Evergreen Child Care, Inc.

CHILD CARE FOOD PROGRAM

Program Manual

for Child Care Centers

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I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

What is the Child and Adult Care Food Program?

The U.S. Congress originally established the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) in 1968 as the Child Care Food Program. The purpose of the CACFP is to provide aid to child and adult care institutions/centers for the provision of nutritious foods that contribute to the wellness, healthy growth, and development of young children, and the health and wellness of older adults and chronically impaired disabled persons.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and California Department of Social Services (CDSS). Licensed child care centers that meet necessary requirements may receive reimbursement each month to help pay for the meals and snacks they serve to children in their care. As a day care center, the amount of reimbursement you receive is based on the total household income of each child enrolled.

Disclaimer: Although this handbook is thorough in detail, it is impossible to cover every possibility that could occur. It is the center's responsibility to contact our agency, **Evergreen Child Care, Inc. (ECCI)**, for any information pertaining to the food program that may not be noted in this handbook and to seek guidance for their individual situation.

II. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Day care center must:

- Provide nonresidential care services;
- Be licensed by California Department of Social Services (for At Risk centers may be license exempt if they meet the exemption requirements described in the Child Care Center General Licensing requirements)
- Be public, nonprofit, or for-profit.

Business Entity Type

To participate in the CACFP, a center may be; private, nonprofit; or private, for-profit.

- **Private, Nonprofit**

  The CACFP regulations require all nonprofit child care centers to have tax-exempt status under the IRC of 1986. Centers do not need to have "501(c)" status in order to participate as a nonprofit center; any

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) nonprofit "status" is acceptable. A letter from the IRS citing the center's name, address and the status is adequate. Churches are exempt automatically if they meet the requirements of section 501(c)(3) of the IRC under "organized for a religious purpose." This means that they are not required to apply for or document that they have tax exempt status [CACFP 05-2013 Tax Exempt Status for Private Nonprofit Organizations in CACFP and SFSP, January 24, 2013]. A nonprofit organization must also be incorporated in the State of California.

- **Private, For-profit (must qualify by one of these two criteria)**

a. Either 25 percent of center enrollment or licensed capacity, whichever is less, is eligible for free or reduced-price meal reimbursement according to the USDA income eligibility guidelines. Or 25 percent of center enrollment or licensed capacity, whichever is less, receives subsidized care (e.g., from CDSS Child Development or CalWORKs).

b. Private, for-profit adult care institutions may qualify as long as 25 percent of enrolled participants receive subsidized care (federal Title XIX or Title XX benefits. A for-profit center sponsor must ensure that each of its centers meets the 25-percent threshold in order to claim meal reimbursement on a monthly basis for each center. For example, a sponsor with five centers must ensure that each center meets the eligibility threshold before it claims meal reimbursement for each center. If each center does not meet the threshold, the sponsor may claim meal reimbursement only for those centers that meet the threshold for that claiming month.

LICENSING

A child care center must be licensed in the following manner:

- Either have a current license to operate a child care center from the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) or one of its delegate licensing agencies. For a nonprofit center, the license for a center must be issued in the name of the nonprofit. For a for-profit center, the license must be issued to the current owner, individual, business, or corporation.

- Possess a Certification of Operation from the DSS Child Development Division providing a 60-day approval to operate pending the transfer of license by DSS or one of its delegate licensing agencies. However, there are the following exceptions to the licensing requirement:

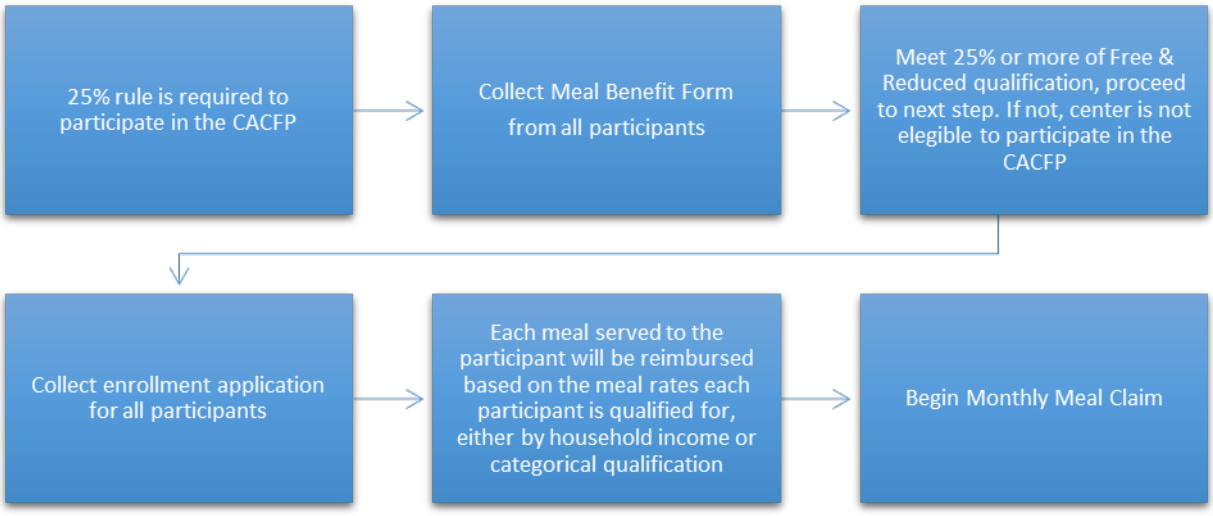
    a) Child care centers, such as at-risk, afterschool centers may be license exempt if they meet the exemption requirements described in the Child Care Center General Licensing Requirements, Title 22, Division 12, of the California Code of Regulations.

    b) Child care centers on military bases may provide a Department of Defense (DOD) child care license or a letter from the base commander or appropriate military official stating that the center meets DOD child care requirements.

c) Child care centers on Indian reservations may provide appropriate documentation from the Bureau of Indian Affairs or other applicable federal agency.

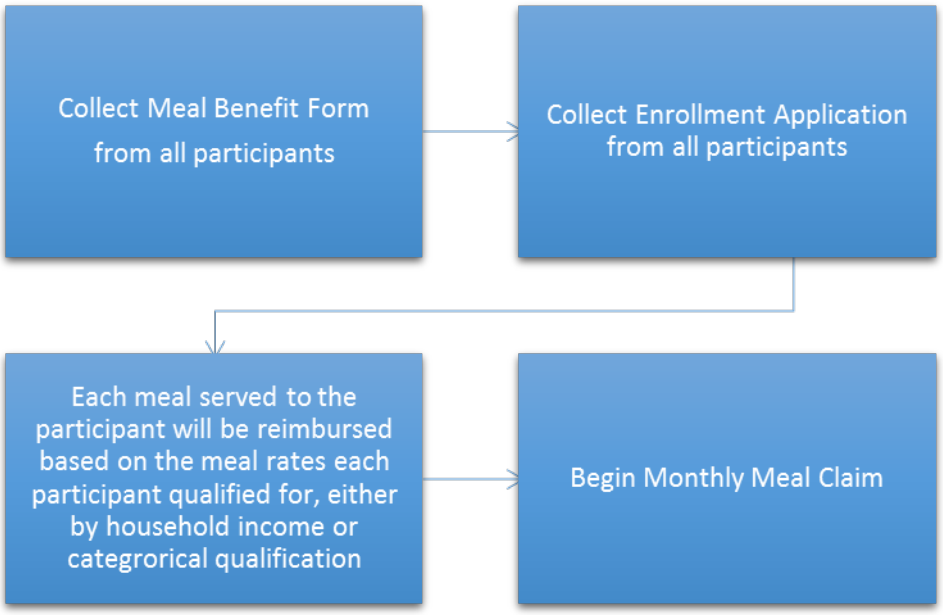
d) An emergency shelter must submit the appropriate local health and safety certifications to operate a shelter in lieu of a child care license.

Steps for Private, For-Profit Centers



Centers must continue to meet 25% or more of free or reduced qualification on a monthly basis in order to be eligible to participate in the CACFP

Steps for Private, Nonprofit Centers (25% rule does not apply)



Centers must continue to show proof that they are maintaining non-profit status with the food program

Non-pricing and pricing programs

There are two optional systems for charging CACFP meals, both of which are tied to the program's free and reduced-price meal policy. These systems are known as "Non-pricing" and "Pricing" Programs.

Non-pricing Programs

Non-pricing Programs are those in which the center assigns no separate charges for meals served to enrolled children. Since most centers charge fees or tuition covering all areas of their day care services, the majority of centers participating in the CACFP are non-pricing programs. The children's meals are covered by the tuition payments and no money is exchanged at mealtime. If all enrollees pay tuition, no portion of which is specifically earmarked for food service, it is a non-pricing program. Likewise, if enrollees pay different tuition fees for reasons other than meal service fees, it is a non-pricing Program. The policy statement that must be submitted for such centers consists of an assurance that all enrolled children are served the same meals at no separate charge, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, and that there is no discrimination in the course of the center's food service [7 CFR 226.23(b)].

Pricing Programs

Pricing Programs are those in which enrolled children who do not qualify for free meals are charged separate fees for their meals. This may be direct payment from the child at the time each meal is served; a separate daily, weekly, or monthly food charge or meal ticket payment; a specifically earmarked portion of the tuition

payment for food service; or an identifiable reduction from the standard tuition rate for meals provided by parents. Centers which charge separately for meals must develop and submit a policy statement that:

- Sets forth the criteria and form that will be used to determine free and reduced-price eligibility for enrolled children;
- Describes the procedures used to accept free and reduced-price statement forms from each child's household;
- Describes the method used to collect payments from children paying the full price of the meal without overtly identifying those paying the reduced-price or those receiving a free meal;
- Provides for a hearing procedure for a child's household to appeal a free and reduced-price eligibility determination;
- Provides assurances that there will be no disclosure or overt identification of children eligible for free and reduced-price meals and no discrimination against any participant on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability; and
- Provides assurance concerning the maximum charges that will be made free or reduced-price meals [7 CFR 226.23(c)].

Evergreen Child Care, Inc. (ECCI) requires all sponsored Child Care Centers participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to operate as **nonpricing programs** to ensure that all enrolled children have equal access to nutritious meals and snacks without discrimination or financial barriers.

Policy Statement

All Child Care Centers operating under ECCI sponsorship are required to maintain a nonpricing meal service as a condition of participation in the CACFP.

Under this policy:

1. All enrolled children shall receive CACFP meals and snacks at no separate charge, regardless of their household income or eligibility classification (Free, Reduced-Price, or Paid).

2. Centers shall not charge families separately for meals or snacks claimed for CACFP reimbursement.

3. Centers shall not require families to pay additional meal fees as a condition of receiving CACFP meals or snacks.

4. Centers may include meal service costs as part of their regular tuition or child care fees, provided that no separate meal charge is imposed.

5. All children shall receive the same meal service without discrimination, regardless of household income, race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, consistent with applicable federal civil rights requirements.

6. Centers shall not identify, segregate, or otherwise treat children differently based on their household income eligibility classification.

Center Responsibilities

Each sponsored Child Care Center shall:

- Operate its CACFP meal service on a nonpricing basis throughout its participation under ECCI sponsorship.
- Provide all participating children with meals and snacks that meet applicable CACFP meal pattern requirements.
- Maintain accurate meal counts, attendance records, enrollment documentation, and other required CACFP records.
- Inform parents or guardians that CACFP meals and snacks are provided without a separate charge.
- Notify ECCI immediately of any proposed changes to its meal service or fee structure that may affect its nonpricing status.

ECCI Monitoring and Oversight

ECCI shall verify compliance with this policy through its regular CACFP monitoring and administrative oversight activities.

