

R381-100-15: CHILD NUTRITION

Purpose

This section provides rules and information about the basic nutritional requirements for the children in care.

(1) If food service is provided:

- (a) The provider shall ensure that the center's meal service complies with local health department food service regulations.

Rationale/ Explanation

The purpose of this rule is to ensure that food preparation and service are sanitary in order to reduce the possibility of foodborne illness. Minimum standards for food safety are based on scientific data that demonstrate the conditions required to prevent contamination of food with infectious or toxic substances that cause foodborne illness.

Enforcement

Always Level 3 Noncompliance.

Assessment

A finding to this rule would be issued if a provider serves food and does not have a kitchen inspection from their local health department.

(1) If food service is provided:

- (b) Foods served by centers not currently participating and in good standing with the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) shall comply with the nutritional requirements of the CACFP. The licensee shall either use standard Department-approved menus, menus provided by the CACFP, or menus approved by a registered dietician. Dietitian approval shall be noted and dated on the menus, and shall be current within the past 5 years.

Rationale/ Explanation

Nourishing food is the cornerstone for children's health, growth, and development. Because young children grow and develop more rapidly during the first few years of life than at any other time, they must be provided food that is adequate in amount and type to meet their basic metabolic, growth, and energy needs. The CACFP regulations, policies, and guidance materials on meal requirements provide the basic guidelines for good nutrition. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pgs. 152-154, Standards 4.2.0.1, 4.2.0.3*

Enforcement

Level 3 Noncompliance if the provider is using non-approved menus not signed and/or dated by a registered dietician but the meals served meet CACFP nutritional requirements.

Level 2 Noncompliance otherwise.

Assessment

This rule is in compliance if there is documentation that the children receive food from a public school in good standing with a federal food program.

If only snacks are served, the licensee must be in compliance with this rule.

Licensees using CACFP menus may mix and match components of the CACFP menus, so that the day-to-day menu may vary from the CACFP menu, as long as each meal contains all of same nutritional components as the CACFP menus.

Food used only as curriculum, it is not part of the snack or meal, does not need to meet rules for food service. If the menus are approved by a dietician but the approval was more than 5 years ago, a finding will be issued. If the facility is on the food program, the Licensing Specialist will not check for substitutions.

Punch such as Tang is not a juice. If juice is listed on the menu and punch is served, a finding will be issued. Licensing does not require portion sizes to be listed as part of the menu.

If a parent, not the center staff, provides meals and snacks, this rule does not apply.

(1) If food service is provided:

- (c) Centers not currently participating and in good standing with the CACFP shall keep a six week record of foods served at each meal or snack.**

[Rationale/ Explanation](#)

The purpose of this rule is to verify that foods actually served to children by centers not participating in CACFP meet basic nutritional requirements. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pgs. 152-154, Standards 4.2.0.1, 4.2.0.3*

[Enforcement](#)

Always Level 3 Noncompliance.

[Assessment](#)

The six week record of foods served at each meal must be dated so Licensing Specialists can determine which foods were served on which dates.

If the only food service provided is a snack, the center staff must keep a six week record of food served for snacks.

(1) If food service is provided:

- (d) The provider shall make available the current week's menu for parent review.**

[Rationale/ Explanation](#)

Making menus available to parents by posting them in a prominent area helps to inform parents about proper nutrition, and allows parents to know if a food is being served that their child has an allergy to. It also allows parents to plan meals at home that do not duplicate what the child ate at the center that day. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pgs. 159-160 Standard 4.2.0.9*

[Enforcement](#)

Always Level 3 Noncompliance.

Assessment

In order for the menu to be posted where parents can review it, it must be posted in an area parents can see as they come and go.

If a rotating menu is used, the date needs to be on each week so the parents know which menu is being served this week.

A snack menu must be posted if the only food service provided is a snack.

(2) The provider shall offer meals or snacks at least once every three hours.

