

Offer Versus Serve in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers

(October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2019)

Offer versus serve (OVS) is an optional approach to menu planning and meal service that allows participants to decline some of the foods offered in a reimbursable breakfast, lunch, or supper. OVS is not allowed at snack. CACFP adult day care centers that choose to implement OVS must notify the [CACFP staff](#) in the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE).

Under OVS, the determination of a reimbursable meal is based on the participant's selection of a minimum number of food components (lunch and supper) or food items (breakfast).

- A **food component** is one of the food groups that comprise a reimbursable meal. The breakfast meal pattern requires three components (milk, vegetables/fruits, and grains). The lunch meal pattern requires five components (milk, meat/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains). The supper meal pattern is the same as lunch except milk is optional.
- A **food item** is a specific food offered within the five food components. For example, a ½-cup serving of applesauce and a ½-cup serving of blueberries are two food items from one food component (fruits); and a 1-cup serving of brown rice and a 2-ounce whole-grain bagel are two food items from one food component (grains).
- A **combination food** contains more than one food component. Examples include lasagna, beef stew, pizza, burritos, chef's salad, and smoothies made with yogurt and fruit. For example, macaroni and cheese contains pasta (grains) and cheese (meat/meat alternates). Combination foods generally cannot be separated (such as pizza or burrito) or are not intended to be separated (such as hamburger on a bun or turkey sandwich).



For a reimbursable breakfast with OVS, CACFP adult day care centers must offer the full serving of at least four different food items, including one food item from each of the three required food components (milk, vegetables/fruits, and grains), plus one additional different food item from the vegetables/fruits, grains, or meat/meat alternates components. Participants must select at least three food items.

For a reimbursable lunch with OVS, CACFP adult day care centers must offer the full serving of at least one food item from each of the five required food components (milk, vegetables, fruits, grains, and meat/meat alternates). For a reimbursable supper with OVS, centers must offer at least one food item from each of the four required food components (milk is optional). For both lunch and supper, participants must select at least three different components.

Signage

If the CACFP menu offers combination foods or two or more food items from one food component, such as bread and rice, the CACFP adult day care center must provide instructions or signs about the OVS requirements. This signage must indicate what choices make up a reimbursable meal and let participants know that they cannot select two of the same food items or components. For example, a participant cannot select two pieces of toast and milk for a reimbursable breakfast

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because this choice provides only two different food items; and a participant cannot select two servings of chicken and one serving of rice for a reimbursable lunch because this choice provides only two components.

Breakfast

For a reimbursable meal, the CACFP adult day care center must **offer** the full serving of at least four different food items and participants must **select** the full serving of at least three food items. Participants can decline any one food item.

OVS Breakfast Requirements	
Adult day care center must offer at least four food items ¹	Participants must select
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Milk 2. Vegetables/fruits 3. Grains 4. Meat/meat alternates or additional vegetables/fruits or additional grains ² 	At least three different food items (can decline any one food item)
<p>¹ Each food item must provide the minimum serving size in the CACFP adult breakfast meal pattern.</p> <p>² The fourth food item may be a meat/meat alternate item, or an additional serving of a different vegetable or fruit item, or an additional serving of a different grain item.</p>	

Breakfasts must meet the criteria below to be reimbursable under OVS.

- Breakfast menus must include the minimum serving of at least four different food items. For example, a breakfast of milk, banana, and two servings of toast (e.g., enriched cinnamon-raisin bread and whole-wheat bread) is not reimbursable because the two servings of toast are the same food item.
- Participants may decline any one of the four food items, including milk.
- Larger servings of the same component count as only one food item. For example, 1 cup of strawberries counts as one food item (vegetables/fruits). A 3-ounce whole-wheat bagel or two servings of whole-grain toast each count as one food item (grains).
- If the menu offers the minimum daily serving of a component as two separate food items, participants must take both servings to credit as one food item for OVS. For example, the adult breakfast meal pattern requires ½ cup of vegetables/fruits. If the adult day care center offers ¼ cup of sliced peaches and ¼ cup of pineapple tidbits, participants must select both servings to count as one food item (vegetables/fruits). The adult breakfast meal pattern requires two servings of grains. If the adult day care center offers one serving of cereal and one serving of a whole-grain muffin, participants must select both servings to count as one food item (grains).
- Amounts less than a full serving do not count as a food item for OVS. For example, a selection of ¼ cup of cantaloupe does not count as a vegetables/fruits item.