ECCI may review:

- Parent handbooks, enrollment agreements, tuition schedules, and other documents describing meal service fees.
- Meal service practices during monitoring visits.
- Parent communications concerning meal charges.
- Any complaints or concerns regarding improper meal charges or unequal meal service.

Noncompliance and Corrective Action

Any sponsored Center found charging separately for CACFP meals or otherwise failing to comply with this policy shall be required to take corrective action as directed by ECCI.

Corrective action may include:

- Immediate discontinuation of unauthorized meal charges.
- Revision of tuition agreements, parent handbooks, or meal service policies.
- Refunds or other appropriate remedies for improperly collected meal charges.
- Submission of written corrective action documentation to ECCI.

Failure to correct identified noncompliance may result in additional administrative action, including serious deficiency procedures or termination of the CACFP agreement, as applicable under federal and state requirements.

Policy Compliance

All ECCI-sponsored Child Care Centers must comply with this policy throughout their participation in the CACFP.

This policy shall be incorporated into ECCI's CACFP administrative policies and communicated to all sponsored Child Care Centers.

NON-PROFIT FOOD SERVICE STATUS

A center, whether it is public, nonprofit, or for-profit, must operate a nonprofit food service operation. Nonprofit food service includes all food service operations conducted by the center principally for the benefit of enrolled participants. *All program reimbursement funds are used solely for the operation or improvement of the CACFP.* We highly recommend that a center should have procedures for comparing food service costs to CACFP reimbursement to ensure they maintain a nonprofit food service.

The following are examples of ways that agencies may use excess funds to benefit CACFP participants:

- Expand menus to include a larger variety of foods including the amount and variety of whole grains, fresh vegetables, and fruits
- Serve hot meals
- Fund CACFP-related nutrition education training for staff members
- Improve kitchen facilities and equipment

What does this mean?

Any receipts that pertain to the food program as a direct cost to the food program MUST be entered monthly. Receipts include; food you purchase at the grocery stores to serve to the daycare children, utensils, plates, cups, microwave and/or food service labor costs.

**If you wish to use partial of reimbursement on kitchen appliances such as toaster, microwave, you must contact our agency for approval. **

Food Service Labor Costs:

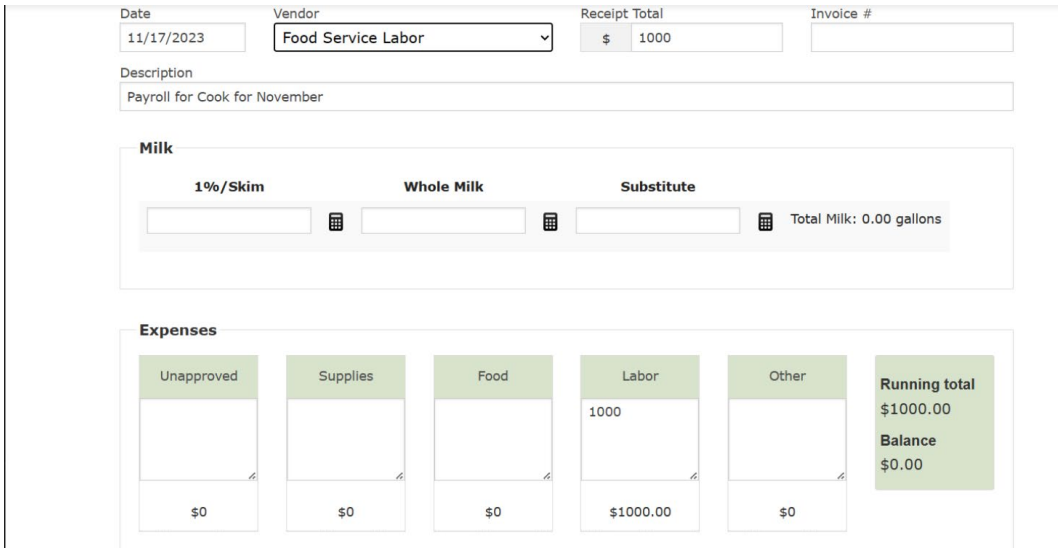
Centers must document the cost of food service labor needed for the operation of the CACFP. This may include wages, salaries, employee benefits, and the share of taxes paid by the independent center necessary to perform the following tasks:

- Menu planning and purchasing;
- Meal preparation, serving, and clean-up of Program meals;
- Supervision of day-to-day food service operations, including supervision of children during the meal service; and
- On-site preparation of daily Program meal service records. (if you do use part of the food reimbursement you must allocate appropriately and are required maintain records of hours contribution to program activities)

For example: Staff #1 $100.00 partial salary for daily program meal service records
Staff #2 $200.00 partial salary for daily program meal service records.

Note: Proof of payroll stubs and records of hours of contribution to program activities **must** be provided to our agency to us upon request.

Example: If you use some of the food program funds for salary paid to your cook, then you MUST enter payroll information onto Minute Menu CX/KidKare on a monthly basis as well. The vendor you will use will say "Food Service Labor" and You will add the labor costs under the "labor" section under managed receipts.



III. ELIGIBILTY, MEAL BENEFIT FORM & ENROLLMENT APPLICATION

Eligibility

Income Eligibility Determinations

In order to claim a childcare participant for either; free, reduced-price or paid rate of reimbursement, individual eligibility information must be collected for all enrolled children once each year.

The information submitted by each child's household is compared with the USDA Income Eligibility Guidelines in order to determine the enrollee's rate of reimbursement.

Automatic Eligibility

There are instances in which child care participants are given automatic eligibility for free meals. These instances include:

1. For a child who has CalFresh, California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs), or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) benefits for your child, their family need complete only the following information on a free and reduced-price application:

    a. The name(s) and appropriate CalFresh, CalWORKs, or FDPIR case number(s) for the child(ren); and
    b. The signature of an adult member of the household.

2. Recent amendments and laws have allowed for automatic eligibility for foster children.

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 provides automatic eligibility for free meals, without further application, to any foster child whose care and placement is the responsibility of the State or who is placed by a court with a caretaker household. State agencies will network with the agency responsible for foster care services to facilitate foster children's information being available to centers.

Note: The presence of a foster child in the household does not convey eligibility for free meals to all children in the household in the same manner as CalFresh, CalWORKs, or FDPIR

Eligibility Categories

There are three possible income determinations that may be made on a household's income eligibility application:

• The free meal category is for a participant whose household size and gross income are at or below the eligibility level for free meals according to the current guidelines; or for those who receive CalFresh,

CalWORKs, or FDPIR benefits. The free meal category is also for foster children and children who are enrolled in Head Start.

• The reduced-price meal category is for a participant whose household size and gross income do not meet the requirements for free meals, but who is at or below the eligibility level for reduced-price meals according to the current Income Eligibility Guidelines.

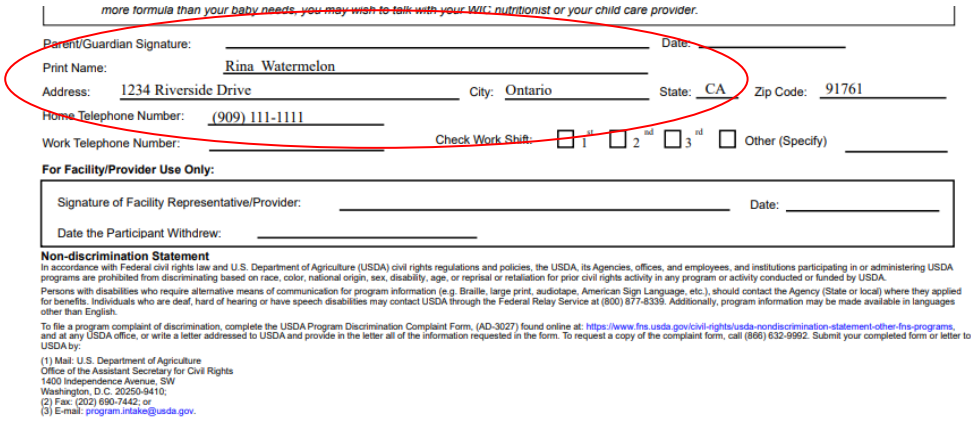
• The paid meal category is for any participant whose household gross income exceeds the eligibility guidelines for free or reduced-price meals, or those who are not a member of CalFresh, CalWORKs, or FDPIR household.

C. Meal Benefit Form (MBF)

The MBF must include; complete information of the the participant's free and reduced-price income eligibility, the parent, guardian or other household adult's signature and must be submitted to ECCI.

*Please note: The parent who is allowed to sign the MBF must match the name of the parent whose information is registered as parent/guardian on Minute Menu CX (MMCX)/Kidkare. If the parent's name on the MBF does not match any of the parent/guardian's name registered on MMCX/Kidkare, it will be deemed as an incomplete MBF and processed as incomplete.

<u>Example:</u>



more formula than your baby needs, you may wish to talk with your WIC nutritionist or your child care provider.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: Rina Watermelon

Address: 1234 Riverside Drive City: Ontario State: CA Zip Code: 91761

Home Telephone Number: (909) 111-1111

Work Telephone Number: _____ Check Work Shift: ☐ 1st ☐ 2nd ☐ 3rd ☐ Other (Specify) _____

For Facility/Provider Use Only:

Signature of Facility Representative/Provider: _____ Date: _____

Date the Participant Withdrew: _____

Non-discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: https://www.fns.usda.gov/civil-rights/usda-nondiscrimination-statement-other-fns-programs, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(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) E-mail: program.intake@usda.gov.

4. Last Four Digits of Social Security Number (SSN) and Signature

Penalties for misrepresentation: I certify that all of the above information is true and correct and that the CalFresh, CalWORKs, FDPIR, or other eligible program case number is current, correct, or that all income is reported. I understand that this information is being given for the receipt of federal funds; that agency officials may verify the information on the meal benefit form (MBF) and that the deliberate misrepresentation of the information may subject me to prosecution under applicable state and federal laws.

Printed Name: Rina Watermelon

Last Four Digits of SSN: 1234 Check Here if No SSN: ☐

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____ Date: _____

2

A sample form and sample letters to the parent or guardian which explain the purpose for determining free and reduced-price eligibility are available and can be found in different languages on the FNS website and also can be found in English on our website at:

http://www.evergreencacfp.org/uploads/1793313304cacfp-09-nonpricing_letter_to_parents_jun25-(1).pdf

For all enrolled children (except those meeting the categorical eligibility criteria above), "income" includes; the household's gross earnings, wages, welfare, pension, and support payments, unemployment compensation, social security, and additional cash received or withdrawn from any other sources, including savings, investments, trust accounts, and other resources. Some forms of military combat and/or per capita tribal payments are not considered.

A household with foster and non-foster children may choose to include the foster child as a household member, as well as any personal income earned by the foster child, on the same household application that includes its non-foster children. This may help the foster family's non-foster children qualify for free or reduced-price meals based on household size and income.

Meal Benefit Form (MBF) Due Date:

It is the center's responsibility to submit a current, completed, and certified MBF for each child that is claimed in the free or reduced-price eligibility category at least 15 days prior to their first claim month.

Please be advised that any MBF received after 60 days from the signature date will not be accepted.

A completed MBF must contain the following household information:

- Name of each child
- Names of each household members and their sources of income including pay frequency (i.e. $500/weekly), if applicable
- Categorical eligibility, if applicable (Case ID # for Cal-Fresh, CalWORKS, FDPIR
- etc.)

- Signature and the last four digits of the Social Security Number of the adult household member completing the application, or verification that the adult household member does not have a Social Security Number.
- Parent/Guardian's name of MBF must match the parent's name registered on MMCX/Kidkare.

