

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services	Policy
	MT CACFP 2002-5 Rev 4
Child and Adult Care Food Program	Section: All Institutions and Facilities
	Subject: Food Substitutions and Modifications
Date Revised: 1/18/2023	

FOOD SUBSTITUTIONS AND MODIFICATIONS

Considerations of safety, nutrition and dietary needs are a priority for CACFP meal services to all of its participants.

Providers may make food substitutions when one allowable food item from the planned menu is replaced by another food from the same food component category. For example, apples may replace oranges, or chicken may replace pork. When these substitutions are made, they must be documented on the menu prior the start of the meal service. These substitutions are also permitted to meet an individual participant's food preferences, ethnic, religious, economic, food allergies or intolerances, or other needs.

All children/adults who required special meals and/or accommodations must have a medical statement completed and on file. This form only needs to be updated if changes are made and not annually.

The Medical Statement to Request Special Meals and/or Accommodations is located on the State agency website (www.cacfp.mt.gov) under the Documents tab.

The following categories of special dietary needs are listed below:

Dietary needs due to a disability

In all cases of a disability requiring special meals and/or accommodations, the name and signature of a licensed medical authority and the parent/guardians or adult participants signature is required.

Providers *are required* to make substitutions to the planned menu for participants whose disability restricts or modifies their diet unless it will cause undue hardship on the provider. For example, the substitute food is high in cost or when substitute food is a medical food prescribed by a physician and is available only by special order or through a pharmacy. If this is the case, the provider **may** ask the parent/guardian or adult participant to supply the item(s).

For non-disability dietary needs

For food substitutions or modifications not due to a disability of a participant and which comply with the regulatory CACFP meal pattern do not require documentation from a physician or a recognized medical authority. The *Medical Statement to Request Special Meals or Accommodations* must be completed and signed by a parent/guardian or the adult participant.

Whenever reasonably possible, the provider must supply the requested food substitutions or modifications. The provider makes these substitutions and modifications at its discretion.

Non-disability dietary needs may include parent preference and will still need a Medical Statement to Request Special Meals and/or Accommodations completed and signed by a parent/guardian. Accommodating non-medical requests because of parent preference is optional and can be reimbursed if the request can be made within the meal pattern. The meal is not reimbursable if it falls outside the meal pattern **unless** the form is signed by a licensed medical authority. Most common requests are for milk and gluten free.

In all cases, the parent/guardian or adult participant may only provide **one component** of the meal if they choose to provide the substitution for the meal to be reimbursable.

Milk

Milk substitutions and modifications for participating children and adults who do not have a disability, or a non-disability request related to consuming milk must have a licensed medical authority's signature if the fluid milk substitution does not meet the nutritional requirements of cow's milk.

Fluid Cow Milks

Reduced-lactose milk, acidophilus milk and ultra-high temperature processed milk are acceptable substitutions for fluid cow milk for children or adults who request them. Parents on behalf of their child participant, or an adult participant, must complete and sign the Medical Statement to Request Special Meals and/or Accommodations for these milk substitution's. **Providers are required to accommodate the milk substitution if the request is for a disability or medical condition.**

Non-Dairy Beverages

Non-dairy beverages must be nutritionally equivalent to milk and meet the nutritional standards for fortification of calcium, protein, vitamin A, vitamin D, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, riboflavin and vitamin B-12 levels found in cow's milk. The nutrient standards for non-dairy beverages are outlined in the CACFP regulations in 226.20(g)(3). Parents on behalf of their child participant, or an adult participant, must complete and sign the Medical Statement to Request Special Meals and/or Accommodations for these milk substitution's.

If the non-dairy beverage does not meet the requirements stated above, the parent/guardian must complete the Medical Statement and the form must be signed by a licensed medical authority. **In the case of non-medical reasons or a disability the provider does not have to purchase the requested substitute.**

Meals containing food substitutions and modifications that do not comply with USDA FNS rules for food substitutions or modifications in Child Nutrition Programs cannot be claimed for reimbursement to the CACFP or may be the basis for an overclaim against the provider if the form is not on file and not signed by the appropriate individuals.

For additional information on food substitutions, see:

Special Dietary Needs Documentation Flowchart
[Special Dietary Needs Documentation Flowchart \(mt.gov\)](#)

Parent Provided Meal Component Flowchart
[Parent Provided Foods Flow Chart \(mt.gov\)](#)

Milk Substitution for Children with Dietary Disabilities Flowchart
[CACFP/SFSP Milk Substitution for Children with Dietary Disabilities \(mt.gov\)](#)

Montana CACFP Approved Milk Substitutes
[Montana CACFP Approved Milk Substitutes \(mt.gov\)](#)

USDA FNS Memo CACFP 17-2016, Nutrition Requirements for Fluid Milk and Fluid Milk Substitutions in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Questions and Answers, July 14, 2016. [CACFP17_2016os.pdf \(azureedge.us\)](#)

USDA FNS CACFP 14-2017, SFSP 10-2017 Modifications to Accommodate Disabilities in CACFP and SFSP. [CACFP 14-2017_SFSP 10-2017 \(azureedge.us\)](#)

USDA FNS Independent Child Care Centers, A Child and Adult Care Food Program Handbook, May 2014, pages 35-36. [Independent Child Care Centers Handbook.pdf \(azureedge.us\)](#)

USDA FNS Family Day Care Homes Monitor Handbook, A Child and Adult Care Food Program Handbook, February 2012, pages 23-25. [Monitoring_Homes.pdf \(azureedge.us\)](#)

USDA FNS At-risk Afterschool Meals, A Child and Adult Care Food Program Handbook, Revised July 2015, page 38. [At-Risk Afterschool Meals - A CACFP Handbook \(azureedge.us\)](#)
[At-risk Afterschool Meals Guide \(azureedge.us\)](#)

USDA FNS Adult Day Care, A Child and Adult Care Food Program Handbook, January 2014, pages 34-35. [CACFP Adult Day Care Handbook \(azureedge.us\)](#)

This Institution is an equal opportunity Provider.