

# NEW Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Patterns

## HIGHLIGHTS:

This is the first major revision of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal patterns since the program's inception in 1968. The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 required the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to revise the CACFP meal patterns to ensure children and adults have access to healthy, balanced meals throughout the day.

There are many parts of the new meal patterns that CACFP centers and day care homes may begin implementing right away without compromising the current meal components required for reimbursement. We highly encourage all centers and day care homes to start integrating some of the new requirements as soon as possible. The Office for Food and Nutrition Programs will issue additional guidance and training as USDA's Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) develops resources and guidance materials.

CACFP centers and day care homes must comply with the new meal patterns by **October 1, 2017. The current meal patterns (infant, child and adult) remain in place.**

The Office for Food and Nutrition Programs has reviewed the Child Nutrition Programs Final Rule to the CACFP Meal patterns and identified practices that transition towards full implementation and compliance. A summary highlighting sustainable changes and the accompanying 'Sugar Sense' flyer are guidance materials created and issued from the Office for Food and Nutrition Programs as the first release of information pending further guidance from USDA.

## Infant Meal Pattern

- **Encourage and support Breastfeeding:** Centers and day care homes should support mothers who choose to breastfeed their infants by encouraging mothers to supply breastmilk for their infants while in day care. Centers and providers may offer mothers a quiet, private area that is comfortable and sanitary for mothers to express into sterilized containers to provide to the center or day care provider for safe storage and use while the mother is away from the infant.
- Eliminate the serving of juice while the infant is in care.
- Eliminate the serving of cheese food or cheese spread and opt for hard cheeses such as cheddars, colby/jack or provolone.



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## Child and Adult Meal Pattern:

- Juice is limited to once per day
- At least one serving of grains per day must be whole grain-rich
- Eliminate the serving of grain-based desserts as part of the grain component

## Less added sugar:

- Yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces
- Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce.

## Milk:

- Unflavored whole milk must be served to 1 year olds
- Unflavored low-fat or fat-free milk must be served to children 2 through 5 years old
- Unflavored low-fat, unflavored fat-free or flavored fat-free milk must be served to children 6 years old and older and adults;
- Non-dairy milk substitutes that are nutritionally equivalent to milk may be served in place of milk to children or adults with medical or special dietary needs. Existing requirement under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.



\*Department of Elementary & Secondary Education has created a non-inclusive list of cereals and yogurts that meet these new standards for reference.

## Additional Improvements

- Deep fat frying is not allowed as a way of preparing foods on-site.
- Water should be offered and made available during the day for participants. Young children and adults with limited cognitive abilities may not be able to request water.

USDA has created side-by-side comparison of old and new meal standards, which can be found at:

### Infant Meal Pattern:

[http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cacfp/CACFP\\_infantmealstandards.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cacfp/CACFP_infantmealstandards.pdf)

### Child and Adult Meal Pattern:

[http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cacfp/CACFP\\_childadultmealstandards.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cacfp/CACFP_childadultmealstandards.pdf)

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