

Commissioner's Memo

2/5/2019

FY 2019 Child and Adult Care Food Program Guidance

Memo Information

Memo Number **CNU-19-026**

Memo Date 2/5/2019

Memo Type Regulatory

Unit Child Nutrition

Regulatory Authority Richard B. Russell National School Act 7CFR 210, 215, 220

Response Required NO

Attention Superintendents; Assistant Superintendent; Principals; General Business Managers; Child Nutrition Directors/Managers

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Memo Text

ATTENTION SUPERINTENDENTS, CHILD NUTRITION DIRECTORS, CO-OP DIRECTORS

On April 25, 2016, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) published the final rule "Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP): Meal Pattern Revisions related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010" (81 FR 24348). These regulations were intended, in part, to update the CACFP meal pattern requirements in 7 CFR 226.20 and the meal pattern requirements for infants and preschoolers in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs under 7 CFR 210.10 and 220.8. Child Nutrition Program (CNP) operators were required to comply with these updated meal pattern requirements no later than October 1, 2017.

Technical assistance and a transitional period was offered for the first year of implementation, effective October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018, to allow State agencies and CNP operators to adjust to the updated meal pattern requirements. The changes to the CACFP meal pattern are based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, scientific recommendations from the National Academy of Medicine,

and unit stakeholders. The changes assure that the meals will make available and provide a greater variety of fruits and vegetables, increase the availability of whole grains, and decrease sugars and saturated fats. As the transition period comes to an end, FNS applauds the efforts of CNP operators to achieve and maintain compliance with the updated meal pattern requirements. See below for a review of all changes to the CACFP breakfast, lunch and snack meal patterns.

Changes to the CACFP breakfast meal pattern are as follows:

The breakfast meal consists of three (3) components which are 1% or skim, unflavored milk, whole grain rich or enriched grains, and fruits/vegetables or a combination of both.

- All three (3) components must be served for the breakfast meal to be reimbursable.
- Offer versus Serve (OVS) is not an option for the new CACFP breakfast, lunch, or snack meal patterns except for adults and at-risk afterschool participants.
- Flavored milk is not allowed.
- Pasteurized full-strength juice may be used only one (1) time per day (across all meals served) to meet the fruit/vegetable requirement for breakfast, lunch, or snacks.
- At least one (1) serving of grain must be whole grain rich each day. This rule extends across all meals served.
- Breakfast cereals may contain no more than six (6) grams of sugar per dry ounce and/or no more than 21.2 grams of sucrose or other sugars per 100 grams of cereal.
- One (1) ounce of meat/meat alternate may be used at breakfast up to three (3) times per week in place of the grain requirement.
- Beginning October 2019, the grains will be specified as ounce equivalents. Until October 2019 the minimum serving size for children ages 3-5 is 1/3 cup.

Changes to the CACFP lunch meal pattern are as follows:

- The lunch meal pattern consists of five (5) components which are 1% or skim, unflavored milk, meat/meat alternate, whole grain rich or enriched grains, fruits, and vegetables.

In addition to the specifications listed for breakfast, the following specifications also apply to lunch:

- All five (5) components must be served for the lunch meal to be reimbursable.
- Yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounce portion.
- Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts or seeds may be used to meet no more than one half (1/2) of the meat/meat alternate daily requirement.
- If soy products such as tofu are used to meet the meat alternate requirement, the products must comply with Appendix A to part 226.
- A vegetable may be used to meet the entire fruit requirement. If two vegetables are used to meet this requirement, it must be two different vegetables.
- Grain based desserts may not be used to credit toward the reimbursable CACFP meal pattern.
- Frying is not allowed as a means of on-site preparation.

Changes to the CACFP snack meal pattern are as follows:

The snack meal pattern consists of five (5) components to include 1% or skim, unflavored milk, meat/meat alternate, vegetables, fruits, and whole grain rich or enriched grains.

In addition to the specification listed for breakfast and lunch, the following applies:

- Two (2) of the five (5) meal components must be served to be reimbursable.

During the transition year, FNS continued to develop and issue policy guidance and clarifications as well as educational resources, in response to State agencies' and CNP operators' implementation needs. These resources include:

- Policy Memoranda and Q&As (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/policy>)
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/child-and-adult-care-food-program>)
- <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks>
- Team Nutrition CACFP Meal Pattern Training Tools (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp-training-tools>)
- CACFP Halftime: Thirty on Thursdays Training Webinars (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp-halftime-thirty-thursdays-training-webinar-series>)
- CACFP Trainer's Corner Quarterly Webinar Series

However, State agencies and CNP operators were not fully equipped with these materials at the outset of the implementation period and ongoing feedback has indicated that some operational challenges continue. Given the operational challenges still being experienced by State agencies and CNP operators in implementing CACFP and preschool meal pattern requirements, for fiscal year 2019, FNS strongly encourages State agencies to use the flexibilities available to them under 7 CFR 210.18(1)(2) and 226.14(b). For CACFP, when a State agency finds that an institution, which prepares its own meals, is failing to meet meal requirements under 7 CFR 226.20, fiscal action need not be taken if the State agency determines other action would have a corrective effect (7 CFR 226.14(b)). For State agencies monitoring schools serving preschool meal patterns through the School Meal Programs, in most cases, State agencies before fiscal action is assessed (7 CFR 210.18(1)(2)). However, State agencies, and CACFP sponsoring organizations, must continue to take immediate fiscal action if a meal is completely missing one or more of the required food components (see 7 CFR 210.18(1)(2)(i); 226.2, definition of "meal;" 226.14(a); and 226.20(a)).

As implementation of the updated meal patterns continues, refer to the above listed resources for technical assistance. FNS and the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) will continue to offer the CACFP Meal Pattern Requirements Training to State agencies and CACFP sponsoring organizations.

Contact your Area Specialist at (501) 324-9502 if you have questions concerning the changes to the CACFP meal pattern.

Attachments

- [Serving_Preschoolers_2018-2019_110751.pdf](#)