Rationale/ Explanation

Young children need to be fed often. Appetite and interest in food varies from one meal or snack to the next. To ensure that the child's daily nutritional needs are met, small feedings of nourishing food should be scheduled over the course of a day. Snacks should be nutritious, as they often are a significant part of a child's daily intake of food. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pgs. 156-157 Standard 4.2.0.5.*

Enforcement

Always Level 3 Noncompliance.

Assessment

Meal times will be counted from the end of one meal time to the start of the next meal time. If only the start time is listed on the daily schedule, the start time of the next activity will be used as the end time of the meal or snack. An extra 30 minutes will be allowed at the end of nap time, if needed, to allow children time to wake up from their nap and get ready for snack.

For centers who provide late evening or overnight care, meals or snacks do not need to be served every three hours after children have gone to bed for the night.

If a center is open until 7:00 p.m., there may be up to but not more than four hours between the afternoon meal or snack and the center's closing time. If the center is open later than 7 p.m., a meal or snack must be offered at least every three hours.

(3) The provider shall serve children's food on dishes, napkins, or sanitary high chair trays, except for individual serving size items, such as crackers, if they are placed directly in the children's hands. The provider shall not place food on a bare table.

Rationale/ Explanation

Using clean food service dishes and utensils prevents the spread of microorganisms that can cause disease. The surfaces that are in contact with food must be sanitary. Food should not be put directly on the table surface for two reasons. First, even washed and sanitized tables are more likely to be contaminated than washed and sanitized dishes or disposable plates. Second, eating from plates reduces contamination of the table surface when children put down their partially eaten food. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pg. 178 Standard 4.5.0.2*

Highchair trays function as plates for seated children. Therefore, they should be washed and sanitized the same way as plates and other food service utensils. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pg. 178 Standard 4.5.0.2*

Enforcement

Always Level 3 Noncompliance.

- (4) The provider shall ensure that caregivers who serve food to children are aware of food allergies and sensitivities for the children in their assigned group, and that children are not served the food or drink they have an allergy or sensitivity to.

Rationale/ Explanation

Food allergies are common, occurring in between two and eight percent of infants and children. Food allergic reactions can range from mild skin or gastrointestinal symptoms to severe, life-threatening reactions with respiratory and/or cardiovascular compromise. Deaths from food allergies are being reported in increasing numbers. For all of these reasons, vigilant efforts to avoid exposure to the offending foods are necessary. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pg. 182 Standard 4.6.0.1.*

Enforcement

Level 1 Noncompliance if a child is served food to which he or she is allergic. Level 2

Noncompliance otherwise.

Assessment

If a child just doesn't like a particular food, but the child doesn't have any negative physical reaction to it that is considered a food preference, not a food allergy or sensitivity.

Food sensitivities can result in minor irritations (rashes, loose stools), whereas a true food allergy could cause a life-threatening event (anaphylaxis, a severe asthma attack, extreme hives, etc.).

- (5) The provider shall ensure that food and drink brought in by parents for an individual child's use is labeled with the child's name, and refrigerated if needed.

Rationale/ Explanation

The purposes of this rule are to ensure that children are not accidentally served food brought by another child, and to ensure that food brought from home does not cause foodborne illness. Foodborne illness and poisoning is a common occurrence when food has not been properly refrigerated and covered. Although many of these illnesses are limited to vomiting and diarrhea, some are life-threatening. *CFOC, 3rd Ed. pg. 182 Standard 4.6.0.1*

Enforcement

Level 1 Noncompliance if a child is served food to which he or she is allergic. Level 2

Noncompliance otherwise.

Assessment

Food and drink brought from home can be labeled with the child's first name only, unless there is more than one child in the center with food or drink brought from home who has the same first name. When this is the case, the food and drink can be labeled with the child's first name and last initial. If there is more than one child in the center with food or drink brought in from home who has the same first name and last initial, the food and drink must be labeled with the child's full first and last name.

Refrigerated can include being in a lunch container with a cold pack, as long as the cold pack is at least cool to the touch.

If food brought from home is put in a cubbie labeled with the child's name this rule will be considered in compliance.