

# Self-assessment of Adult Day Care Center Practices for Special Diets in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

This tool is intended to help adult day care centers that participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) assess current practices for meal modifications and identify areas in need of improvement. The federal nondiscrimination laws require reasonable meal modifications for participants whose disability restricts their diet, based on documentation from a recognized medical authority. A recognized medical authority is a state-licensed healthcare professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under state law. This includes physicians, physician assistants, doctors of osteopathy, and advanced practice registered nurses. For information on the requirements for meal modifications, refer to the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) guide, *Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers*, and visit the CSDE’s [Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.

For participants whose dietary restrictions are not related to a disability, CACFP adult day care centers may choose to make optional modifications within the CACFP adult meal patterns. For information on the CACFP adult meal patterns, visit the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage and review the CSDE’s guide, *Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers*.



**Step 1 — Assessment.** Check the appropriate box to indicate if each practice is fully implemented, partially implemented, or not implemented by the CACFP adult day care center. Refer to the CACFP adult day care center’s policies, guidelines, and standard operating procedures (SOPs) for special diets and meal modifications. Check “Not known” if additional information is needed to determine whether the CACFP adult day care center implements the practice.

Federal and state requirements	Implementation			
	Full	Partial	None	Not known
1. The CACFP adult day care center complies with the federal requirements for meal modifications, including the USDA CACFP regulations (7 CFR 226), USDA nondiscrimination regulations (7 CFR 15b), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the ADA Amendments Act. For more information, refer to section 1 of the CSDE’s guide, <i>Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers</i> .				
2. The CACFP adult day care center makes reasonable meal modifications for participants whose disability restricts their diet, based on the medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. The medical statement identifies: 1) how the participant’s physical or mental impairment restricts the participant’s diet; 2) an explanation of what must be done to accommodate the participant; and 3) the food or foods to be omitted and recommended alternatives, if appropriate. <b>Note:</b> The CSDE’s form, <i>Medical Statement for Meal Modifications in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers</i> , is available in English and Spanish in the “Documents/Forms” section of the CSDE’s Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers webpage.				
3. The CACFP adult day care center maintains a medical statement for each participant who requires a meal modification due to a disability.				
4. When identifying participants during the meal service who require modified meals and snacks due to a disability, the CACFP adult day care center implements policies and practices that protect the privacy of participants and maintain the confidentiality of each participant’s medical condition. For more information, refer to “Identifying Participants” in section 2 of the CSDE’s guide, <i>Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers</i> .				

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Federal and state requirements, continued	Implementation			
	Full	Partial	None	Not known
5. Optional modified meals and snacks for participants <b>without</b> a disability comply with the CACFP adult meal patterns. Examples of optional modifications include requests related to religious or moral convictions, general health concerns, and personal food preferences, such as adult participants who prefer eating a gluten-free diet or organic foods because they believe it is healthier.				
6. Optional milk substitutions for participants <b>without</b> a disability include only lactose-free or lactose-reduced milk (unflavored low-fat (1%), unflavored fat-free, or flavored fat-free); and/or nondairy milk substitutes that meet the USDA’s nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes. For more information, refer to section 3 of the CSDE’s guide, <i>Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers</i> , and the CSDE’s handout, <i>Allowable Milk Substitutes for Adult participants without Disabilities in the CACFP</i> . <b>Note:</b> For participants <b>without</b> a disability, CACFP adult day care centers can never substitute any other beverages for milk (such as juice, water, nutrition supplement beverages, coffee, tea, and soda), even with a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority.				
7. The CACFP adult day care center takes appropriate precautions to prepare and serve safe meals and snacks for participants with food allergies. Procedures are in place to:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop a food allergy action plan for each participant with a life-threatening food allergy;</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• check ingredients for all foods served to participants with food allergies;</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• designate an area in the kitchen for allergen-free meals and snacks, and use separate equipment and utensils during preparation, cooking, and serving;</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implement cleaning procedures to prevent cross-contact of possible allergens; and</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide annual and ongoing training for staff, including management of participants with life-threatening food allergies and administration of epinephrine autoinjectors.</li> </ul>				
8. The CACFP adult day care center maintains current nutrition information for foods and beverages served in CACFP meals and snacks, which is available to participants, guardians/caregivers, recognized medical authorities, and appropriate staff, as needed. For more information, refer to “Nutrition Information” in section 2 of the CSDE’s guide, <i>Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers</i> .				
<b>Team</b>				
9. The CACFP adult day care center includes a team of appropriate individuals in the planning and implementation of meal modifications for participants whose disability restricts their diet. Examples of team members include program administrator, sponsoring organization representative, nurse, disability coordinator, registered dietitian, food service personnel, and other individuals with relevant experience.				
10. The team develops and communicates the CACFP adult day care center’s policy and procedures for meal modifications.				

