessing current operations, developing SOPs, providing staff training, and ensuring consistent communication.

- Identify the personnel and resources needed for planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating the policy and SOPs.
- Conduct a self-assessment of current policies, practices, and procedures for CACFP meal modifications.
- Identify the essential practices to implement in food services and health services, and determine where SOPs are necessary.
- Develop an action plan to address the practices needing attention, as identified by the self-assessment. When developing action plans for SOPs, start with the most important practices. The CSDE's action planning form and sample action plans can assist with this process:
 - *Action Planning Form*;
 - *Sample Action Plan: Policy Development*; and
 - *Sample Action Plan: Policy Promotion*.
- Develop SOPs by writing down the actual steps taken when performing the specific task. When using sample SOPs from organizations or other programs, customize the information so it is specific to the local adult day care center. The resources below provide examples of SOPs:
 - *Preparation of Foods with Potential to Cause Allergic Reaction: Standard Operating Procedure* (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction);

5 | POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- *Standard Operating Procedure: Handling Students Identified with Severe Food Allergy or Anaphylaxis* (South Windsor Public Schools);
 - *Food Safety SOPs* (Institute of Child Nutrition); and
 - “Standard Operating Procedures” in the CSDE’s *Food Safety* resource list.
- Identify the training needs of adult day care center personnel regarding meal modifications for participants with special dietary needs. Provide professional development on special diets at least annually for food service staff and other staff, as appropriate.
 - Determine effective communication strategies between the food service director, food service staff, center staff, administrators, and families.



6 — Resources

This section includes links to federal and state regulations, policy memoranda, websites and the CSDE’s guides, resource lists, forms, and handouts.

CSDE FORMS AND HANDOUTS

Allowable Milk Substitutes for Adults without Disabilities in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Adultmilksub.pdf>

Medical Statement for Meal Modifications in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers:

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/AdultMedical.pdf>

Guidance and Instructions: Medical Statement for Meal Modifications in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers:

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/MedicalCACFPinstr.pdf>

All forms and handouts are available on the CSDE’s [Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.

CSDE GUIDES

Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers:

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Special-Diets-in-CACFP-Adult-Day-Care-Centers>

Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers:

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-CACFP-Adult-Day-Care-Centers>

Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/MealPattern/AdultNPGmp.pdf>

Planning Healthy Meals in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/MealPattern/AdultNPGhealthy.pdf>

CSDE RESOURCE LISTS

The CSDE resource lists are available on the CSDE's Resources for Child Nutrition Programs webpage at <http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Resources-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>.



Child Nutrition Programs:

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesCNP.pdf>

Competitive Foods:

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesSCHOOLFD.pdf>

Dietary Guidelines and Nutrition Information:

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesDG.pdf>

Food Safety:

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesFDSAFE.pdf>

Health and Achievement:

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesACHIEVE.pdf>

Menu Planning and Food Production:

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesMP.pdf>

Nutrition Education:

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesNUTRED.pdf>

Physical Activity and Physical Education:

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesPA.pdf>

Promoting Healthy Weight:

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesOB.pdf>

Special Diets:

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesSPDIET.pdf>

Wellness Policies for Schools and Child Care:

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesWP.pdf>

NONDISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION

ADA: <https://www.ada.gov/>

ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-325):

<http://www.ada.gov/pubs/ada.htm>

ADA Amendments Act of 2008 Final rule: Amendment of Americans with Disabilities Act Title II and Title III Regulations to Implement ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (28 CFR Parts 35 and 36): <https://www.ada.gov/regs2016/adaaa.html>

ADA Final Rule: *Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability by Public Accommodations and in Commercial Facilities* (28 CFR Part 36) (Implementing regulation for Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)):

https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/titleIII_2010/titleIII_2010_regulations.pdf