Enrollment Application

It is the child care center's responsibility to collect and submit enrollments for each child to Evergreen Childcare Inc. (ECCI), regardless if parents choose for their child to participate in the food program or not (decline form). All meals served to children who are not enrolled for care are not reimbursable.

Note: The Meal Benefit Form is not an enrollment application.

Enrollment applications and declining forms are completed on MMCX/Kidkare (Software information is discussed further in this manual)

Child's enrollment document must:

- Be signed by the child's parent or guardian;
- Document normal days and hours of care;
- Document meals to be served during the hours of care.
- Be updated annually. (In the month of September, ECCI will email all centers instructions on how to print and enrollment renewal which includes; enrollment forms and MBF's) for the upcoming fiscal year.

How to enroll children on Minute Menu CX and Kidkare

Type & complete all required fields under the **ENROLL CHILD** button in your assigned Minute Menu CX account/KidKare. ***Enrollment information cannot be finalized or saved properly if any required field is incomplete.***

Please refer to link on how to enroll new child onto MMCX:

https://help.minutemenucx.com/help/enrolling-children

Please refer to link on how to enroll new child onto Kidkare for centers:

https://youtu.be/-hblFZD8bCQ

Enrollment Date/ Parents' Signature

Centers can start claiming meals for children **only after receiving a completed enrollment form, signed and dated by parents.**

All completed enrollment applications must be submitted to ECCI within **5 calendar days** from the date that the parent and/or guardian had signed.

Each child will be eligible for meal reimbursement as of the date the parent/guardian sign the enrollment.

If enrollment forms have not been completed/signed by the parent at the time of the monitoring visit, meals for that child will be disallowed.

Enrollment due date- All completed enrollment applications must be submitted to ECCI **within 5 calendar days** from the date that the parent and/or guardian signed the enrollment. If, for any reason, enrollments are submitted after 5 days, that child will be eligible for the food program as of the date that ECCI receives the enrollment form.

Please be advised that any enrollment application and MBF received after 60 days from the signature date will not be accepted.

Keeping a copy of enrollment application- The center must retain a copy of each child's enrollment form and enrollment renewal (along with MBF) on site. These records must be kept for three program years plus the current year.

Updating enrollments-Any changes on the enrollment application, such as hours in care, days and meal types, the center must print out the existing enrollment on MMCX/KidKare and make these changes in **red** pen. Any information that is not updated, the child becomes ineligible for the food program until the updated enrollment is submitted. Any incorrect spelling of name and/or incorrect birth dates, centers must submit name and age verification, such as; copy of immunization record, birth certificate, and passport. A center cannot alter the child's enrollment information through MMCX/KidKare once the form has been finalized.

Previously enrolled children returning to the daycare- If a child that was previously enrolled in the daycare returns, the center must contact ECCI to reinstate the child's status as "pending" on MMCX/KidKare. Thereafter, the center may print out the enrollment for the returning child.

Withdrawing children from the food program- The center may withdraw an active child from MMCX/KidKare directly. Ensure to assign the date when the child has been withdrawn from care.

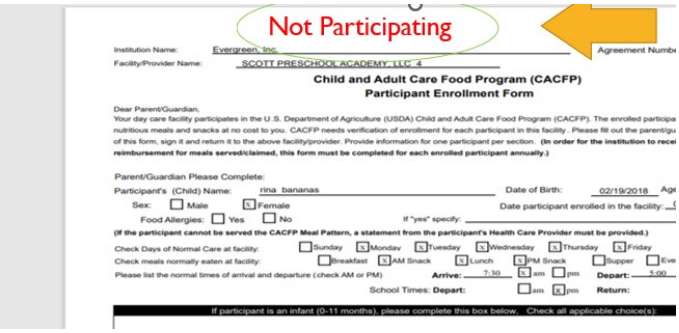
Foster children: One enrollment application per foster child is required. For Meal Benefit Form, a center is not required to have a MBF for a foster child, as long as the center has a document from the appropriate agency verifying the status of the child as a foster child whose care and placement are the responsibility of the state, or that the foster child has been placed with a caretaker household by a court. If such a document is not available, the child care center must have the foster child's household complete a MBF that includes the foster child. In this case, the foster child is still categorically eligible for free meal reimbursement.

PARENT'S FORM FOR DECLINING THE FOOD PROGRAM

All children regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status will not be discriminated by the food program. Centers are still required to complete the enrollment application for the child even if the parent/legal guardian has decided to decline CACFP.

When completing the child's enrollment ensure to do the following:

- Once the enrollment is printed, you will write in red pen on top of enrollment “Not Participating”.



- A meal benefit form (MBF) for any non-participant is NOT needed.

<u>Enrollment Renewal</u>

Centers are required to renew their daycare children’s enrollment and Meal Benefit Form (MBF) every year in September. The enrollment renewal packet will include the following:

1. Enrollment applications for the new fiscal year, will be printed by each center via MMCX/KidKare in the month of September. In order to renew the enrollment application, a current date and signature must be obtained by the parent or guardian.

2. A completed MBF. A completed MBF must contain the following household information:

  - Name of each child
  - Names of each household members and their sources of income including pay frequency (i.e. $500 weekly), if applicable
  - Categorical eligibility, if applicable (Case ID # for Cal-Fresh, CalWORKS, FDPIR etc.)
  - Signature and the last four digits of the Social Security Number of the adult household member completing the application, or verification that the adult household member does not have a Social Security Number.
  - Parent/Guardian’s name of MBF must match the parent’s name registered on MMCX/Kidkare.

All completed enrollment renewals will be activated as of October 1st of every year. If centers fail to submit the enrollment renewal form(s) by the due date, those child(ren) will not be eligible for meal reimbursement until the completed enrollment renewal form(s) is submitted to ECCI.

IV. PLANNING, PREPARING, AND SERVING ALLOWABLE MEALS FOR INFANTS AND CHILDREN AGE 1 YEAR AND ABOVE

Meal Pattern Chart

Meal pattern for Infants (0-11 months) is available on ECCI's Website:
http://www.evergreencacfp.org/uploads/1725574022cacfp-infant-meal-pattern-(2024).pdf

Meal pattern for children over 1 year is available on ECCI's Website:
http://www.evergreencacfp.org/uploads/1725573597cacfp-children-meal-pattern-(2024).pdf

Each Meal Pattern Chart displays the MINIMUM portion sizes, per meal, per each age group. You may serve more. For example, below displays the minimum quantities for breakfast/per age group (1-12 yrs.):

TABLE 3 TO PARAGRAPH (c)(2)—CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM LUNCH AND SUPPER

[SELECT THE APPROPRIATE COMPONENTS FOR A REIMBURSABLE MEAL]

Meal components and food items[1]	Minimum quantities				
	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18[2]	Adult participants
Fluid milk	4 fluid ounces[3]	6 fluid ounces[4]	8 fluid ounces[5]	8 fluid ounces[5]	8 fluid ounces.[6]
Meats/meat alternates[7]	1 ounce equivalent	11/2 ounce equivalents	2 ounce equivalents	2 ounce equivalents	2 ounce equivalents.
Vegetables[8]	1/8 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup.
Fruits[8]	1/8 cup	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup.
Grains[9]	1/2 ounce equivalent	1/2 ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent	2 ounce equivalents.

Food Buying Guide

The USDA Food Buying Guide (FBG) for Child Nutrition Programs serves as the principal tool to determine how much food to purchase and prepare. The FBG also identifies each food item's contribution to the meal pattern requirement. It provides average yields for over 1,200 foods.

All meal components that the centers use in their reimbursable meals must be listed in the Food Buying Guide.

Interactive Food Buying Guide is available at:

https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Home/Home

Standardize Recipes

According to CACFP regulations, any menu items that are prepared from scratch that contains more than ***one*** ingredient, requires a standardize recipe on file.

For better practices: we highly suggest to have a separate folder specifically for standardize recipes.

Samples of menu foods that require standardize recipes are; home-made pizza, spaghetti and meatballs, chicken stir-fry, soups and stews.

Standardize recipes require a separate training. The training is located on our website at:
http://www.evergreencacfp.org/uploads/1564503026standardize-recipe-training.pdf

Infants (0-11 months)

All CACFP Operators with infant care must:

Offer CACFP Program benefits to all infants. CACFP Operators with infants enrolled for care do not have the option to limit participation in the CACFP to children only.

Notify parents or guardians that an iron-fortified infant formula is provided by the program operator at no cost (by either including a notification in a parent handbook, on the enrollment record, on program operator's website, or another document available to parent(s) or obtained a signed written statement from a parent or guardian who chooses to provide an alternate infant formula, acknowledging that they are declining CACFP operator's infant formula.

Parents Declining Provider-Supplied Infant Formula and/or Food

For parents or guardians who decline the provider's offered infant formula and/or food, the provider must obtain written documentation indicating that the parent or guardian will provide an alternate creditable infant formula, breast milk, or age-appropriate infant food.

ECCI's Infant Enrollment Form shall serve as the written statement, documenting which food components will be supplied by the parent or guardian and which components will be supplied by the child care provider.

Parent-Supplied Food for Infants

Parents or guardians may voluntarily provide only one creditable food component per meal or snack for their infant, such as breast milk, iron-fortified infant formula, or one creditable solid food component.

The child care provider must supply all remaining required food components in accordance with the CACFP infant meal pattern and the infant's developmental readiness for the meal or snack to qualify for reimbursement.

An exception may be made for infants with documented disability-related dietary needs. A medical statement must be maintained on file when the meal modification does not meet the CACFP meal pattern.

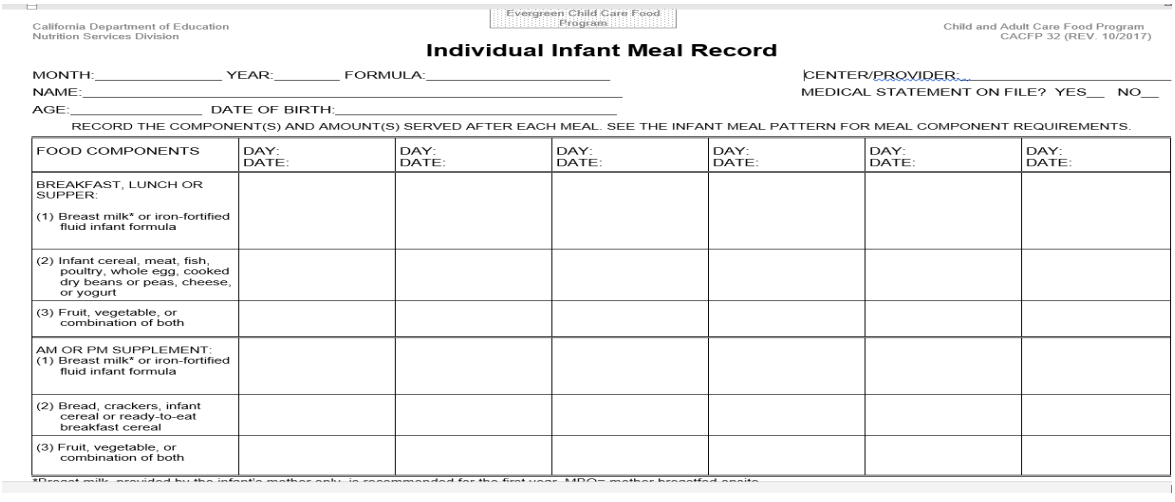
Meals or snacks in which parents supply more than one creditable food component without an allowable exception are not eligible for CACFP reimbursement.

Center must maintain infant feeding records, documentation of parent-supplied food components, and applicable medical statements on file.

Posting menu

Centers must post the current daily menu and/or meal production records (MPR) to show serving sizes per age group for every meal and snack claimed (per infant). Centers are no longer required to complete MPR, effective October 1, 2020; they are optional.

