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**TO:** CACFP Sponsoring Organizations of Day Care Centers and Homes

**FROM:** Lois Hazelton, Assistant Director  
Child and Adult Care Food Program

**SUBJECT:** Feeding Infants in CACFP: Requirements, Recordkeeping, and Claiming

### **I. Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of this memorandum is to outline requirements for feeding and claiming infants under one year of age in CACFP. Recordkeeping requirements, frequently asked questions, and additional resources are also included.

### **II. Background Information**

CACFP regulations require that meals be offered to all children enrolled in care including infants. For CACFP, an infant refers to a child from birth to their first birthday.

Meals and snacks must meet CACFP Infant Meal Pattern requirements. The day care must offer one iron-fortified infant formula that will meet the needs of at least one infant in care. Parents may decline formula and/or food offered by the day care.

Infants do not eat on a strict meal schedule and should be fed during a span of time that is consistent with the infant's eating habits.

### **III. Infant Meals Eligible for Reimbursement**

#### **A. Feeding Infants: Birth through 5 Months**

- The only creditable food is breast milk and/or iron-fortified infant formula.
- All infants in care may be claimed whether they are fed breast milk or formula by the child care provider or if the mom breast feeds her infant on site. This includes formula purchased by the day care or parent.
- Infants who start solids prior to 6 months of age can be claimed.

#### **B. Feeding Infants: 6 Months to 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday**

- Breast milk and/or iron-fortified infant formula is required at all meals and snacks.
- Solid foods are required once the infant is developmentally ready to accept them.
- A parent may provide one component for a meal or snack. Please note that mothers who directly breastfeed their infants at the day care are providing one component. If the parent supplies more than one component, the meal may not be claimed.

- Communicate with and follow the direction of parents when introducing solid foods to infants.
- As a best practice, CACFP recommends that parents request in writing when the day care should start serving solid foods to their infant.
- Refer to the *Crediting Foods in CACFP* Guide (1377) for detailed guidance on foods/beverages that are creditable for infants.
- Refer to the Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program guide for additional information on this topic.

#### **IV. Recordkeeping Requirements**

The following documents are required:

##### **A. Menu**

- An infant menu with developmentally appropriate meals and snacks for 6 Months to 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday is required. All required components must be listed for each meal/snack and all foods/beverages offered must be creditable for the infant age group. A sample menu is enclosed for your reference.

##### **B. Infant Feeding Statement**

- The Infant Feeding Statement is completed by a parent to indicate whether they accept or decline the formula/foods offered by the day care. This statement is required for all infants in care.
- Day care centers provide the parents with Infant Feeding Statement (CACFP-121).
- Day care home providers document the parent's selection on the Child Enrollment Form for Day Care Homes (DOH-4419), in Kid Kare or on a Sponsor developed form.

##### **C. Attendance and Meal Count Records**

- Infants should be recorded in the daily attendance records when present. Meal count records must be kept to record the number of meals served to all infants in care.

#### **V. Breast Feeding Friendly Child Care**

CACFP encourages child care providers and centers to support breastfeeding families and recognizes these centers/providers with Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care certificates when they meet specific best practices. For more information, please visit the NYS CACFP Breastfeeding Friendly website at:

<https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/breastfeedingspon.htm>.

#### **VI. Summary**

CACFP participating centers and day care homes are required to serve all children in care, including infants. If an enrolled infant is in care during mealtime, the center must offer the infant a meal that complies with the age appropriate CACFP meal pattern.

CACFP provides classroom and online training for Sponsoring Organizations on Feeding Infants in CACFP. For more information on CACFP training opportunities please visit:

<https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/training.htm>.

For additional questions, please call CACFP at 1-800-942-3858 and ask to speak to a nutritionist.

Enclosures

CACFP Infant Meal Pattern (1260)

Sample Infant Menu (CACFP-109)

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

**1. Are any day care homes or centers exempt from offering infant meals?**

No. All CACFP participating day care homes and centers that are licensed to care for infants must offer developmentally appropriate meals and snacks to all enrolled participants.

**2. Is there a list of CACFP approved formulas?**

No. All commercially available iron-fortified infant formulas are acceptable.

**3. Who is responsible for providing more expensive specialty formulas?**

The day care home or center must provide appropriate formulas for infants that require specialty formulas due to a disability when a written medical statement is provided. The medical statement must be signed by a licensed professional. In New York State, licensed professionals that can write the medical statements include physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and dentists.

**4. A parent has requested that their infant be served cow's milk. Is cow's milk creditable for infants under 1 year old?**

Cow's milk is only creditable for infants when a written medical statement by a recognized medical authority is provided. The medical statement must be signed by a licensed professional. In New York State, licensed professionals that can write the medical statements include physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and dentists.

**5. What are the guidelines for infants who receive benefits through the WIC Program?**

All infants in care must be served equally, whether they participate in WIC or not. A day care home or center cannot require the parent to provide formula due to their participation in WIC. If the parent chooses to bring their WIC formula to the daycare, the infant meals are still reimbursable.

**6. What should be done if the parent of an older infant does not want the infant to be fed solid foods?**

If the parent or guardian does not want their infant to be served solid foods while the infant is in care, the day care home or center should have a conversation with the infant's parents or guardians. However, the day care needs to respect the parent's decision and not serve the infant solid foods. In this situation, as long as the home or center continues to offer the infant the required minimum amount of formula or breast milk, the meals are still reimbursable.

**7. Can a day care home provider's infant be claimed if the infant is breastfed during work hours?**

Yes, if the following conditions are met:

- a) The providers household is income eligible based on the completed Letter to Households/Income Eligibility (DOH-4161).
- b) Non-resident children are in care at the time of feeding
- c) The infant is enrolled in care
- d) Breastfeeding is done onsite

**8. Can a day care center staff member's infant be claimed if the staff member breast feeds their infant during work hours?**

Yes, if following conditions are met:

- a) The infant is enrolled in care and
- b) Breastfeeding is done onsite.

**9. Can a meal or snack be reimbursed if the infant does not eat at the scheduled time?**

Yes. As long as all required food components are offered over the course of the day, the foods may be counted towards reimbursable meals and snacks. An infant does not have to eat the entire meal for the meal at the scheduled time to be reimbursed.