- ADA: The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Revised ADA Regulations Implementing Title II and Title III (U.S. Department of Justice website):
https://www.ada.gov/2010_regs.htm
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008* (Public Law 110-325): <https://www.ada.gov/pubs/ada.htm>
- Civil Rights (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office for Civil Rights):
<https://www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/for-individuals/disability/index.html>
- Code of Federal Regulations 7CFR15b.3 Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs and Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance* (USDA):
http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2003/7cfr15b.3.htm
- CSDE Circular Letter C-9: *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1975: Procedural Safeguards*:
<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Circular-Letters/circ00-01/c9.pdf>
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)* (U.S. Department of Education):
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*: http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=108_cong_public_laws&docid=f:publ446.108
- Know the Rights That Protect Individuals with Disabilities from Discrimination* (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Office for Civil Rights):
www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/knownyourrights504adafactsheet.pdf
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:
<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/knownyourrights504adafactsheet.pdf>
- USDA Nondiscrimination Regulations (7 CFR 15b: *Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance*):
<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/granule/CFR-2010-title7-vol1/CFR-2010-title7-vol1-part15b>
- Your Rights Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act* (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office for Civil Rights):
<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ocr/civilrights/resources/factsheets/504.pdf>

CACFP

CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE):

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP-Adult-Day-Care-Centers>

Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cnlabeling/child-nutrition-cn-labeling-program>

Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Connecticut Department of Public Health Food Protection Program:

<http://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Food-Protection-Program/Main-Page>

Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE):

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-CACFP-Adult-Day-Care-Centers>

FNS Instructions for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/FNS-Instructions-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Food-Safety-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Forms for CACFP Adult Centers (CSDE):

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Lists/Forms-CACFP-Adult-Day-Care-Centers>

Laws and Regulations for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Laws-and-Regulations-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Manuals and Guides (CSDE):

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Manuals-and-Guides-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE):

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-CACFP-Adult-Centers>

Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning>

Operational Memoranda for the CACFP (CSDE):

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Lists/Operational-Memoranda-for-the-CACFP>

Planning Healthy Meals in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE):

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Planning-Healthy-Meals-CACFP-Adults>

Program Guidance for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE):

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Program-Guidance-CACFP-Adults>

Resources for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Resources-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE):

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Special-Diets-in-CACFP-Adult-Day-Care-Centers>

REGULATIONS AND POLICY

CACFP Policy Memos (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/policy>

CACFP Regulations (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/regulations>

Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (81 FR 24348), April 25, 2016.

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-04-25/pdf/2016-09412.pdf>

Code of Federal Regulations 7CFR15b.3 Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs and Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance. Revised January 1, 2003.

http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2003/7cfr15b.3.htm

Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-221q (Sale of Beverages):

https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_170.htm#sec_10-221q

Connecticut Public Health Code 19-13-B42: Sanitation of Places Dispensing Foods or Beverages (DPH):

<https://eregulations.ct.gov/eRegsPortal/Browse/getDocument?guid=%7BF2EAB579-78B9-43A1-8B73-7ACE5B2DC9DD%7D>

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 2A-18: *Requirements for Meal Modifications in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers:*

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Memos/OM2018/OM02A18.pdf>

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 4A-16, 5C-16 and 5H-16: *New Meal Pattern Requirements for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP):*

http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Memos/OM2016/OM04A16_05C16_05H16.pdf

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 3A-16, 4C-16 and 4H-16: *Statements Supporting Accommodations for Participants with Disabilities in the Child Nutrition Programs:*

http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Memos/OM2016/OM03A16_4C16_04H16.pdf

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 11C-11 and 04H-11: *Fluid Milk and Milk Substitutions in the CACFP:*

http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Memos/OMEarlierYears/OM11C11_14H11.pdf

FNS Instruction 783-13, Revision 3: *Variations in Meal Requirements for Religious Reasons: Jewish Schools, Institutions and Sponsors.*

<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/FNSinstruction/783-13.pdf>

FNS Instructions for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/FNS-Instructions-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-296):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>

How to Determine if a Soy-Based Beverage Meets the Nutrient Requirements to Qualify as an Authorized Milk Substitute in WIC (USDA):

https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/wicworks/Learning_Center/FP/soybeverage.pdf

Nutrition Standards for CACFP Meals and Snacks (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks>

6 | RESOURCES

USDA Memo CACFP 14-2017 SFSP 10-2017: *Modifications to Accommodate Disabilities in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Food Service Program:*

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/modifications-accommodate-disabilities-cacfp-and-sfsp>

USDA Memo CACFP 21-2011-REVISED: *Child Nutrition Reauthorization 2010: Nutrition Requirements for Fluid Milk and Fluid Milk Substitutions in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Questions and Answers:* <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp-21-2011-revised-child-nutrition-reauthorization-2010-nutrition-requirements-fluid-milk-and>

