CACFP Updates June 2026



CACFP Updates is the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) electronic newsletter for sponsors of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), including child care centers, family day care homes, emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, and adult day care centers.

This edition of CACFP Updates includes updated forms and resources for **CACFP civil rights, CACFP meal patterns and crediting, and meal modifications** for program year 2026-27. Meal pattern and crediting updates include the requirements of the USDA final rule, Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs, effective June 8, 2026. Please discard any previously downloaded versions and replace them with the revised versions dated May 2026.

This edition's topics are listed below. Please review and share with appropriate staff members. For previous versions of CACFP Updates, visit the CSDE's CACFP Updates webpage.

- Updated CACFP Civil Rights Forms and Resources
- USDA Final Rule: Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs: Effective June 8, 2026
- Updated CACFP Meal Patterns for Children for Program Year 2026-27
- Updated CACFP Menu Forms for Child Care Programs for Program Year 2026-27
- Updated CACFP Adult Meal Patterns for Program Year 2026-27
- Updated CACFP Menu Forms for Adult Day Care Centers for Program Year 2026-27
- Updated CSDE Menu Planning Guidance Series for the CACFP for Program Year 2026-27
- New CSDE Resource: Offering Lactose-Free and Lactose-Reduced Milk in the CACFP
- Updated CSDE Crediting Resources for Program Year 2026-27
- Updated CSDE Crediting Documentation Resources for Program Year 2026-27
- Updated Offer versus Serve (OVS) Resources for Adult Day Care Centers and At-risk Afterschool Programs for Program Year 2026-27
- Updated CSDE Guide and Resources on Meal Modifications for CACFP Child Care Programs for Program Year 2026-27
- Updated CSDE Guide and Resources on Meal Modifications for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers for Program Year 2026-27

Updated CACFP Civil Rights Forms and Resources

Updated versions (dated May 2026) of the CACFP civil rights forms and resources are available in the "Civil Rights for CACFP" section of the CSDE's Civil Rights for Child Nutrition Programs webpage. Please use these updated versions going forward.

Guide

- Civil Rights Requirements for the CACFP

Forms

- Civil Rights Beneficiary Data Collection Form
- Civil Rights Potential Beneficiary Data Determination Form
- Population by Race per Town Based on 2012 Public School Enrollment (use to complete the Civil Rights Potential Beneficiary Data Determination Form)

Presentation

- Overview: Civil Rights: Your Responsibilities in the CACFP
- Presentation: Civil Rights: Your Responsibilities in the CACFP

As a reminder, the USDA requires that all "frontline staff" who interact with applicants or participants, as well as supervisors of "frontline staff," must be provided civil rights training on an annual basis. Training is required so that people involved in all levels of administration of programs that receive Federal financial assistance understand civil rights related laws, regulations, procedures, and directives. For questions, please contact the CACFP staff.

USDA Final Rule: Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs: Effective June 8, 2026

On May 8, 2026, the USDA published the final rule, Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs. Effective June 8, 2026, this final rule with comment period expands fluid milk options by allowing schools and child and adult care providers participating in the Child Nutrition Programs (CNPs) to offer whole and reduced-fat milk to participants ages 2 and older. The final rule applies to the:

- National School Lunch Program (NSLP), including the Afterschool Snack Program (ASP), the NSLP and ASP preschool meal patterns, and Smart Snacks;
- School Breakfast Program (SBP), including the SBP preschool meal pattern;
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP); and
- Special Milk Program (SMP).

The final rule does not require CNP operators to offer whole or reduced fat milk for ages 2 and older. CNP operators may choose which types of fluid milk to offer within the requirements of each CNP meal pattern.

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service will be issuing an implementation memorandum to provide information and guidance on implementing the final rule. The CSDE is updating all meal pattern and crediting resources to reflect this information.

Submitting Comments

Comments on this final rule must be received by June 8, 2026. Comments may be submitted in writing by either method below.

- Online (preferred): Go to http://www.regulations.gov. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- Mail: Send comments to School Meals Policy Division, Food and Nutrition Service, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314.

Updated CACFP Meal Patterns for Children for Program Year 2026-27

Updated versions (dated May 2026) of the CACFP meal patterns for children for program year 2026-27 (effective June 8, 2026) are available in the "CACFP Meal Patterns for Children" section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage. Updates include the requirements of the USDA final rule, Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs, effective June 8, 2026.