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Written policy and procedures	Full	Partial	None	Not known
11. The CACFP adult day care center has a written policy addressing the requirements and procedures for meal modifications in the CACFP. For more information, refer to section 5 of the CSDE’s guide, <i>Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers</i> .				
12. The CACFP adult day care center has written SOPs for meal modifications, such as:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• preparing foods for special diets, e.g., texture modifications, food allergies, celiac disease, and diabetes;</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reviewing menus, reading food labels, and making nutrition information for CACFP meals and snacks available to participants, guardians/caregivers, recognized medical authorities, and appropriate staff, as needed.</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cleaning to prevent cross-contact of possible food allergens;</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• handwashing to prevent cross-contact of possible food allergens;</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring that CACFP adult day care center staff and food service staff regularly communicate and collaborate regarding the planning and implementation of meal modifications for participants whose disability restricts their diet;</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• obtaining consultation services (such as a registered dietitian), as needed, to plan meals and snacks for participants whose disability restrict their diet; and</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• training for food service staff and all applicable CACFP adult day care center staff (including substitutes) involved with planning, preparing, and serving CACFP meals and snacks.</li> </ul>				
13. <b>CACFP adult day care centers with 15 or more employees:</b> The CACFP adult day care center designates at least one person to coordinate compliance with the disability requirements of the USDA nondiscrimination regulations (7 CFR 15b.6). For more information, refer to section 5 of the CSDE’s guide, <i>Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers</i> . <b>Note: For CACFP adult day care centers with less than 15 employees,</b> the USDA recommends having someone on staff who can provide technical assistance to centers and family day care homes when they are making meal modifications for participants with disabilities.				
14. <b>CACFP adult day care centers with 15 or more employees:</b> As required by the USDA nondiscrimination regulations (7 CFR 15b.6(b)), the CACFP adult day care center has written grievance procedures that incorporate appropriate due process standards and that provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints. For more information, refer to section 5 of the CSDE’s guide, <i>Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers</i> .				
<b>Communication</b>				
15. The CACFP adult day care center regularly communicates with all food service and applicable CACFP adult day care center staff regarding:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the requirements for meal modifications;</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the CACFP adult day care center’s policy and SOPs for meal modifications; and</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the individual accommodations for each participant whose disability requires a meal modification;</li> </ul>				

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Communication, continued	Implementation			
	Full	Partial	None	Not known
16. The CACFP adult day care center regularly communicates with participants and guardians/caregivers regarding meal modifications, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the CACFP adult day care center’s policy and SOPs for managing meal modifications for participants whose disability restricts their diet;</li> <li>• procedures for participants and guardians/caregivers to request meal modifications for participants whose disability restricts their diet, including how to complete the medical statement (items 2 and 3);</li> <li>• procedures for obtaining nutrition information for CACFP meals and snacks (item 8); and</li> <li>• procedural rights for grievance procedures (item 14),</li> </ul>				
17. The CACFP adult day care center’s policy and SOPs for meal modifications are posted on the CACFP adult day care center’s website and shared with participants and guardians/caregivers through other means, such as handbooks, newsletters, e-mails, handouts, menu backs, bulletin boards and displays, center events, and public service announcements.				
Professional Development				
18. Food service personnel receive professional development on accommodating special diets at least annually.				
19. Professional development for food service personnel includes training on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the USDA requirements for meal modifications and documentation, i.e., medical statement (items 1-3);</li> <li>• types of special diets and required modifications for menus and recipes;</li> <li>• how to read food labels for nutrition information and ingredients;</li> <li>• planning, preparing, and serving safe meals and snacks;</li> <li>• cleaning and handwashing procedures to prevent cross-contact of possible food allergens;</li> <li>• how to implement the CACFP adult day care center’s policy and SOPs for meal modifications (items 11-14); and</li> <li>• procedures for maintaining the confidentiality of each participant’s medical condition during the meal service (item 4).</li> </ul>				
20. CACFP adult day care center staff receives professional development about meal modifications, as appropriate to their job responsibilities.				
Monitoring and review				
21. The CACFP adult day care center implements monitoring procedures to ensure that all applicable staff consistently follows the policy and SOPs for meal modifications.				
22. The CACFP adult day care center implements monitoring procedures to ensure that meal modifications are reasonable, appropriate, and meet each participant’s dietary needs.				
23. The CACFP adult day care center reviews the policy and SOPs for meal modifications at least annually, and makes changes as needed.				