In order to be in compliance with CACFP regulation, each infant must have an individual menu/meal record to show what will be served and the serving sizes per infant. This must be done manually and must be submitted to ECCI by the 3rd calendar day of the month in order to receive reimbursement for the infant.



California Department of Education
Nutrition Services Division

Evergreen Child Care Food Program

Child and Adult Care Food Program
CACFP 32 (REV. 10/2017)

Individual Infant Meal Record

MONTH:_____ YEAR:_____ FORMULA:_____ CENTER/PROVIDER:_____

NAME:_____ MEDICAL STATEMENT ON FILE? YES__ NO__

AGE:_____ DATE OF BIRTH:_____

RECORD THE COMPONENT(S) AND AMOUNT(S) SERVED AFTER EACH MEAL. SEE THE INFANT MEAL PATTERN FOR MEAL COMPONENT REQUIREMENTS.

FOOD COMPONENTS	DAY: DATE:	DAY: DATE:	DAY: DATE:	DAY: DATE:	DAY: DATE:	DAY: DATE:
BREAKFAST, LUNCH OR SUPPER: (1) Breast milk* or iron-fortified fluid infant formula						
(2) Infant cereal, meat, fish, poultry, whole egg, cooked dry beans or peas, cheese, or yogurt						
(3) Fruit, vegetable, or combination of both						
AM OR PM SUPPLEMENT: (1) Breast milk* or iron-fortified fluid infant formula						
(2) Bread, crackers, infant cereal or ready-to-eat breakfast cereal						
(3) Fruit, vegetable, or combination of both						

*Breast milk, provided by the infant's mother only, is recommended for the first year. MBC= mother breastfed onsite

REQUIRED MEAL COMPONENTS FOR INFANTS
(0-11 MONTHS)

- Formula/Breast Milk
- Vegetables and/or Fruits
- Grains
- Meat and Meat Alternates

CACFP defines an infant as a child up to their first birthday. Infants enrolled for care at a participating CACFP center or day care home must be offered a meal that complies with the CACFP infant meal pattern requirements. CACFP regulations define an enrolled child as "a child whose parent or guardian has submitted to an institution a signed document which indicated that the child is enrolled in child care". A day care home may not avoid this obligation by stating that the infant is not "enrolled" in the CACFP, or by citing logistical or cost barriers to offering infant meals. Decisions on offering Program meals must be based on whether the infant is enrolled for care in a participating CACFP center or day care home, not if the infant is enrolled in the CACFP. Infants do not eat on a strict meal schedule. Instead, infants must be fed during a span of time that is consistent with the infant's eating habits. Infant meals must not be disallowed due solely to the fact that they are not served within the center or day care home's established meal time periods.

Creditable Infant Formulas

As part of offering a meal that is compliant with the CACFP infant meal pattern requirements, Daycare centers with infants in their care must offer at least one type of iron-fortified infant formula. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) defines iron-fortified infant formula as a product "which contains 1 milligram or more of iron in a quantity of product that supplies 100 kilocalories when prepared in accordance with label directions for infant consumption". The number of milligrams (mg) of iron per 100 kilocalories (calories) of formula can be found on the Nutrition Facts label of infant formulas.
CACFP requires participating centers offer meals to infants in care if the child is present during the meals service period. A center must offer at least one iron-fortified infant formula that would satisfy the needs of one or more of the infants in care (Parent's Choice is the most economical). An infant's parent or guardian may decline the formula or food being offered and supply some or all of the infant's meal components instead. If parent supplies all the meal components, meals are not subject for reimbursement.

The formula determination must be documented on the enrollment form by the parent or guardian. CACFP requires that both the center and the CACFP sponsor have an enrollment form on file for all infants.

The following criteria may be used to determine whether a formula is eligible for reimbursement:

1. Ensure that the formula is not an FDA Exempt Infant Formula. An exempt infant formula is an infant formula labeled for use by infants who have inborn errors of metabolism or low birth weight, or who otherwise have unusual medical or dietary problems. More information and a list of FDA Exempt
Infant Formulas can be found at:

https://www.fda.gov/food/infant-formula-guidance-documents-regulatory-information/exempt-infant-formulas-marketed-united-states-manufacturer-and-category

2. Look for “Infant Formula with Iron” or a similar statement on the front of the formula package. All iron fortified infant formulas must have this type of statement on the package.

3. Use the Nutrition Facts label as a guide to ensure that the formula is iron-fortified. The nutritive values of each formula are listed on the product’s Nutrition Facts label. To be considered iron fortified, an infant formula must have 1 mg of iron or more per 100 calories of formula when prepared in accordance with label directions.

Parent or guardian provided breastmilk or formula

An infant’s parent or guardian may, at their discretion, decline the infant formula offered by the day care Center and provide expressed breastmilk or a creditable infant formula instead. Meals containing parent or guardian provided expressed breastmilk or creditable infant formula that are served to the infant by the childcare center are eligible for reimbursement, including meals when an infant is only consuming breastmilk or infant formula. Additionally, in recognition of the numerous benefits of breastfeeding, and the breastmilk as being the optimal source of nutrients through the first year of life, day care homes may claim reimbursement of meals when a mother directly breastfeeds her infant at the day care home. This includes meals when an infant is only consuming breastmilk. Meals when a mother directly breastfeeds her infant on-site are eligible for reimbursement and ***highly encouraged.*** Since amount of breastmilk cannot be determined when a mother directly breastfeeds her infant on-site, it is not required.

However, when a parent or guardian chooses to provide expressed breastmilk or a creditable infant formula, centers must document the amount of formula or expressed breastmilk that they plan to serve (i.e., fl oz.). Additionally, when the infant is consuming solid foods, the center must supply all the other required food components along with the serving size of each component, in order for the meal to be reimbursable.

Expressed Breastmilk Storage

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends an optimal storage time of 72 hours for refrigerated expressed breastmilk (may be stored at the day care home in a refrigerator for up to 72 hours from the date the breastmilk was expressed). Bottles of expressed breastmilk must be stored in a refrigerator kept at 40o Fahrenheit (4.4o Celsius) or below.

SOLID FOODS

The CACFP infant meal pattern includes two infant age groups: birth through the end of 5 months and the beginning of 6 months through the end of 11 months. These infant age groups are consistent with the infant age groups in the WIC program. In addition, the infant age groups will help delay the introduction of solid foods until around 6 months of age. It is important to delay the introduction of solid foods until around 6 months of age because most infants are typically not physiologically developed to consume solid foods until midway through the first year of life. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), 6 to 8 months of age is often referred to as a critical window for initiating the introduction of solid foods to infants.

In addition, by 7 to 8 months of age, infants should be consuming solid foods from all food groups (Vegetables, fruits, grains, protein foods, and dairy). Solid foods must be served to infants around 6 months of age, as it is developmentally appropriate for each individual infant. Once an infant is developmentally ready to

accept solid foods, the center or day care home is required to offer them to the infant. Food Nutrition Services (FNS) recognizes, though, that solid foods are introduced gradually, new foods may be introduced one at a time over the course of a few days, and an infant's eating patterns may change. For example, an infant may eat a cracker one week and not the next week. Day care homes must follow the eating habits of infants. Meals should not be disallowed simply because one food was offered one day and not the next if that is consistent with the infant's eating habits.

In addition, solid foods served to infants must be of a texture and consistency that is appropriate for the age and development of the infant being fed. There is no single, direct signal to determine when an infant is developmentally ready to accept solid foods. An infant's readiness depends on his or her rate of development and infants develop at different rates. Centers and day care homes should be in constant communication with infants' parents or guardians about when and what solid foods to serve while the infant is in care. As a best practice, Evergreen recommends that parents or guardians request in writing when a center or day care home should start serving solid foods to their infant. When talking with parents or guardians about when to serve solid foods to infants in care, the following guidelines from the AAP can help determine if an infant is developmentally ready to begin eating solid foods:

a. The infant is able to sit in a high chair, feeding seat, or infant seat with good head control;
b. The infant opens his or her mouth when food comes his or her way. He or she may watch others eat, reach for food, and seem eager to be fed;
c. The infant can move food from a spoon into his or her throat; and
d. The infant has doubled his or her birth weight and weighs about 13 pounds or more.

Allowing solid foods to be served when the infant is developmentally ready (around 6 months of age) better accommodates infants' varying rates of development and allows centers and day care homes to work together with the infant's parents or guardians to determine when solid foods should be served. For more information and best practices on serving solid foods to infants.

Vegetables and Fruits

CACFP goal is to help children establish healthy eating patterns at an early age. Offering a variety of nutrient dense foods, including vegetables and fruits (cooked, mashed, pureed, or small diced as needed to obtain the appropriate texture and consistency), can help promote good nutritional status in infants. Additionally, the AAP recommends infants consume more vegetables and fruits.

Vegetables and fruits are already required at breakfast, lunch, and supper meals for infants that are developmentally ready to accept them (around 6 months of age). To further help increase infant's exposure and consumption of vegetables and fruits, the meal pattern requires vegetables and/or fruits be served at snack for infants that are developmentally ready to accept them. In addition, juice cannot be served to infants and is not reimbursable at any meals/snacks.

Grains

To provide greater flexibility to the menu planner, the infant meal pattern allows ready to-eat cereals to be served at snack ONLY for infants that are developmentally ready to accept them. All ready-to-eat cereals served to infants must meet the same added sugar limit (6g or less) per dry ounce as breakfast cereals served to children and adults in the CACFP. This means, ready-to-eat cereals served to infants at snack must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce. As a reminder, ready-to-eat cereals must also be whole grain-rich, enriched, or fortified in order to be creditable in the CACFP. For more information on the breakfast cereal sugar limit and creditable grains, please see ECCI Website under "Polices and Regulations" tab.

Meat and Meat Alternates

Meat and meat alternates are good sources of protein and provide essential nutrients for growing infants, such as iron and zinc. FNS acknowledges that yogurt is often served to infants as they are developmentally ready. In recognition of this, the updated infant meal pattern allows yogurt as a meat alternate for older infants who are developmentally ready to accept them. All yogurts served in the CACFP, including those served to infants, must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugar per 6 ounces. In addition, the updated infant meal pattern no longer allows cheese food or cheese spread as creditable meat alternates. This is due to their higher sodium content, and the AAP recommends caregivers choose products lower in sodium. Regular cheese, however, is still creditable.

The updated infant meal patterns allow whole eggs as meat alternates. Previously, only egg yolks were creditable in the infant meal pattern because there were concerns with developing food allergies when infants are exposed to the protein in the egg white. However, the AAP recently concluded that there is no convincing evidence to delay the introduction of foods that are considered major food allergens, such as eggs.

REQUIRED MEAL COMPONENTS FOR CHILDREN (1 year and above)

Vegetables and Fruits

Vegetables and fruits are considered two separate categories in all creditable meals. Breakfast requires either a vegetable or a fruit. Snack may include a vegetable and a fruit, but not two servings of vegetables or two servings of fruits only. Lunch and dinner require a vegetable and a fruit, or two different vegetables, to be reimbursable. It is highly suggested to serve a variety of whole, fresh vegetables and fruits are. Frozen, jarred, and canned vegetables and fruits are also creditable as long as they meet minimum serving size requirements.

Vegetables or fruits served as a combination item (e.g., fruit cocktail, succotash, peas and carrots, mixed vegetables, and vegetables used in soups or stews) may be credited to meet only one of the two required items for lunch and supper.

Beans and legume vegetables may be counted as either a meat alternate or as legume vegetable but not as both simultaneously. This includes roasted beans such as roasted chickpeas (garbanzo beans).