USDA Memo CACFP 04-2010: *Q&As: Milk Substitution for Children with Medical or Special Dietary Needs (Non-Disability):* <http://www.fns.usda.gov/qas-milk-substitution-children-medical-or-special-dietary-needs-non-disability>



Glossary

Administrative Review: A periodic review of an institution’s operations by the Connecticut State Department of Education to monitor performance and assess compliance with all USDA regulations.

advanced practice registered nurse (APRN): An individual who performs advanced level nursing practice activities that, by virtue of post-basic specialized education and experience, are appropriate to and may be performed by this profession. The APRN performs acts of diagnosis and treatment of alterations in health status and collaborates with a physician (licensed to practice medicine in Connecticut) to prescribe, dispense and administer medical therapeutics and corrective measures. For more information, see [Section 20-87a](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes.

alternate protein products (APP): APPs are generally single ingredient powders that are added to foods. Some examples include soy flours, soy concentrates, soy isolates, whey protein concentrate, whey protein isolates, and casein. APPs include vegetable protein products. The USDA has specific requirements for the crediting of APP in Child Nutrition Programs. For more information, see “Seventh-day Adventist Sponsors” in section 4, and the CSDE’s guide, *Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers*, available on the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.

food intolerance: An adverse food-induced reaction that does not involve the body’s

anaphylaxis: A sudden, severe allergic reaction occurring in allergic individuals after exposure to an allergen such as food, an insect sting or latex. Anaphylaxis involves various areas of the body simultaneously or causes difficulty breathing and swelling of the throat and tongue. In extreme cases, anaphylaxis can cause death.

body mass index: A screening tool calculated from a person's weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in meters. A high BMI can be an indicator of high body fatness. For more information, see the CDC’s [Defining Adult Overweight and Obesity](#) webpage.

carbohydrates: A category of nutrients that includes sugars (simple carbohydrates), and starch and fiber (complex carbohydrates). Carbohydrates are easily converted by the body to energy (calories). Foods in the basic food groups that provide carbohydrates — fruits, vegetables, breads, cereals, grains, milk and dairy products — are important sources of many nutrients. However, foods containing large amounts of added sugars provide calories but few, if any, nutrients. For more information, see “added sugars,” “simple carbohydrates” and “complex carbohydrates” in this section.

celiac disease: An autoimmune digestive disease that damages the small intestine and interferes with absorption of nutrients from food. People who have celiac disease cannot tolerate gluten, a protein in wheat, rye and barley. For more information, see the [National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse](#) website.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP): The USDA’s federally assisted meal program providing nutritious meals and snacks to participants in child care centers, family day care homes and emergency shelters, and snacks and suppers to participants participating in eligible at-risk afterschool care programs. The program also provides meals and snacks to adults who receive care in nonresidential adult day care centers. For more information, see the USDA’s [CACFP](#) website.

CACFP facilities: Child care centers, family day care homes, emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers and adult day care centers that participate in the USDA participant and Adult Care Food Program.

CACFP adult meal pattern for adults: The required food components and minimum serving sizes that facilities participating in the CACFP must provide to receive federal reimbursement for meals (breakfast, lunch, and supper) and snacks served to adult participants. For more information, see the CACFP adult meal pattern for participants in the CSDE’s guide, [Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#).

CACFP sponsor: A public or private nonprofit organization that is entirely responsible for the administration of the CACFP in one or more day care homes, child care centers, emergency shelters or at-risk afterschool care centers. In some situations, for-profit institutions may also be eligible to participate in the CACFP. For more information, see Section 226.2 in the CACFP regulations ([7 CFR 226](#)).

Child Nutrition (CN) label: A statement that clearly identifies the contribution of a food product toward the meal pattern requirements, based on the USDA’s evaluation of the product’s formulation. Products eligible for CN labeling include main dish entrees that contribute to the meat/meat alternates component of the meal pattern requirements, e.g., beef patties, cheese or meat pizzas, meat or cheese and bean burritos, egg rolls, and breaded fish portions. The CN label will also indicate the contribution of other meal components that are part of these products. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the CACFP](#), and the USDA’s [Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labeling](#) webpage.

