




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Child Care Center and Family Day Home Sponsors

FROM: Susan H. Boyle, Education Consultant 
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education

DATE: January 2, 2013

SUBJECT: Operational Memorandum #03C-13 and 3H-13
Dietary Accommodations for Celiac Disease in the CACFP

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently provided clarification regarding dietary accommodations for children with celiac disease in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs. The USDA considers celiac disease to be a disability. Therefore, CACFP child care centers and family day care homes are **required** to make special dietary accommodations for children with celiac disease who participate in the CACFP.

Before CACFP sponsors can make any dietary accommodations, the child's family must provide a medical statement signed by a **licensed physician**. This statement must identify the following:

- the child's disability and an explanation of why the disability restricts the child's diet;
- the major life activity affected by the disability; and
- the food or foods to be omitted from the child's diet and the food or choice of foods that must be substituted.

The medical statement must be completed in its entirety and all required information must be provided before the centers and homes can make any meal modifications or substitutions for children with disabilities. This ensures that the modified meal is reimbursable and that any meal modifications meet nutrition standards that are medically appropriate for the child.

CACFP sponsors should use the *Medical Statement for Children with Disabilities* form for all children with celiac disease. This form is available in PDF and Word formats on the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) Nutrition Policies and Guidance for the CACFP page at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322326>.

Special meals for children with celiac disease are not required to meet the meal pattern requirements because the USDA considers celiac disease to be a disability. Optional accommodations for children with special dietary needs (without recognized medical disabilities) must continue to meet the CACFP meal pattern.

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The CSDE's guide for child care programs, *Nutrition Policies and Guidance for the CACFP: Accommodating Special Diets*, will be updated in the near future to reflect this information.

This guide is available at http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cacfp/special_diets/special_diets.pdf.

For questions about this information, please contact Susan Boyle at 860-807-2074, Celia Cordero at 860-807 2076 or Benedict Onye at 860-807-2080.

SHB:sff

Important: This is a numbered Operational Memorandum that contains important program information. Please read carefully and retain in a binder for future reference. Operational Memoranda are also posted on the Child Nutrition Web site at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333794>.