Fruit juice or vegetable juice may only be used to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at **one breakfast meal or snack per day**.

Any liquid or frozen product labeled “juice,” “full-strength juice,” “single-strength juice,” “100 percent juice” or “reconstituted juice” is considered full-strength juice. To be used in meeting a part of the vegetable requirement, the product must be 100% full-strength juice.

Full-strength vegetable juice may be used as one component of a snack when the other component is not fluid milk.

The following products do not contribute to the vegetable component in any meal served under the Child Nutrition Programs:

- Snack-type foods made from vegetables such as potato chips, banana chips, or popcorn;
- Pickle relish, jam, or jelly;
- Tomato catsup and hot sauce (ex. Tabasco, Tapatio, Sirracha)
- Home canned products (for food safety reasons); or
- Dehydrated vegetables used for seasoning.

Fruits that are fresh, frozen, dried, canned (packed in water, full-strength juice, or light syrup) and full-strength fruit juice may contribute toward the fruit requirement.

To help meet nutritional standards from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, the fruit requirements are based on the following recommendations:

Include a variety of fruits each week;

- Serve a variety of fruit choices, as each fruit differs in nutrient content.
- At least half of the recommended amount of fruits should come from whole fruits.
- Fruit juice is lower than whole fruit in dietary fiber and when consumed in excess can contribute extra calories.
- Select fruits with more potassium often, such as bananas, prunes and prune juice, dried peaches and apricots, cantaloupe, honeydew, melon, and orange juice.
- When choosing canned fruits, select fruit canned in 100% fruit juice or water rather than syrup.
- Keep saturated fat and added sugars low when preparing fruit dishes.

The following products may not be credited as a fruit requirement in any meal served under the Child Nutrition Programs:

- Snack-type foods made from fruits such as fruit strips, fruit drops, or fried banana chips.
- Pickle relish, jam, or jelly; or
- Home canned products (for food safety reasons).

Grains, Breads and Bread Alternates

The following types of ingredients are considered creditable grains in Child Nutrition Programs:

- Whole grains (i.e. whole wheat, whole wheat meal/flour, brown rice, rolled oats)
- Enriched grains (i.e. enriched wheat meal/flour, enriched rice)

Foods that contribute to the grains requirement in all Child Nutrition Programs include the following items when made from above specified ingredients, but are not limited to:

- Breads, biscuits, bagels, rolls, tortillas, crackers, cereal grains (cooked) such as rice, bulgur, oatmeal, corn grits, wheat berries or couscous

- Must be made from grains that are enriched, whole grain (and/or bran or germ for CACFP, SFSP and afterschool snacks), or meet the whole grain-rich criteria: a blend of whole-grain meal and/or flour and enriched meal and/or flour of which at least 50 percent is whole grain with remaining grains, if any, being enriched.

Ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereals

- Must be fortified, enriched, or list a whole grain as the primary ingredient. If the product includes enriched ingredients, or the product itself is enriched, the ingredients or the product must meet the Food and Drug Administration's standards of identify for enrichment.

- Breakfast cereals served to infants, children, and adults must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugar per dry ounce. Breakfast cereals include ready-to-eat cereals and instant and hot cereals. All breakfast cereals are reimbursable for the child and adult meal patterns. However, breakfast cereals must meet the sugar limit and be whole grain-rich, enriched, or fortified to be creditable in the CACFP.

- Please refer to ECCI's Breakfast Cereal List which is available on ECCI website under Policies and regulations.

Macaroni, pasta, noodle products (cooked)

- Must be made from grains that are enriched, whole grain, or that meet the whole grain-rich criteria: made from a blend of whole-grain meal and/or flour and enriched meal and/or flour of which at least 50 percent is whole grain with remaining grains, if any, being enriched.
- CACFP regulations allow enriched macaroni products that have been fortified with protein to be counted to toward the grains requirement only.
- Pasta products made with bean flours do not count toward the grain requirements.

Whole Grain-Rich

At least one serving of grains per day must be whole grain-rich. Foods that meet the whole grain-rich criteria are foods that contain 100 percent whole grains, or that contain at least 50 percent whole grains and the remaining grains in the food are enriched. This whole grain-rich requirement only applies to meals served to children and adults; it does not apply to infant meals.

There are four simple ways to determine if a grain product meets the whole grain-rich criteria. The following checklist can be used to decide if a grain is whole grain-rich. The food must meet at least one of the following:

The food is labeled as “whole wheat”. Grain products that are specifically labeled as “whole wheat bread”, “entire wheat bread”, “whole wheat rolls”, “entire wheat rolls”, “whole wheat buns”, and “entire wheat buns” are 100 percent whole wheat and meet the whole grain-rich criteria.

A whole grain is listed as the first ingredient on the food’s ingredient list (or second after water), and the next two grain ingredients are creditable (whole or enriched grains, bran, or germ). Some examples of whole grain ingredients are whole wheat, brown rice or wild rice, oatmeal, bulgur, whole-grain corn, and quinoa.

The product includes one of the following Food and Drug Administration approved whole-grain health claims on its packaging:

“Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods and low in total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers.”

OR

“Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods, and low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may help reduce the risk of heart disease.” FNS is allowing the FDA whole grain health claims to be sufficient documentation to demonstrate compliance with the whole grain-rich criteria in the CACFP, only. The FDA whole grain health claims are not sufficient documentation to demonstrate a grain is whole grain-rich in the School Meal Programs.

Proper documentation (from a manufacturer or a standardized recipe) demonstrates that whole grains are the primary grain ingredient by weight. When a whole grain is not listed as the first ingredient, the primary ingredient by weight may be whole grain if there are multiple whole-grain ingredients and the combined weight of those whole grains is more than the weight of the other ingredients. For example, bread may be made with three grain ingredients: enriched wheat flour (40 percent of grain weight), whole-wheat flour (30 percent of grain weight) and whole oats (30 percent of grain weight). The combined weight of the two whole-grain ingredients (whole wheat and whole oats at 60 percent) is greater than the enriched wheat flour (at 40 percent), even though the enriched wheat flour is listed first on the ingredient list. This bread could meet the whole grain-rich criteria with proper documentation from the manufacturer or a standardized recipe, for foods prepared by a CACFP center.

Examples of whole grain-rich products:

- Whole-grain cereal
- Whole-grain corn tortilla
- Whole wheat bread
- Whole wheat pasta
- Whole oats/Oatmeal
- Brown rice
- Whole rye
- Whole-grain barley
- Wild rice
- Buckwheat
- Triticale
- Bulgur (cracked wheat)

- Millet
- Quinoa
- Sorghum
- 100% whole wheat flour

Please be advised, if you do not serve at least one whole-grain rich product on your menu per day, you will automatically be disallowed a meal for that day.

In order to receive credit, centers must do the following:

Ensure to click "yes" on the question "Is this a whole-grain rich product?" on the particular menu you which you will be serving the whole-grain rich product in MMCX/KidKare. Also, in the event that the button is not working in your account, you MAY indicate on the comment section which meal has a whole-grain rich product.

Grain-Based Desserts

Grain-based desserts are NOT creditable in the CACFP.

What are considered grain-based desserts?

Grain-based desserts include, but are not limited to:

- Cookies
- Brownies
- Doughnuts
- Pastries
- Granola bars
- Cereal/ breakfast sweet bars
- Sweet rolls
- Pop tarts
- Sweet pie crust

Please be advised, although grain-based desserts are not subject for reimbursement, you may still serve them, but not claim them.

Sweet crackers

Sweet crackers (e.g., graham and animal crackers) are only allowed to be served during snacks. Centers may want to occasionally serve grain-based desserts, such as for celebrations or other special occasions. As a reminder, centers and day care homes continue to have the flexibility to serve grain-based desserts as an additional food item that does not contribute to the meal components required for reimbursement.

Meat and Meat Alternates (M/MA)

Meats and meat alternates (M/MA) include meat, poultry, fish, cheese, yogurt, dry beans and peas, whole eggs, alternate protein products, soy yogurt, tofu, peanut butter or other nut or seed butters, and nuts and

seeds. Child Nutrition Program operators must serve meals that contain the amount of M/MA required in the lunch and supper Meal Pattern Charts as found in this manual book. Serving sizes on the Menu Pattern Chart are cooked amounts.

A meat or meat alternate may be used to meet the entire grains component at breakfast no more than three times per week. Tofu and soy yogurts may be used to meet the meat/meat alternate component at any meal or snack.

Nuts and seeds may fulfill no more than one-half of the meat/meat alternate requirement for lunch, supper and breakfast. You also should be aware of potential food intolerances or allergies with some populations. In such circumstances, you should make appropriate accommodations under the medical substitution requirement. Soy nuts may be used as a meat/meat alternate but not as a vegetable. Nuts and seeds should be served to 2- to 3-year-olds and some elderly participants with caution as they may cause choking. Always supervise participants during meals and snacks.

As a general guideline, commercial, frozen and fast foods including pizza, restaurant food, boxed macaroni and cheese, frozen supermarket raviolis, taquitos, mini-quiches etc. may not be creditable because the meat quantities do not provide sufficient protein per serving size. Homemade items are creditable if they meet the minimum quantities and should be marked as such ("HM").

Alternate Protein Products (APPs) [formerly Vegetable Protein Products] are processed from soy or other vegetable protein sources and may be in a dehydrated granule, particle, or flake form. They are generally used as part of a formed meat patty or in a vegetarian patty, resembling a meat product. Meat/meat alternate products with APPs are currently being used successfully in large Child Nutrition Programs when a CN Label or product formulation statement is present. Before using products containing APPs, contact your state agency for information and assistance on the service and crediting of these products.

Main dish products which contribute to the meat/meat alternate component of the meal pattern requirements. Examples of these products include but are not limited to beef patties, cheese or meat pizzas, meat or cheese and bean burritos, egg rolls, and breaded fish portions.

Commercially processed meat and fish products (such as chicken nuggets, fish sticks, corndogs, egg rolls, potpies, etc) may be counted as meal components only if they have the Child Nutrition Label. The Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program is operated by the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) directly with commercial food processing firms. Manufacturers may choose to put these labels on a food product indicating the contribution that product makes toward meal pattern requirements in the Child Care Food Program. Processed meat and fish products which contribute to the meat/meat alternate component of the meal pattern requirements are eligible for CN Labels. For example, the label will state exactly how much meat is on each nugget and how many nuggets must be served to each child. Products without the CN Label may not be counted towards the meal pattern.

** Please see our updated Evergreen's Approved Processed Foods & Commercial Combination Food Products

Milk

Regulations for Child Nutrition Programs require that fluid milk be offered at each breakfast, lunch, or supper meal service. The fluid milk may be served as a beverage, on cereal, or both; however, in a lunch or a supper

meal, the fluid milk must be served as a beverage. Program operators have the option to serve fluid milk as one of the two components of a snack served in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The milk must contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and must be consistent with State and local standards.

General Fluid Milk Requirements

All ECCI-sponsored facilities must offer fluid milk at each reimbursable breakfast, lunch, and supper for children ages one year and older, unless an allowable substitution applies.

- **Breakfast:** Milk may be served as a beverage, on cereal, or both.
- **Lunch and Supper:** Milk must be served as a beverage.
- **Snack:** Milk may be served as one of the two required components. Milk and juice may not be served together as the only two snack components.

All fluid milk must be pasteurized, meet applicable State and local standards, and contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

2. Milk Requirements by Age Group

Children 12–23 Months (1 Year Old)

- Must be served unflavored whole milk.
- Iron-fortified infant formula may be served during the one-month transition period from 12 through 13 months of age.
- Breastmilk may be served as an allowable substitute at any age.