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- If a combination food contains two or more food items and the breakfast menu offers only four food items, participants cannot decline the combination food. For example, a menu offers a fruit smoothie made with yogurt (meat/meat alternates) and strawberries (vegetables/fruits), a whole-grain muffin (grains), and milk (milk). Participants must select the smoothie (two food items) and one other food item for a reimbursable meal.

Examples of OVS at Breakfast

The sample breakfast menus below show examples of OVS in adult day care centers. Breakfast menu 1 contains four different food items and breakfast menu 2 contains five different food items.

Sample breakfast menu 1 (four food items)			
CACFP adult meal pattern for OVS	Planned Menu	Meal pattern contribution	
		Servings	Food items
Grains (G), 2 servings	Whole-grain bagel, 2 ounces	2	1 G
Vegetables and fruits (VF), ½ cup	Strawberries, ½ cup	1	1 VF
Milk (M), 8 fluid ounces ¹	Unflavored low-fat (1%) milk, 1 cup	1	1 M
Meat/meat alternates (MMA) (1 ounce) or additional VF (½ cup) or G (1 serving)	Orange slices, ½ cup	1	1 VF
Participants must select the minimum serving of at least three different food items			
Participant meal		Reimbursable meal?	
Participant selects	Number of food items		
Strawberries (1 VF) Milk (1 M)	2	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 VF and 1 M).	
Bagel (1 G) Strawberries (1 VF)	2	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G and 1 VF).	
Bagel (1 G) Milk (1 M)	2	No. The selected meal contains only two food items (1 G and 1 M).	
Strawberries (1 VF) Orange slices (1 VF) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three different food items (2 VF and 1 M).	
Bagel (1 G) Orange slices (1 VF) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three different food items (1 G, 1 VF, and 1 M).	
Strawberries (1 VF) Orange slices (1 VF) Bagel (1 G)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three different food items (2 VF and 1 G).	
¹ The milk component requires unflavored low-fat (1%), unflavored fat-free (skim), or flavored fat-free milk. The USDA's <i>CACFP Best Practices</i> recommends serving only unflavored milk.			

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Sample breakfast menu 2 (five food items)			
CACFP adult meal pattern for OVS	Planned Menu	Meal pattern contribution	
		Servings	Food items
Grains (G), 2 servings	Whole-wheat toast, 1-ounce slice Whole-grain cereal, 1 ounce	2	2 G
Vegetables and Fruits (VF), ½ cup	Blueberries, ½ cup	1	1 VF
Milk (M), 8 fluid ounces ¹	Unflavored low-fat (1%) milk, 1 cup	1	1 M
Meat/meat alternates (MMA) (1 ounce) ² or additional VF (½ cup) or G (1 serving)	Peanut butter, 2 Tablespoons ³	1	1 MMA
Participants must select the minimum serving of at least three different food items			
Participant meal		Reimbursable meal?	
Participant selects	Number of food items		
Toast (1 G) Cereal (1 G) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three different food items (2 G and 1 M).	
Toast (1 G) Peanut butter (1 MMA) Blueberries (1 VF)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three different food items (1 G, 1 MMA, and 1 VF).	
Toast (1 G) Cereal (1 G) Blueberries (1 VF)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three different food items (2 G and 1 VF).	
Toast (1 G) Blueberries (1 VF) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three different food items (1 G, 1 VF, and 1 M).	
Toast (1 G) Peanut butter (1 MMA) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three different food items (1 G, 1 MMA, and 1 M).	
Peanut butter (1 MMA) Blueberries (1 VF) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three different food items (1 MMA, 1 VF, and 1 M).	
Cereal (1 G) Blueberries (1 VF) Milk (1 M)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three different food items (1 G, 1 VF, and 1 M).	
<p>¹ The milk component requires unflavored low-fat (1%), unflavored fat-free (skim), or flavored fat-free milk. The USDA's <i>CACFP Best Practices</i> recommends serving only unflavored milk.</p> <p>² With OVS, breakfast menus can include a serving of meat/meat alternates every day as the fourth breakfast food item. Without OVS, breakfast menus can substitute a meat/meat alternate for the entire grains component up to three times per week. One ounce of meat/meat alternates substitutes for one ounce of grains.</p>			