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**Step 2 — Prioritize the areas for change.** Review the areas rated “none” or “partial” and identify the priority areas for change in the CACFP adult day care center.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 3 — Develop an action plan for each priority area.** For more information, refer to the CSDE’s form, *Action Planning Form*, and the CSDE’s sample completed action planning forms, *Sample Action Plan: Developing Policy for Meal Modifications in the CACFP* and *Sample Action Plan: Promoting Policy for Meal Modifications in the CACFP*.

## Resources

Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/GuideSpecialDietsCACFPAdults.pdf>

Action Planning Form (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/SpecDiet/Action\\_Planning\\_Form.docx](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/SpecDiet/Action_Planning_Form.docx)

Allowable Milk Substitutes for Adult Participants without Disabilities in the CACFP (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Milk\\_Substitutes\\_CACFP\\_Adults.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Milk_Substitutes_CACFP_Adults.pdf)

CACFP Meal Patterns for Adults (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/MealPattern/Adult\\_Meal\\_Pattern\\_CACFP.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/MealPattern/Adult_Meal_Pattern_CACFP.pdf)

CSDE Operational Memorandum 2A-18: Requirements for Meal Modifications in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Memos/OM2018/OM02A18.pdf>

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

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/MealPattern/Guide\\_CACFP\\_Meal\\_Patterns\\_Adults.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/MealPattern/Guide_CACFP_Meal_Patterns_Adults.pdf)

## Self-assessment of Adult Day Care Center Practices for Special Diets in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

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

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

Medical Statements for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Special-Diets-in-CACFP-Adult-Day-Care-Centers/Documents#MedicalStatements>

Requirements for Meal Modifications in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE presentation):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Meal\\_Modifications\\_CACFP\\_Adults\\_Presentation.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Meal_Modifications_CACFP_Adults_Presentation.pdf)

Sample Action Plan: Developing Policy for Meal Modifications in the CACFP (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Action\\_Policy\\_Special\\_Diets\\_CACFP.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Action_Policy_Special_Diets_CACFP.pdf)

Sample Action Plan: Promoting Policy for Meal Modifications in the CACFP (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Action\\_Promote\\_Special\\_Diets\\_CACFP.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Action_Promote_Special_Diets_CACFP.pdf)

Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

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

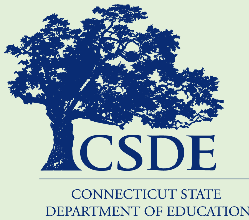
Summary of Requirements for Accommodating Special Diets for Adult Participants in the CACFP (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Summary\\_Chart\\_Special\\_Diets\\_CACFP\\_Adults.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Summary_Chart_Special_Diets_CACFP_Adults.pdf)

USDA Memo CACFP 14-2017 and SFSP 10-2017: Modifications to Accommodate Disabilities in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Food Service Program:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/modifications-accommodate-disabilities-cacfp-and-sfsp>

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For more information, visit the CSDE's [Special Diets in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage or contact the [CACFP staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Assessment\\_Special\\_Diets\\_CACFP\\_Adults.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Assessment_Special_Diets_CACFP_Adults.pdf).

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- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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