Children 2–5 Years Old

The following unflavored milk types are allowable:

- Whole milk
- Reduced-fat (2%) milk
- Low-fat (1%) milk
- Fat-free (skim) milk

Children 6 Years and Older

The following milk types are allowable:

- Whole milk
- Reduced-fat (2%) milk
- Low-fat (1%) milk
- Fat-free (skim) milk

California Restriction: Flavored milk is prohibited for children of all ages in licensed child care centers and day care homes, regardless of milk fat content.

Children Unable to Drink Cow's Milk

If a child is unable to consume cow's milk due to a medical or special dietary need that does not constitute a disability, or due to a dietary preference, the parent or guardian may request a nutritionally equivalent nondairy milk substitute.

The parent or guardian must complete ECCI's Milk Substitute Form, identifying the requested creditable nondairy beverage.

The form is available on ECCI's website under the Forms tab.

A medical statement is not required when the requested nondairy beverage meets USDA nutritional equivalency standards.

For children with disabilities requiring meal modifications, the provider must make reasonable accommodations in accordance with CACFP requirements. A medical statement from a State-licensed healthcare professional authorized to write medical prescriptions is required when the requested modification does not meet CACFP meal pattern requirements.

Providers should contact ECCI for guidance regarding disability-related meal modifications.

Nondairy Milk Substitutes

Participants who cannot consume cow's milk due to a medical need, disability, or dietary preference may receive an approved nondairy beverage.

The following requirements apply:

1. Written Request: For a nondisability-related substitution, the parent or guardian must submit ECCI's completed Milk Substitute Form. A medical statement is not required when the beverage meets USDA nutritional equivalency standards.

2. Nutritional Equivalency: Nondairy beverages must meet or exceed USDA's established nutritional standards for fluid milk to be creditable without a disability-related medical statement.

3. Parent-Provided Beverages: Reimbursable meals may include a nutritionally equivalent nondairy beverage supplied by either the provider or the parent or guardian, provided all other CACFP meal pattern requirements are met.

4. Flavored Nondairy Beverages: Nondairy milk substitutes served to children ages 1–5 must be unflavored. ECCI requires unflavored nondairy beverages for all children unless an approved disability-related accommodation requires otherwise.

5. Non-Equivalent Beverages**:** Nondairy beverages that do not meet USDA nutritional equivalency standards may be served as part of a reimbursable meal only when supported by an appropriate disability-related medical statement.

6. Documentation: All written requests and medical statements, when required, must be maintained in the child's records and made available to ECCI during monitoring reviews.

Nutritional Standards for Nondairy Milk Substitutes

To qualify as nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk, a nondairy beverage must meet or exceed the following USDA nutritional standards per 8 fluid ounces (1 cup):

Nutrient	Minimum Amount
Calcium	276 mg
Protein	8 g
Vitamin A	500 IU
Vitamin D	100 IU
Magnesium	24 mg
Phosphorus	222 mg
Potassium	349 mg
Riboflavin (Vitamin B2)	0.44 mg
Vitamin B12	1.1 mcg

Important: Not all soy, almond, oat, coconut, or other plant-based beverages meet these nutritional requirements. Providers must verify the product's nutritional content before serving it as a creditable milk substitute.

Non-dairy milks that are nutritionally equivalent to milk: 8th Continent Soy Milk (Original), Pacific Ultra Soy Milk, Silk Soy Milk (Original, 8g of protein) & Ripple Kids-Pea Milk (Unsweetened Original),









V. ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Menu Planning/Recording menus/Meal Production Records/Creating Menu Templates in MMCX/KidKare

Refer to the MMCX/KidKare Training Workbook for detail on how to plan your menus and meal production records. Training videos are also available:

MMCX: https://help.minutemenucx.com/help/center-side-training
KidKare Training: https://help.kidkare.com/help/menu-calendar-overview

Milk Audit and entering & verifying receipts

MMCX Milk Audit:
https://help.minutemenucx.com/help/milk-audit-c5e6974-milk-audit

KidKare Milk Audit:

https://help.kidkare.com/help/milk-audit

*Manual for entering & verifying receipts:

MMCX: https://help.minutemenucx.com/help/verify-receipts

KidKare: https://help.kidkare.com/help/enter-expenses

Meal Service Styles

The two meal service styles that can be used in CACFP are pre-portioned and family style. Pre-portioned means that the minimal requirement (or more) of food for each required component is prepared by an adult and given to each child on a plate or tray.

Family style meal service means that the food is placed on each table for each child to help him/herself. Children may then select the foods they want and the amount of each food they want. During your review, you must ensure that minimum portions (or more) of each required component for all children are available for the children at the table. During the meal, it is the responsibility of the center to encourage each child to accept the full required portion for each food component of the meal pattern. For example, if a child does not want a food component, or does not want the full required portion of a meal component, the center should offer the food component to the child again. If minimum portions are not available to each child, the meals would be disallowed.

- Centers must to maintain sufficient amount of required food components to serve to children at the center at all times.
- All required components must be served at the same time.
- Menus must be preplanned at least 2 hours prior to the next mealtime.

- *Infants: Each infant must have their own menu/Individual meal record onsite.*
- Any changes to the menu must be made at least 2 hours prior to the meal service.
- ECCI recommends planning your menu a week in advance.
- Serving identical menu items within the same week is not recommended.
- Any food items provided by parents and/or any meals sent with children to school or other locations including field trips are not reimbursable.
- Processed foods manufacturer name and/or homemade must be indicated in the menu comment section.
- If you find a new creditable processed food item, ensure to provide ECCI with a copy of the Child Nutrition (CN) label along with the manufacturer's name.
- Corn Chips, Cakes, puddings, pepperoni, popcorn, and spam, are not creditable for CACFP.
- Deep fat-frying is not allowed as a way of preparing foods on-site. Centers are may sauté the food in a small amount of oil.

Tofu

Tofu is creditable and may be counted as a meat alternate.

- Tofu must be easily recognized as a meat substitute.
- Tofu must meet protein requirement: at least 5 grams per 2.2 ounces by weight.
- Tofu is **NOT** creditable for infants (0-11 months).

Non-creditable Tofu:

- Tofu in smoothies
- Tofu used to add texture or enhance nutrients in foods.
- Tofu noodles (not easily recognized as meat substitute).
- Homemade Tofu (non-commercial, non-standardized tofu and soy products).

Yogurt

Yogurt may be counted as a meat alternate. Yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugar per 6 ounces.

Sugars/serving size = threshold
Threshold should be 2 or less

Water Availability

Water should be made available to all children throughout the day, including meal times. Although drinking water must be made available to children during meal times, it is not part of the reimbursable meal and may not be served instead of fluid milk. Make sure centers do not serve young children too much water before and during meal times because it can reduce the amount of food and milk consumed by the children. If drinking water is not available to children, this would result in a finding.

Major Holidays- Following major holidays are not eligible for meal reimbursement.

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day

- Presidents' Day
- Veterans Day
-Thanksgiving Day
-Christmas Da
- Memorial Day
- Christmas Day

VI. RECORDING DAILY MEAL COUNTS AND ATTENDANCE ON MINUTE MENU CX/KIDKARE

1. It is Center's responsibility to edit check by logging in to the MMCX/KidKare and check attendance before end of each day to ensure that all meals served are recorded & saved accurately.

2. Claim no more than two major meals and one supplement or one major meal and two supplements per day per child (Major meals are: breakfast, lunch & dinner).

3. Head count the children during the meals to ensure that the meal claim is recorded correctly. Meal claims must be recorded at the time of each meal service and/or right after each meal service (no more than 30 mins) to receive the reimbursement. You may choose to log in the meals to MMCX/KidKare directly by using your computer, tablet, and/or smart phone or may choose to print out the daily or weekly worksheet to write the daily claim on the worksheet and log in the meals before 10PM on the same day.)

4. School Age: School age children (6 years or older) cannot be claimed for lunch or am snack unless centers submit a reason for claiming lunch or am snack while claiming meals for the child. School age note box is located right next to meal claiming box as sick or school out. Please click the appropriate reason for claiming the school age child. You may also use the child's calendar to log in the school age note for extended vacation/holiday schedules. AM snack and/or lunch meal will not be reimbursable for school-age children if no explanation is provided with the monthly claim.

5. On any occasions, when you are unable to log in the meals on MMCX/KidKare due to technical issues (power outage, internet down, computer down, and etc.) before the end of each day, center must do the following in order for ECCI to consider logging in the meals:

    - Call Evergreen Child Care Inc. (ECCI) on the same day before 10:00 pm and/or leave a message on our voicemail (#0) and report the problem that you have encountered.

    - E-mail (joinecci@gmail.com) weekly menu & daily/weekly worksheet for that day before midnight.)

    - ECCI must have the appropriate reason why the daily records were not recorded by the center on the same day in order to log in the meals. ECCI will not log in the meals if you fail to inform us of the problem on the same day and/or meal forms are not faxed or e-mail to us before midnight. If you do not have an access to the fax machine nor e-mail, you may leave a voice message first on the same day and fax or e-mail the document on the following morning.

    - "I forgot to log in meals" is not an acceptable reason to ask ECCI to log in the meals for the center.

6. Daily counts of meals served to "Program adults" working in the center's food service and to any other non-enrolled persons must also be recorded. Although they cannot be claimed for reimbursement, costs of these meals are part of food costs reported by the center.

Recording Daily Attendance (Time in & out) in MMCX/KIDKARE

Recording your daily attendance is separate from your meal counts. You may create your own attendance forms or use the attendance forms on Minute Menu CX/KidKare. The attendance must be recorded daily, weekly, or monthly attendance form. Sign in/out sheets are required by community care licensing to substantiate a child's daily attendance. This must be entered in daily no later than 10:00pm in order to prevent meal disallowances and record keeping violation.

Centers must submit a copy of their daily attendance sheet (time in & out) for the entire month to Evergreen at the end of each month. It will be due by the 3rd calendar day of the following month (in order for us to process your claim).

Meal Service Time

Meals should be served on the meal time agreed with our agency.

- Breakfast: after 7AM and before 9 AM
- AM Snack: Two hours after breakfast and/or two hours before lunch)
- Lunch: between 11 AM to 1:30 PM
- PM Snack: two hours after Lunch or two hours before dinner
- Dinner: after 4 PM to 7PM

** Must have at least 2-hour space between each meal and 3-hour space between each major meal.

Meals that are being claimed need to have a specific meal time within the meal time frame and need to be documented for Evergreen's records. Anytime meal service schedules are changed, Evergreen must be notified in writing and/or by call-in prior to the date that such changes will take in place. Failure to notify ECCI for changes in advance will result in disallowance of meals on the day of the visit and/or may lose the privilege to claim the certain meal types that ECCI cannot observe during the visitations.

As a CACFP sponsor, we are required to monitor at least two meal time visits in every fiscal year. By knowing your meal schedule, we can visit your facility at the proper times to observe your actual meal service.

CLAIM SUBMISSION, REIMBURSEMENT, ERROR REPORT

- All centers must submit their monthly claim via MMCX/KidKare at the end of each month or before claiming the first meal in the following month.
- Any documentation (i.e., In and Out Timesheets), that is required to submit to Evergreen monthly that will reflect your current meal claims are due by the 3rd calendar day of each month.
- All meal documents received by the 5th calendar day will be reviewed by ECCI staff and its claim information will be submitted to California Department of Social Services (CDSS) before the 10th of each month.

- Once the claim information is submitted to the CDSS, it takes approximately 4-6 weeks to process our claim request.
- When ECCI receives the reimbursement, it must be disbursed within 5 working day

Late submission

Late submission of required documentation will delay reimbursement and may result in no reimbursement to the center.