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OVS at Lunch

At lunch, the CACFP adult day care centers must **offer** the full serving of at least one food item from each of the five food components. For a reimbursable meal, participants may decline any two food items but must **select** the full serving of at least three different components.

OVS lunch requirements	
Adult day care center must offer all five components ¹	Participants must select
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Milk 2. Fruits 3. Vegetables 4. Grains 5. Meat/meat alternates 	At least three food components (can decline any two food components)
¹ Each food component must provide the minimum serving size in the CACFP adult lunch meal pattern.	

Lunches must meet the criteria below to be reimbursable under OVS.

- Each lunch must include the minimum serving of the five lunch components. For more information, see the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Care Centers](#) webpage.
- Participants may decline any one or two food components, including milk.
- Larger servings count as only one food component. For example, 1 cup of broccoli counts as only one food component (vegetables); and two 1-ounce slices of whole-grain bread (two servings) count as only one food component (grains).
- If the menu offers the minimum serving of a component as two separate food items, participants must take both items to credit as one component for OVS. For example, the lunch meal pattern requires ½ cup of vegetables. If the menu offers ¼ cup of broccoli and ¼ cup of corn, participants must select both to count as the full vegetables component. The lunch meal pattern requires one serving of grains. If the menu offers ½ serving of brown rice and ½ serving of a whole-wheat roll, participants must select both to count as the full grains component.
- Amounts less than the full serving do not count as a food component for OVS. For example, a selection of ¼ cup of broccoli does not count as the vegetables component.
- If a combination food contains three or more food components and the menu offers only five food components, a participant cannot decline the combination food. For example, a menu offers spinach lasagna made with cheese (meat/meat alternates), lasagna noodles (grains), and spinach and tomato sauce (vegetables); apple (fruits); and milk (milk). Participants must select the lasagna (three components) for a reimbursable meal.
- Supper follows the same meal pattern as lunch, except milk is optional. If milk is not served, the adult day care center must offer the four required food components (meat/meat



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alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains). For a reimbursable meal, participants must select the full serving of at least three of the four components.

Examples of OVS at Lunch

The sample lunch menus below show examples of OVS in adult day care centers.