- Breakfast: CACFP Breakfast Meal Pattern for Children
- Lunch/Supper: CACFP Lunch/Supper Meal Pattern for Children
- Snack: CACFP Snack Meal Pattern for Children

Updated CACFP Menu Forms for Child Care Programs for Program Year 2026-27

Updated versions (dated May 2026) of the CACFP menu planning forms for child care programs for program year 2026-27 (effective June 8, 2026) are available under "Menu Forms for Child Care Programs" in the "Menu Forms and Production Records" section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs webpage. The changes include the requirements of the USDA final rule, Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs, effective June 8, 2026. The forms are unlocked to allow sponsors to enter information or adapt as needed.

At-risk Supper and Snack

- At-risk Snack and Supper for Ages 6-18
- Two weeks of At-risk Snack for Ages 6-18
- Two-weeks of At-risk Supper for Ages 6-18

Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack

- Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack for Ages 1-2
- Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack for Ages 3-5
- Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack for Ages 6-12

Breakfast and Snack

- Breakfast, AM Snack, and PM Snack for Ages 3-5
- Breakfast and PM Snack for Ages 6-12

Emergency Shelters

- AM, PM, and Evening Snack for Ages 6-18 in Emergency Shelters
- AM Snack, PM Snack, and Evening Snack for Ages 1-2, 3-5, and 6-18 in Emergency Shelters
- Breakfast, Lunch, and Supper for Ages 1-2, 3-5, and 6-18 in Emergency Shelters
- Breakfast, Lunch, and Supper for Ages 6-18 in Emergency Shelters

Lunch and Snack

- AM Snack, Lunch, and PM Snack for Ages 3-5

Snack

- AM and PM Snack for Ages 1-2
- AM and PM Snack for Ages 3-5
- Two weeks of AM or PM Snack for Ages 3-5

Updated CACFP Adult Meal Patterns for Program Year 2026-27

Updated versions (dated May 2026) of the CACFP adult meal patterns for program year 2026-27 (effective June 8, 2026) are available in the "CACFP Adult Meal Patterns" section the CSDE's Meal Patterns for the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage. The changes include the requirements of the USDA final rule, Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs, effective June 8, 2026.

- Breakfast: CACFP Breakfast Meal Pattern for Adult Day Care Centers
- Lunch/Supper: CACFP Lunch/Supper Meal Pattern for Adult Day Care Centers
- Snack: CACFP Snack Meal Pattern for Adult Day Care Centers

Updated CACFP Menu Forms for Adult Day Care Centers for Program Year 2026-27

Updated versions (dated May 2026) of the CACFP menu planning forms for adult day care centers for program year 2026-27 (effective June 8, 2026) are available under "Menu Forms for Adult Day Care Centers" in the "Menu Forms and Production Records" section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs webpage. The changes include the requirements of the USDA final rule, Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs, effective June 8, 2026.

- Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack (AM or PM)
- Lunch and Snack
- Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack

Updated CSDE Menu Planning Guidance Series for the CACFP for Program Year 2026-27

The CSDE revised the CACFP menu planning guides below to include the requirements of the USDA final rule, Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs, effective June 8, 2026. The updated versions are dated May 2026 and are effective June 8, 2026.

CACFP Child Care and Adult Centers:

- Guide to Menu Documentation for the CACFP
- Guide to Meeting the Crediting Requirements for the CACFP

CACFP Child Care:

- Guide to Meeting the CACFP Meal Patterns for Children
- Guide to Meal Service Requirements for Child Care Programs in the CACFP

CACFP Adult Centers:

- Guide to Meeting the CACFP Adult Meal Patterns
- Guide to Meal Service Requirements for Adult Day Care Centers in the CACFP

In addition to the direct links above, these guides are available in the "CSDE Menu Planning Guidance Series" section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage.

New CSDE Resource: Offering Lactose-Free and Lactose-Reduced Milk in the CACFP

The CSDE's new resource, Offering Lactose-Free and Lactose-Reduced Milk in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, summarizes the crediting requirements for lactose-free and lactose-reduced milk in the CACFP. These requirements apply to the CACFP meal patterns for children and the CACFP adult meal patterns. This document is available under "Allowable Types of Milk" in the "Milk: Section of the CSDE's Crediting Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage and under "Lactose-free and Lactose-reduced Milk (Fluid Milk)" in the "Milk Substitutes for Non-disability Reasons" of the CSDE's Special Diets in the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage.

Updated CSDE Crediting Resources for Program Year 2026-27

The CSDE crediting resources for program year 2026-27 are now available. These documents provide guidance on crediting specific foods in the CACFP meal patterns. As applicable, updates include the requirements of the USDA final rule, Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs, effective June 8, 2026. The current versions are dated May 2026 and are available on the CSDE's Crediting Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage.

- Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for the CACFP

Meats/Meat Alternates (MMA) Component
The updated MMA crediting handouts below are available in the "Meats and Meat Alternates" section of the CSDE's Crediting Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage.

- Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternates in the CACFP
- Crediting Deli Meats in the CACFP
- Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the CACFP
- Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the CACFP
- Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the CACFP
- Crediting Yogurt in the CACFP
- Worksheet for Crediting Yogurt in the CACFP
- Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the CACFP

Fruits Component and Vegetables Component
The updated crediting handouts for fruits and vegetables below are available in the "Fruits" and "Vegetables" sections of the CSDE's Crediting Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage.

- Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the CACFP
- Crediting Juices in the CACFP
- Crediting Smoothies in the CACFP
- Crediting Soups in the CACFP
- Vegetable Subgroups in the CACFP

Grains Component
The updated grain crediting handouts below are available in the "Grains" section of the CSDE's Crediting Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage.

- Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents in the CACFP
- Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP
- Worksheet for Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP
- Worksheet for Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP
- Crediting Enriched Grains in the CACFP
- Crediting Whole Grains in the CACFP
- Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the CACFP
- Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP
- How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP
- When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the CACFP

Updated CSDE Crediting Documentation Resources for Program Year 2026-27

The CSDE crediting documentation resources for program year 2026-27 are now available. These documents provide guidance on meeting the crediting documentation requirements for foods and beverages offered in reimbursable meals and snacks in the CACFP meal patterns. As applicable, updates include the requirements of the USDA final rule, Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs, effective June 8, 2026. The current versions are dated May 2026 and are available on the CSDE's Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs webpage.

- Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program
- Records Retention Requirements for the Child and Adult Care Food Program
- Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the Child and Adult Care Food Program
- Using Product Formulation Statements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

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Updated Offer versus Serve (OVS) Resources for Adult Day Care Centers and At-risk Afterschool Programs for Program Year 2026-27

OVS is an optional approach to menu planning and meal service that applies only to CACFP at-risk afterschool programs and adult day care centers. OVS cannot be implemented in any other CACFP child care centers, institutions, or family day care homes.

OVS allows participants to decline some of the foods offered in a reimbursable breakfast, lunch, or supper. OVS cannot be implemented at snack. Adult day care centers and at-risk afterschool programs that choose to implement OVS must notify the CSDE and receive approval prior to beginning implementation. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources below.

- **Adults:** Offer Versus Serve in Adult Day Care Centers in the CACFP
- **At-risk Afterschool Centers:** Offer versus Serve in At-risk Afterschool Centers

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Updated CSDE Guide and Resources on Meal Modifications for CACFP Child Care Programs for Program Year 2026-27

The CSDE has updated the resources below (dated May 2028) on the USDA requirements for meal modifications in the CACFP. Updates include content, formatting, resources, and the requirements of the USDA final rule, Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs, effective June 8, 2026. Please discard any resources downloaded prior to today and replace them with the revised versions.

Requirements and Guidance

- Guide: Guide to Meal Modifications in CACFP Child Care Programs
- Overview: Overview of the Requirements for Meal Modifications for Children in the Child and Adult Care Food Program
- Milk Substitutes: Allowable Fluid Milk Substitutes for Non-disability Reasons for Children in the CACFP
- Summary Chart: Summary Charts of the Requirements for Meal Modifications for Children in the CACFP

Developing Policies

- Self-assessment of Child Care Practices for Meal Modifications in the CACFP
- Sample Action Plan: Developing Policy for Meal Modifications in the CACFP
- Sample Action Plan: Promoting Policy for Meal Modifications in the CACFP

All resources are available on the CSDE's Special Diets in the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage.

Updated CSDE Guide and Resources on Meal Modifications for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers for Program Year 2026-27

The CSDE has updated the resources below (dated May 2028) on the USDA requirements for meal modifications in the CACFP. Updates include content, formatting, resources, and the requirements of the USDA final rule, Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs, effective June 8, 2026. Please discard any resources downloaded prior to today and replace them with the revised versions.

Requirements and Guidance

- Guide: Guide to Meal Modifications in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers
- Overview: Overview of the Requirements for Meal Modifications for Adult Participants in the CACFP
- Milk Substitutes: Allowable Fluid Milk Substitutes for Non-disability Reasons for Adult Participants in the CACFP
- Summary Chart: Summary Charts of the Requirements for Meal Modifications for Adult Participants in the CACFP

Developing Policies

- Self-assessment of Adult Day Care Center Practices for Meal Modifications in the CACFP
- Sample Action Plan: Developing Policy for Meal Modifications in the CACFP
- Sample Action Plan: Promoting Policy for Meal Modifications in the CACFP

All resources are available on the CSDE's Special Diets in the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage.

For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's CACFP Updates webpage or contact the CACFP staff at the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841. This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfpupdates/2026/cacfp_updates_2026_06.pdf.

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