Child Nutrition Programs: The USDA’s federally funded programs that provide nutritious meals and snacks to participants, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program, Special Milk Program (SMP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The CACFP also provides nutritious meals and snacks to the frail elderly in adult day care centers. For more information, see the CSDE’s [Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

creditable food: A food or beverage that can be counted toward meeting the meal pattern requirements for a reimbursable meal or snack in the USDA participant Nutrition Programs. For more information, see the CSDE’s guide, [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#), available on the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.

food intolerance: An adverse food-induced reaction that does not involve the body’s

dietitian: See “registered dietitian” in this section.

disability: A condition in which a person has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment.

fluid milk substitutes: Nondairy beverages (such as soy milk) that can be used as a substitute for fluid milk in the USDA participant Nutrition Programs. For reimbursable meals and snacks, nondairy beverages served to participants without disabilities must comply with the USDA nutrition standards for milk substitutes. For more information, see “nutrition standards for milk substitutes” in this section and “[Milk Substitutions for Adults without Disabilities](#)” in section 3.

food allergy: An exaggerated response by the immune system to a food that the body mistakenly identifies as being harmful. The body’s reaction to the allergy-causing food can affect the respiratory system, gastrointestinal tract, skin, and cardiovascular system. In some people, a food allergy can cause severe symptoms or even a life-threatening reaction known as anaphylaxis. For more information, see “anaphylaxis” in this section.

food components: The five food groups that comprise reimbursable meals in the CACFP (milk, meat/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains). For more information on the individual food components, see the CSDE’s guide, *Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers*, available on the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.

food intolerance: An adverse food-induced reaction that does not involve the body’s immune system, e.g., lactose intolerance. For more information, see “lactose intolerance” in this section.

gluten sensitivity: A condition with symptoms similar to those of celiac disease that improve when gluten is eliminated from the diet. Individuals who have been diagnosed with gluten sensitivity do not experience the small intestine damage found in celiac disease. Gluten sensitivity is a diagnosis of exclusion that requires ruling out celiac disease and wheat/gluten allergy, followed by a period of dietary gluten exclusion to see if the patient gets better, then a gluten challenge to see how the patient reacts. For more information, see “[Gluten Sensitivity](#)” in section 2 and the [Celiac Disease Foundation](#) website.

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA): A federal law that protects personal health information. The HIPAA Privacy Rule provides federal protections for personal health information (electronic, written and oral) held by covered entities and gives patients an array of rights with respect to that information. It also permits the disclosure of personal health information needed for patient care and other important purposes. The Security Rule protects health information in electronic form. It requires entities covered by HIPAA to ensure that electronic protected health information is secure. For more information, see the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#) website.

lactose intolerance: A reaction to a food that does not involve the immune system. Lactose-intolerant people lack an enzyme needed to digest milk sugar (lactose). When that person eats milk products, symptoms such as gas, bloating and abdominal pain may occur.

licensed physician: A doctor of medicine or osteopathy.

meat alternates: Foods that provide similar protein content to meat. Meat alternates include alternate protein products, cheese, eggs, cooked dry beans or peas, nuts and seeds and their butters (except for acorn, chestnut and coconut), and yogurt (plain or flavored). For more information, see the CSDE’s guide, *Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Adult Day Care Programs*.

medical statement: A document that identifies the specific medical conditions and appropriate dietary accommodations for participants with special dietary needs. For information on medical statements for participants with disabilities, see section 2. For information on medical statements for participants without disabilities, see section 3.

menu item: Any planned main dish, vegetable, fruit, bread, grain, or milk that is part of the reimbursable meal. Menu items consist of food items.

noncreditable foods: Foods and beverages that do not count toward any meal pattern components in the USDA participant Nutrition Programs. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Noncreditable Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers*.

nutrient-dense foods: Foods and beverages that provide vitamins, minerals, and other substances that contribute to adequate nutrient intakes or may have positive health effects, with little or no solid fats and added sugars, refined starches, and sodium. Ideally, these foods and beverages are also in forms that retain naturally occurring components, such as dietary fiber. Examples include all vegetables, fruits, whole grains, seafood, eggs, beans and peas, unsalted nuts and seeds, fat-free and low-fat dairy products, and lean meats and poultry (when prepared with little or no added solid fats, sugars, refined starches, and sodium). The term “nutrient dense” indicates the nutrients and other beneficial substances in a food have not been “diluted” by the addition of calories from added solid fats, sugars, or refined starches, or by the solid fats naturally present in the food.