Sample lunch menu 1			
CACFP Adult Meal Pattern	Planned Menu	Meal pattern contribution	
		Servings	Components
Meat/meat alternates (MMA) 2 ounces	Turkey, 2 ounces	1	MMA
Grains (G), 2 servings	Whole-wheat bread, two 1-ounce slices	2	G
Vegetables (V), ½ cup	Broccoli florets, ½ cup,	1	V
Fruits (F), ½ cup	Cantaloupe slices, ½ cup	1	F
Milk (M), 8 fluid ounces ¹	Unflavored low-fat (1%) milk, 1 cup	1	M
Participants must select the minimum serving of at least three different food components			
Participant meal		Reimbursable meal?	
Participant selects	Food components		
Turkey sandwich (MMA, G)	2	No. The selected meal contains only two components (MMA and G).	
Turkey sandwich (MMA, G) Milk (M)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three components (MMA, G, and M).	
Turkey sandwich (MMA, G) Cantaloupe slices (F)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three components (MMA, G, and F).	
Turkey sandwich (MMA, G) Broccoli florets (V)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three components (MMA, G, and V).	
Broccoli florets (V) Cantaloupe slices (F) Milk (M)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three components (V, F, and M).	
Turkey sandwich (MMA, G) Broccoli florets (V) Milk (M)	4	Yes. The selected meal contains four components (MMA, G, V, and M).	
Turkey sandwich (MMA, G) Cantaloupe slices (F) Milk (M)	4	Yes. The selected meal contains four components (MMA, G, F, and M).	
¹ The milk component requires unflavored low-fat (1%), unflavored fat-free (skim), or flavored fat-free milk. The USDA's <i>CACFP Best Practices</i> recommends serving only unflavored milk.			

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Sample lunch menu 2			
CACFP adult meal pattern	Planned menu	Meal pattern contribution	
		Servings	Components
Meat/meat alternates (MMA) 2 ounces	Meat sauce, 2 ounces of cooked hamburger	1	MMA
Grains (G), 2 servings	Spaghetti, 1 cup ¹	2	G
Vegetables (V), ½ cup	Tossed garden salad, 1 cup ² Tomato sauce in meat sauce, ¼ cup ³	1 ½	V
Fruits (F), ½ cup	Fruit salad, ½ cup	1	F
Milk (M), 8 fluid ounces ⁴	Unflavored low-fat (1%) milk, 1 cup	1	M
Participants must select the minimum serving of at least three different food components			
Participant meal		Reimbursable meal?	
Participant selects	Food components		
Spaghetti (G) ¹ Meat sauce (MMA)	2	No. The selected meal contains only two components (G and MMA).	
Spaghetti (G) ¹ Fruit salad (F) Milk (M)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three components (G, F, and M).	
Spaghetti (G) ¹ Meat sauce (MMA) Tossed salad (V) Milk (M)	4	Yes. The selected meal contains four components (G, MMA, V, and M).	
Salad (V) Fruit salad (F) Milk (M)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three components (V, F, and M).	
Spaghetti (G) ¹ Meat sauce (MMA) Milk (M)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three components (G, MMA, and M).	
Spaghetti (G) ¹ Meat sauce (MMA) Fruit salad (F)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three components (G, MMA, and F).	
Salad (V) Fruit salad (F) Milk (M)	3	Yes. The selected meal contains three components (V, F, and M).	
<p>¹ Larger servings of the same food item count as only one food component, e.g., 1 cup of spaghetti (two servings of grains) counts as one food component (grains).</p> <p>² Raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served, e.g., 1 cup of lettuce credits as ½ cup (one serving) of vegetables.</p> <p>³ Amounts less than a full serving do not count as a food component for OVS, e.g., ¼ cup of tomato sauce does not count as the vegetables component for OVS because it is less than the minimum ½-cup serving.</p> <p>⁴ The milk component requires unflavored low-fat (1%), unflavored fat-free (skim), or flavored fat-free milk. The USDA's <i>CACFP Best Practices</i> recommends serving only unflavored milk.</p>			

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Resources

CACFP Meal Patterns for Adults:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/MealPattern/AdultmealpatternCACFP.pdf>

Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-CACFP-Adult-Day-Care-Centers>

Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/MealPattern/AdultNPGmealpattern.pdf>

Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-CACFP-Adult-Centers>

USDA Memo CACFP 05-2017: Offer Versus Serve and Family Style Meals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program: www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/offer-versus-serve-and-family-style-meals-child-and-adult-care-food-program



For more information on the CACFP adult meal patterns, visit the [Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpages or contact the [CACFP staff](#) in the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This handout is available at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/MealPattern/AdultOVS.pdf>.

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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