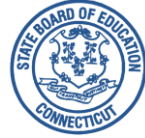




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Sponsors

FROM: John Frassinelli, Chief
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education

DATE: May 4, 2016

SUBJECT: Operational Memorandum No. 3A-16, 4C-16 and 4H-16
Statements Supporting Accommodations for Participants with Disabilities
in the Child Nutrition Programs

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is committed to ensuring that all participants have access to healthy meals that meet their dietary needs. The FNS has facilitated access for participants with special dietary needs through regulations and guidance for the Child Nutrition Programs, including the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

The purpose of this memorandum is to expand the list of **acceptable medical professionals** that may:

- sign a medical statement for meal accommodations in the Child Nutrition Programs; and
- recommend alternate foods for participants whose disability restricts their diets.

A broader list of medical providers will improve access to meal accommodations for participants with special dietary needs while balancing the administrative burden placed on program operators and participants requesting meal accommodations.

Current regulations and guidance require program operators to provide reasonable accommodations for all meals and snacks for participants whose disability restricts their diet, when supported by a medical statement signed by a **licensed physician**. However, in many states, laws permit specific **state recognized medical professionals** to treat patients and write medical prescriptions. With this in mind, the FNS has determined that in addition to licensed physicians, it is reasonable to also permit other recognized medical authorities to complete and sign a medical statement for meal accommodations in the Child Nutrition Programs, and recommend alternate foods for participants whose disability restricts their diet. This decision is at the discretion of a state agency.

A state recognized medical authority for this purpose is a state licensed health care professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under state law. In Connecticut, a “recognized medical authority” is a professional recognized by the Connecticut State Department of Public Health, and includes the following:

- physicians;
- physician assistants;
- doctors of osteopathy; and
- advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), including nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists and certified nurse anesthetists who are licensed as APRNs.

Based on this new USDA policy, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) will now allow medical statements for participants with disabilities to be signed by any state recognized medical authority specified above. This is effective immediately.

The CSDE will be updating *Nutrition Policies and Guidance for the Child and Adult Care Food Program: Accommodating Special Diets* to reflect this information. CACFP institutions will be notified when the updated guide is available.

The CSDE medical statements (dated July 2015) that are currently online already include this information. To access the CACFP medical statements, visit the CSDE’s Nutrition Policies and Guidance Web pages below:

- **Centers and Family Day Care Homes:**
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322326#special
- **CACFP Adult Centers:**
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322694#special

As a reminder, CACFP institutions are **required** to modify meals for participants with disabilities, and may **choose** to modify meals for participants without disabilities.

- **Participants with Disabilities:** The CACFP institution may claim reimbursement for meals provided to a disabled participant only if a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority is on file. All meal modifications must follow the specific instructions outlined in the participant’s medical statement.
- **Participants without Disabilities:** The CACFP institution may claim reimbursement for meals provided to a nondisabled participant only if the meals comply with the meal pattern requirements, and a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority is on file. CACFP institutions cannot claim a meal for reimbursement if it does not meet meal pattern requirements, *even if a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority is on file.*

For more information, please review the CSDE’s *Accommodating Special Diets* at the Web pages above.

Questions may be directed to the CSDE’s CACFP staff.

Day Care Center Sponsors	Day Care Home Sponsors:
Susan Boyle at 860-807-2074 Celia Cordero at 860-807-2076 Benedict Onye at 860-807-2080	Celia Cordero at 860-807-2076

JF:sff

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 posted on the Connecticut State Department of Education’s Child Nutrition Web site at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=320676>.