nutrient-rich foods: See “nutrient-dense foods” in this section.

nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes: The nutrition requirements for nondairy beverages (such as soy milk) used as fluid milk substitutes in the USDA participant Nutrition Programs. The USDA requires that any fluid milk substitutes are nutritionally equivalent to cow’s milk and meet the following nutrients based on a 1-cup serving (8 fluid ounces): 276 milligrams (mg) of calcium; 8 grams (g) of protein; 500 international units (IU) of vitamin A; 100 IU of vitamin D; 24 mg of magnesium; 222 mg of phosphorus; 349 mg of potassium; 0.44 mg of riboflavin; and 1.1 micrograms (mcg) of vitamin B-12. For more information, see [table 4](#).

nutritionist: There is no accepted national definition for the title “nutritionist.” All registered dietitians are nutritionists but not all nutritionists are registered dietitians. Some state licensure boards have enacted legislation that regulates use of the title “nutritionist” and sets specific qualifications for holding the title. The definition is variable from state to state. Section 20-206n of the Connecticut General Statutes defines a licensed dietitian/nutritionist certification for registered dietitians. Other professionals can also apply if they have successfully passed a written examination prescribed by the Commissioner of Public Health and have a master’s degree or doctoral degree from an institution of higher education accredited by a regional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, with a major course of study which focused primarily on human nutrition or dietetics. For more information on state licensing requirements, see the DPH’s [Dietitian/Nutritionist Certification](#) webpage.

obese: A body mass index (BMI) of 25.0 to 29.9. For more information, see “body mass index” in this section and the CDC’s [Defining Adult Overweight and Obesity](#) webpage.

overweight: A body mass index (BMI) of 30 or higher. For more information, see “body mass index” in this section and the CDC’s [Defining Adult Overweight and Obesity](#) webpage.

phenylketonuria: A rare genetic disorder in which an individual lacks an enzyme to break down the amino acid phenylalanine, which is present in protein foods. Without the enzyme, levels of phenylalanine build up in the body. This can harm the central nervous system and cause brain damage.

product formulation statement (PFS): An information statement obtained from the manufacturer that provides specific information about how the product credits toward the USDA meal pattern requirements, and documents how this information is obtained citing Child Nutrition Program resources or regulations. All creditable ingredients in a PFS must match a description in the USDA’s [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#). Unlike a CN label, a PFS does not provide any warranty against audit claims. If foods with a PFS will be used in a reimbursable meal, the CACFP sponsor must check the manufacturer’s crediting information for accuracy. For more information, see the CSDE’s handouts, [Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP](#) and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP](#).

product specification sheet: Manufacturer sales literature that provides various information about the company’s products. These materials do not provide the specific crediting information that is required on a product formulation statement, and cannot be used to determine a product’s contribution toward the USDA meal pattern components.

reasonable modification: A change or alteration in policies, practices, and/or procedures to accommodate a disability that ensures adults with disabilities have equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from a program. The general guideline in making accommodations is that adults with disabilities must be able to participate in and receive benefits from programs that are available to adults without disabilities.

recognized medical authority: A state-licensed health care professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under state law and is recognized by the State Department of Public Health. In Connecticut, recognized medical authorities include physicians, physician assistants, doctors of osteopathy, and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), i.e., nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, and certified nurse anesthetists who are licensed as APRNs.

registered dietitian: The Commission on Dietetic Registration defines a registered dietitian (RD) as an individual who has: completed the minimum of a Baccalaureate degree granted by a U.S. regionally accredited college or university, or foreign equivalent; met current minimum academic requirements (Didactic Program in Dietetics) as approved by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics; completed a supervised practice program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics; successfully completed the Registration Examination for Dietitians; remitted the annual registration fee; and complied with the Professional Development Portfolio (PDP) recertification requirement.

reimbursable meals: Meals and snacks that meet the meal pattern requirements of the CACFP regulations, and are eligible for USDA funds.

serving size or portion: The weight, measure, or number of pieces or slices of a food or beverage. CACFP adult day care centers must provide the minimum serving sizes in the USDA meal patterns for meals and snacks to be reimbursable.



CSDE
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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION