

OSPI CNS Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Reference Sheet

Meal Requirements

Centers and day care homes offering meals through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) play a critical role in supporting the wellness, health, and development of children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities through the provision of nutritious foods. Nutrition standards for meals and snacks served in the CACFP are based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and recommendations made by the National Academy of Medicine. Program sponsors are reimbursed for meals served when in compliance with the CACFP meal pattern.

Requirements

- ✓ For each participant, sponsors may claim reimbursement for a maximum of two meals and one snack **or** two snacks and one meal per day.
 - Exceptions include:
 - Emergency shelters can claim up to three meals per day per child
 - At-Risk can only claim up to one meal and one snack per child per day
- ✓ Meals claimed for reimbursement must meet CACFP meal pattern requirements.
- ✓ Meals must be served:
 - To enrolled participants.
 - At an approved site.
 - At approved times.
 - In an approved meal service style.
- ✓ Provide at least the minimum required portion sizes of all meal pattern food components to each age group of children served.
- ✓ Prepare enough food to accommodate older children who require larger portions.
- ✓ Follow proper sanitation and health standards while storing, preparing, and serving food.
- ✓ Follow all applicable state and local laws and regulations.
- ✓ Adequate facilities must be available to store food or hold meals.

Reimbursable Meal Types

- ✓ Institutions can claim reimbursement only for the meal types specified in their approved Site Calendar(s) in WINS.
- ✓ The following meal types are eligible for reimbursement:
 - Breakfast
 - A.M. Snack
 - Lunch



- P.M. Snack
- Supper
- Evening Snack

Meal Times

- ✓ Meals that are claimed for reimbursement must be served at traditional mealtimes.
- ✓ OSPI Child Nutrition Services (CNS) defines traditional mealtimes as:
 - Breakfast: Up to 9:30 a.m.
 - A.M. Snack: 9 – 11 a.m.
 - Lunch: 11 a.m. – 130 p.m.
 - P.M. Snack: 1:30 – 5 p.m.
 - Supper: 5 – 7 p.m.
 - Evening Snack: 7 – 9 p.m.
- ✓ Submitting meal time changes
 - Institutions may submit mealtime changes in WINS when necessary to meet participants' needs.
 - When updates are made to Site Calendar(s) in WINS, Sponsors must send an email alert to their assigned CACFP Specialist to notify them of the requested change.
 - These requests must be approved by the CACFP Specialist prior to change in operation.
 - Meals served outside approved meal service times may not be claimed for reimbursement.

Meal Patterns

- ✓ Meal patterns are separated by the following age groups:
 - 1 - 2 years
 - 3 – 5 years
 - 6 – 12 years
 - 13 – 18 years (At-Risk and Emergency Shelters)
- ✓ The meal pattern is made up of five food components, with minimum portion sizes required for a reimbursable breakfast, lunch, supper, and snack for specific age groups of participants.
 - Breakfast: Three components are required.
 - Fluid milk
 - Grains
 - Vegetable, Fruit, or both
 - Meat/Meat Alternates may be used to meet the entire grains requirement a maximum of three times per week.
 - Lunch or Supper: All five components are required
 - Fluid milk
 - Grains
 - Meat/Meat Alternates

- Vegetable
 - Fruit
- Snack: Two different components are required
 - Snacks with two food items from the same component group are **not** reimbursable
 - Snacks with two different beverages are **not** reimbursable
 - Fluid milk
 - Grains
 - Meat/meat alternate
 - Vegetable
 - Fruit
- ✓ Medical Exceptions to the Meal Pattern
 - Review the [Special Dietary Needs Reference Sheet](#) for detailed information.
- ✓ Food Provided by Parents/Guardians
 - Parents/Guardians cannot be required to provide food(s) for their child who is participating in the CACFP.
 - If a parent/guardian chooses to provide a meal component these requirements must be followed:
 - They can only provide **one** of the meal components.
 - The item **must** meet the meal pattern.
 - The program must provide all other required components for that meal.
- ✓ Use the [Meal Service Styles Reference Sheet](#) for details on meal service.

References

- [7 CFR 210](#)
- [7 CFR 215](#)
- [7 CFR 220](#)
- [7 CFR 226](#)

Resources

- [Child and Adult Care Crediting Handbook for the CACFP](#)
- [CACFP Meal Pattern Chart - Child](#)
- [OSPI CNS- Meal Patterns and Menu Planning Webpage](#)
- [Special Dietary Needs Reference Sheet](#)
- [USDA- CACFP Best Practices Handout](#)
- [USDA- CACFP Meal Patterns: Child and Adult Meals](#)
- [USDA- Food Buying Guide](#)
- [USDA- Mealtimes with Toddlers in the CACFP](#)
- [USDA Team Nutrition- Meal Pattern Worksheets](#)

Acronym Reference

- CACFP- Child and Adult Care Food Program
- CFR- Code of Federal Regulations
- CNS- Child Nutrition Services
- OSPI- Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- USDA- United States Department of Agriculture