1st Adjustment Claim: Any late meal claims received after the 10th and before the 29th of each month will be processed under 1st Adjustment. 1st Adjustment will be submitted to CDSS on the 30th of each month.

2nd (Final) Adjustment: Any late meal claims received after 30th and before 11th of the following month will be processed under 2nd (Final) Adjustment. 2nd Adjustment will be submitted to CDSS on the 15th of following month. ECCI cannot process any late claims that is submitted after Final Adjustment due date.

Claim Summary and Errors Report

After submitting your meal claim to our agency, your Claim Summary and Errors Report will be available 2-3 business days after submitting your meal claim.

As a center who is participating in the CACFP, it is your responsibility to read your error report on a monthly basis. Reading your monthly error report is an important part of reviewing your meal claim. We highly suggest that you read your error report EVERY month to ensure you are in compliance with the CACFP regulations. It also ensures that you are receiving the most reimbursement from your food program. We want every center to strive to receive the message:

"Congratulations! We found no errors on your claim."

How can I access my error report?

Please refer to MMCX/KidKare Training on how to access your error report. We will show you how to access your reports on the program software training portion.

VII. MEAL MODIFICATIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS WITH OR WITHOUT A DISABILTY

Meal Modifications for Participants without a Disability Requirements

CACFP Operators must:

Document all parent or guardian-supplied (or CACFP Operator-supplied) foods and beverages offered as a meal or snack modification. The CACFP Operator can document these modifications in a document that they already maintain (e.g., infant meal record, menu with serving sizes, enrollment record), on a specific form that the CACFP Operator develops for this purpose, or using the specific form that the CDSS developed for this purpose, listed below. Accommodating participants without disabilities is encouraged, but not required.

Sample Form: Form ID CACFP 12, Parent/Guardian's Form for Declining a Center's Infant Formula or Food; Form ID CACFP 84, Parent/Guardian's Form for Declining a Center's Food for Older Children

Ensure parents or guardians supply no more than one reimbursable food component at each meal and snack.

Ensure all parent or guardian-supplied (or program operator-supplied) food and beverages offered as a meal or snack modification are creditable when served as part of a reimbursable meal or snack.

Obtain a signed written request from a child's parent or guardian, or a household member of an adult participant, when a request is made for a fluid milk substitution and a medical statement is not on file (7 CFR, Section 226.20[c][3]). The CDSS sample form, Form ID CACFP 49, Request for a Fluid Milk Substitution, may be used or requests can be incorporated into an existing form, such as an enrollment record.
Note: CACFP Operators may include a policy that does not allow food to be brought from home unless program participants have a signed written medical statement on file in order to reduce:

- Documentation requirements for food brought from home
- The program operator's risk for meal disallowances
- Food safety concerns
- Differences between meals that each participant receives
-

For more information on meal modifications for participants without disabilities, access the CDSS Menu Modifications in the CACFP tip sheet referenced in Section XII Regulations, Policies, and Resources.

Meal Modifications for Participants with Disabilities Requirements

Evergreen Child Care, Inc. (ECCI) is committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities have equal access to Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) benefits and services. ECCI will ensure that reasonable accommodations, including necessary meal modifications, are provided to eligible participants with disabilities at no additional cost.

Notification of Rights to Free Accommodations

ECCI will inform all prospective and current CACFP applicants and participants with disabilities of their right to request reasonable accommodations and meal modifications at no cost.

Information regarding these rights will be made available through program application materials, enrollment information, Civil Rights notices, and other program communications.

Applicants, participants, and parents or guardians may request disability-related accommodations or meal modifications by contacting ECCI or their participating child care provider.

ECCI will maintain documentation demonstrating how applicants are informed of these rights, including copies of notices, application materials, and other relevant communications.

Medical Statement Requirements

When a disability-related food or beverage substitution does not meet CACFP meal pattern requirements, a signed medical statement must be requested from a state-licensed physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner.

The medical statement must:

- Describe the participant's physical or mental impairment sufficiently to explain how it restricts the participant's diet.
- Identify the food or beverage substitutions or other modifications necessary to accommodate the disability.
- Be signed by an authorized medical professional.

A specific medical diagnosis is not required to be disclosed.

Meal Modifications Pending Medical Documentation

Providers must not delay necessary disability-related meal modifications while awaiting a signed medical statement.

Meals with disability-related modifications that do not meet standard CACFP meal pattern requirements may remain reimbursable while documentation is pending, provided that providers:

1. Document the initial conversation with the parent or guardian regarding the requested accommodation and the request for a signed medical statement.
2. Document all subsequent follow-up communications when the medical statement has not been received.
3. Continue following up until the medical statement is obtained or the accommodation request is withdrawn.

4. Provide at least one required meal component. Parents or guardians may supply one or more creditable components of a reimbursable meal when the modification is disability-related.

Centers Responsibilities

Participating centers must:

- Inform parents or guardians of their right to request disability-related meal modifications at no cost.
- Make reasonable accommodations for participants with disabilities.
- Request and maintain required medical documentation.
- Document accommodation requests and follow-up communications.
- Contact ECCI for technical assistance when necessary.

ECCI Responsibilities and Documentation

ECCI will:

- Inform program applicants and participating providers of their right to free disability accommodations and meal modifications.
- Provide written notification of these rights through application materials, Civil Rights notices, and program communications.
- Maintain copies of notification materials and records demonstrating their distribution or availability to applicants.
- Provide technical assistance to participating providers regarding disability accommodations and meal modification requirements.
- Review accommodation-related documentation as necessary to ensure compliance with CACFP requirements.

Recordkeeping

ECCI and participating providers must maintain applicable accommodation requests, medical statements, follow-up communications, and notification documentation in accordance with CACFP recordkeeping requirements.

Documentation must be made available to ECCI and authorized reviewing agencies upon request.

Note: A medical statement does not need to be updated unless there is a change in the dietary restriction.

Medical Statement Form:

http://www.evergreencacfp.org/uploads/1757001183cacfp_97-medical_statement-frm.pdf

Milk Substitution Form

Parents or guardians may ask for non-dairy milk substitutions without providing a medical statement. For example, if a parent has a child who follows a vegan diet, the parent may submit a written request to the child's caretaker asking that soy milk be served in lieu of cow's milk. The written request must identify the medical or other special dietary need that restricts the diet of the child.

http://www.evergreencacfp.org/uploads/1757613699cacfp-49-request-for-fluid-milk-frm.pdf

VIII. MONITORING VISITS

During each fiscal year, minimum of three monitoring visits are required for daycare centers participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Two out of the three monitoring visits conducted are unannounced and must be in observance of a meal service.

Reminder: Evergreen's fiscal year begins in October and ends in September of the following year.

Saturday Visitation: Saturday monitoring visitation will be conducted for centers who are approved for Saturday cares. (Saturday registration form must be on file and approved by ECCI.)

Monitors will check for:

- License, capacity, enrollment applications, declining forms (if applicable), tiering status, record retention, license renewal fee payment record, and medical statements (if applicable).

- Full names of all children present. All recorded meals will be compared with enrollment forms. If completed enrollment application for both new and/or updated child(ren) are not available for review, the meal claims for that child will be disallowed.

  **Please note that ECCI has right to call the parents of the child to verify the enrollment status.

- Menus, meal production records, recorded meals, standardize recipes, food labels, food receipts, daily in & out records and other food program related documents to ascertain that records are up-to-date. Any changes to the menu must be made in red pen on the printed weekly menu plan prior to its meal service not after; Menu must be posted in a prominent place. All required documents must be readily & immediately available to monitors for review at all times.

- Income Eligibility Forms (Meal Benefit Form): Evergreen must verify the accuracy of the center's determination of each child's free, reduced-price, or paid category for claiming meals. For non-pricing Programs, Evergreen will review 100 percent of the free, reduced-price, and denied income eligibility applications to ensure their accuracy

- All foods used in preparation of a meal must be readily available for monitors to see.

- Meals being served to children accordingly to center's meal time schedule.

- Any non-creditable food is being used.

- For meal visits, ECCI will compare between the number of children being claimed on daily basis in the claim month and the number of children ECCI observes during the meal service. If 85% of the average number of children claimed are not seen more than two time during the same fiscal year, you may lose the privilege of claiming that meal type where we are unable to observe the 85% of attendance and you may be found as a Serious Deficient Center
- License capacity compliance

- Over capacity situations and incompliance of the adult staff-child ratio would be reported to the Department of Social Services. All the meal claims for the month will be disallowed.

- CACFP Meal Pattern Chart (Meal Pattern Chart (Food Chart) must be posted in the kitchen and center must serve adequate serving sizes based on the child's age for each component that are being served.

- Sanitation and safety of the facility.

Note: Here is the link to of documents needed to help prepare for In-person monitoring visits.

http://www.evergreencacfp.org/uploads/1692744460preparing_for_in_person_visits-center.pdf

Failure to Comply with Regulations during a Monitoring Visit:

1. Center shall receive a disallowance of any meals that relate to the deficiency found.
2. Technical Assistance shall be given to the center on site by the field specialist conducting the visit.
3. Serious Deficiency letter will be mailed out with the detail information of all findings (if needed).

In order to verify information, Evergreen may contact the households to obtain source documentation to support their reported income. If the application contains a SNAP, FDPIR, or TANF case number for a child or a SNAP, FDPIR, SSI, or Medicaid number for an adult participant, the verification shall consist only of a confirmation that the child or adult is certified eligible for the relevant program. Otherwise, households must be informed in writing that they have been selected for verification process and that they are required to submit documentation to verify their eligibility for free or reduced-price meals. This letter must include the types of documentation that Evergreen has deemed to be sufficient for the purposes of verification.

IX. PROGRAM POLICIES

RECORD KEEPING

All information on the claiming records (Menu planning for infant/non infants, recording meals, and enrollment applications, Meal Benefit Forms) must support your daily meal claim. Please double check your record before end of each day to ensure accuracy of your meal claims.

Why Record Keeping is important?

- Records kept on a daily basis will ensure accurate reports of attendance and meal counts for both the center and sponsor.
- Logging meals and attendance on a daily basis at the time of each meal service will help to prevent objections between centers and sponsors.
- It is mandatory in accordance with CACFP regulations.

Record Keeping Violation for menus, meal production record, meal counts and attendance.

- On the first offense, if a center fails to update any daily documents including menus, meal counts, meal production record and attendance for less than two days, ECCI will document the finding on the monitoring report and provide on-site training (any meals related to the finding will be disallowed). However, if the finding is more than two days, ECCI will initiate the Serious Deficiency (SD) process.

- On the second offense, if the center fails to update any daily documents including menus, meal counts and attendance for less than two days, ECCI will document the finding in the monitoring report and failure to implement permanent corrective action will result in the initiation of the Serious Deficiency (SD) process. A letter notifying the finding(s), corrective action and the consequence will be sent to the center. If the finding is more than two days, ECCI will initiate the SD process

- On the third offense, if the center is found with similar or same finding in future visit, ECCI will initiate the SD process.

Record Keeping Violation Related to Internet and/or Computer Issues

- On the first offense, if a center fails to record the claim (meal attendance, menu and time in & out if applicable) or unable to show records due to internet and/or computer issues, ECCI will warn the center in the monitoring report that failure to implement permanent corrective action will result in the initiation of the SD process. A letter including finding(s), corrective action, and the consequence will be sent to the center.

- On the second offense, ECCI will initiate the SD process.

MONTHLY CLAIM ERROR REPORT

After each monthly claim process, centers can have an access to the "Claim Error Report" to review for any/all errors found during the meal claim process.

RECORD RETENTION REQUIREMENT

Centers must retain all documents to verify that the meal pattern requirements were met for the current Federal Fiscal Year (FFY), October 1 through September 30, plus the prior three FFYs, such as:For example, agencies must keep records for Program Year (PY) 2017–18 (October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018) until at least October 1, 2021.These records may then be disposed of only if there are no unresolved audit findings, administrative review issues, or the center's program is not under investigation.

In the event of an earthquake, flood, or fire, or other disaster type event, evidence of enrollment documentation, eligibility, and meal counts is required. Centers must keep these records even if they are illegible from water, fire, or other type of damage. If the documents are completely lost, centers must have a record of the disaster to document their loss, such as an insurance or police report. If the records are lost or damaged, centers must immediately notify their sponsor, and the sponsor must immediately notify their assigned CACFP Specialist.

These documents include but not limited to;

- Documentation of current license or approval;
- Menus and Individual Infant Meal Records
- MPRs (required for all centers)
- Standardize Recipes
- Food and beverage receipts
- Each child's enrollment form and Meal Benefit Form (if applicable);
- Daily records of the number of children in attendance;
- Daily records of attendance (time in & out);
- Daily records of the number of meals, by type, served to enrolled children
- Medical statements or requests for medical statements, if applicable
- A written request from a parent or guardian of an infant or child or a household member of an adult participant for a nondairy milk substitute when there is no medical statement on file, if applicable
- Payroll records of labor cost charged to the CACFP and job descriptions associated with the CACFP tasks, if applicable
- Any other documentation showing that you are spending food program reimbursement on services/items relating to food program with little to no profit.

Only 12 months plus the current month must be maintained and immediately available at the center. The rest of the retained documents must be retrievable within a reasonable amount of time if requested by the sponsor, a representative of the CDSS, or the USDA. Records may be kept in hard copy or electronic format, as long as the records are available for review. Failure to abide with the record retention requirement would be used as a ground to determine center as a "Serious Deficient."

OVERCAPACITY

Over Capacity: If over capacity is detected by a Field Specialist during a monitoring review, Field Specialist will report the violation to Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) and all ineligible meal claims will be disallowed. In addition, Center may be determined as a Serious Deficient Center in violation of License Capacity Regulation.

First offense: Report the violation to CCLD and initiate the SD process.
Second offense: Report the violation to CCLD and initiate the Termination process.

If overcapacity is detected during claim review:

- First offense: Written warning will be given with a request of corrective. In addition, ECCI will keep track of the centers with overcapacity by keeping record on a spread sheet.

- Second offense: Initiate SD process

PROOF OF CENTER LICENSE RENEWAL FEE PAYMENT

All participating Centers in CACFP must be current with their daycare license. Thus, proof of the license fee payment made to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is required to be submitted to ECCI annually.

Proof of the license renewal fee payment (front & back copy of the cancelled check, money order, online payment confirmation, bank/credit card statement that has payable to CDSS, or copy of profile) must be forwarded to ECCI within 2 months from the license renewal date. Failure to submit the required proof within the due date may be used as a ground to determine center as Serious Deficient.

MANDATORY ANNUAL TRAINING

ECCI provides a mandatory “Annual Training” once a year. All participating centers in CACFP must attend/complete this annual training. A center may be determined as a Serious Deficient if fails to attend/complete the mandatory annual workshop.

HOUSEHOLD CONTACTS

To improve program integrity within the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), all Child Care Centers (CCC) participating in the CACFP through Evergreen Child Care, Inc. (ECCI) are subject to household contact verifications. The purpose of these verifications is to validate the enrollment, attendance, and specific meal services routinely provided to children in care.

Household contacts for enrolled children may be initiated if a CCC exhibits patterns including, but not limited to, the following:

A. Consistently claiming a greater number of children at any meal service than the total enrollment or verified attendance (specifically if such a pattern is detected over three or more consecutive claim months).
B. Claiming weekend or holiday meals that are not substantiated by official enrollment or attendance records.

C. Reporting uniform meal counts consistently, raising suspicion regarding the CCC's claiming practices.
D. Recording a consistently high number of children in attendance that cannot be verified during monitoring visits, where observed attendance is significantly lower than reported figures.
If a center meets one or more of the criteria listed above, ECCI may conduct household contact verifications via telephone, email, or written correspondence.
Centers must maintain current and accurate parental contact information at all times for all children participating in the CACFP through ECCI. If ECCI cannot successfully complete a household contact due to inaccurate or missing facility records, it may result in the disallowance of reimbursement claims for the center.

ECCI will conduct household verifications using the following procedures:

1. Information Retrieval: Retrieve the phone number, email address, and home address from the child's most recently updated enrollment form or enrollment renewal report.
2. Initial Contact: Place a telephone call to the number on file to verify the enrollment status and attendance of the child in question, utilizing the official ECCI Parent/Guardian Survey Template.

3. Follow-Up Correspondence: If the parent or guardian does not respond after multiple attempts, ECCI will issue an email or a formal letter via USPS Certified Mail instructing them to contact the agency. The parent is allocated 14 calendar days (two weeks) to respond. Failure to reply within this timeframe will prompt ECCI to initiate a formal claim review and an unannounced monitoring visit at the facility.To improve the program integrity within the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), all sponsors participating in the CACFP are required to conduct household contacts (by phone call or in writing) in order to verify the enrollment and attendance of the children in care and the specific meals that are routinely served to them.

RECORDING ATTENDANCE IN ADVANCE

- Step 1: Center will be retrained. All meals in which are documented prior to the meal being served will be disallowed and documented in the report

- Step 2: Center that completes the attendance prior to the meal being served for the second consecutive times within the fiscal year, may be determined as a serious deficient. Any and/or all meals that are documented in advance will be disallowed. Attendance must be recorded at the time of and/or right after each meal service.

ABSENCE POLICY

An action will be taken if a center fails to comply with CACFP regulations:

First Absence: If the monitoring visit was conducted during non-meal visit, the center may receive a written notice stating the time and date of visit. In addition, the center will be asked to submit a schedule of meal service times and pick-up times. A follow up visit will be conducted. If the center fails to inform ECCI (by call-in or/and in writing) in advance and the monitoring visit was conducted during the meal time, including Saturdays, any meals claimed for that day and all days prior will not be reimbursable. In addition, if the monitoring visit was conducted on Saturday, the center may lose the privilege to claim Saturdays permanently.

Second Absence: Center will receive a written notice stating the time and date of the visit. Meals for that day and any day(s) prior will be disallowed and a follow up visit will be conducted. Evergreen will also initiate the SD process.

CALL-IN POLICY

If the center fails to inform Evergreen by call-in and/or in writing of any changes related to meal service (no children in attendance during registered meal times, field trip, meal time change, no meal service or claiming, and etc.) prior to meal service, following actions may be taken.

On the first offense, ECCI will warn the center in the monitoring report that failure to implement permanent corrective action will result in the initiation of the SD process. In addition, a center will be given an on-site training regarding the Call-In Policy. Meal(s) will be disallowed for any meal type(s) that the center had failed to inform Evergreen in advance of changes made related to the meal service (such as meal service time changes without notifying ECCI, meals already being served, adding and/or deleting meal types without obtaining prior approval, no meal services, and etc.). A letter notifying the finding(s), corrective action and consequences will be sent to the center.

On a second offense, if ECCI cannot observe the actual meal service to children during the meal service visitations, meals will be disallowed. If two or more visits were conducted to observe one targeted meal type; center may lose the privilege to claim that meal type that ECCI staff could not validate. In addition, ECCI will initiate the SD process.

Exemptions may be given for valid emergencies and natural disasters.

X. SERIOUS DEFICIENCY PROCESS (SD)

Serious Deficiency Determination

A SD Notice must be issued for any SD finding(s).

List of SD(s):

1. Submission of false information on the application to the sponsor, including but not limited to a determination that the center has concealed a conviction for any activity that occurred during the past seven years which would indicate a lack of business integrity. A lack of business integrity includes fraud, antitrust violations, embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, receiving stolen property, making false claims, obstruction of justice, or any other activity indicating a lack of business integrity.
2. Permitting an individual who is on the National Disqualified List (NDL) to serve in a principal capacity with the center.
3. Failure to operate the program in conformance with the Federal performance standards.
4. Failure to comply with the bid procedures and contract requirements of applicable federal procurement regulations.
5. Failure to maintain adequate records. A frequent finding during monitoring visits is missing records such as menus, meal attendance, and daily attendance. On the first offense for missing records, if the center is behind with recordkeeping for less than two days, this does not constitute a SD finding. Training must be completed with the center and documented and written corrective action must be submitted by the center if findings do not rise to the level of SD. If a center is missing six days or more of records, the sponsor shall proceed with the SD process.
6. Failure to adjust meal orders to conform to variations in the number of participants.
7. Submitting a request for reimbursement for meals not served to participants.
8. Submitting a request for reimbursement for a significant number of meals that do not meet program requirements.
9. Use of a food service management company that is in violation of health codes.
10. Submitting a request for reimbursement for meals served as a proprietary (for profit) center during a calendar month in which less than 25 percent of its enrolled participants, or 25 percent of its licensed capacity, whichever is less, were Title XX beneficiaries or eligible for free or reduced price meals.
11. Failure to perform any of the other financial and administrative responsibilities required by Federal regulation.
12. The fact any of the center's Responsible Individuals (RP/Is) have been declared ineligible for any other publicly funded program by reason of violating that program's requirements. However, this prohibition does not apply if the institution or the principal has been fully reinstated in, or is now eligible to participate in, that program including the payment of any debts owed.
13. Conviction of the center or any of its principals for any activity that occurred during the past seven years and that indicates a lack of business integrity.

14. Any other action affecting the center's ability to administer the program in accordance with program requirements.
15. Any other circumstance related to non-performance under the sponsoring organization's permanent agreement, as described by Evergreen.

If Evergreen determines that a center has committed one or more of the listed SD(s), or receives notification forwarded by CDSS, from the Child Care Licensing Division of Intent to Revoke License, Intent not to Renew License or a Summary Suspension, or related notices, action must be initiated to terminate the agreement of the participating center and to disqualify the center and any responsible principals and responsible individuals (RP/Is) by starting the SD process.

During the monitoring visit in which the sponsoring organization identifies SD findings, the sponsor must document the finding(s) in their monitoring report. The center's RP/Is, if available, must sign the monitoring report as acknowledgement that the finding(s) have been explained to the center.

The following steps shall be taken upon determination of a Serious Deficiency

- Notice of Serious Deficiency shall be sent to the Center by a method of delivery that confirms receipt and/or delivery of the notice (either by certified mail or email). A copy of the Serious Deficiency notice will be forwarded to California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Nutrition Services Division (NSD), and Program Integrity Unit (PIU). The notice shall contain the following:

    1. Detailed description of Serious Deficiency.
    2. Legal basis for each SD finding [cite the SD regulation(s) as well as specific provisions in the permanent agreement and/or regulations that support the SD finding(s)].
    3. Corrective Actions plan with a specified deadline (max. 30 days).
    4. Serious deficiency determination is not subject to appeal.

If center fails to submit the corrective actions by due date, ECCI will:

- Propose termination of the center's CACFP agreement with the sponsor and the

- Proposed disqualification of the center and the Responsible Individuals (RP/Is).

Program payments continue during the corrective actions period, unless one of the findings is an imminent threat to health and safety of children, at which time the suspension process must be followed.

Voluntary termination will result in center being terminated for cause and placed on the National Disqualified List.

If serious deficiencies are not corrected, the following measures shall be taken:

- Notice of proposed termination/disqualification will be sent to the corresponding center and its' Responsible Individuals (RP/Is) and a copy of the SD notice will be forwarded to CDSS, NSD, and Program Integrity Unit (PIU). The notice will propose that the center and its Responsible Individuals (RP/Is) will be terminated for cause and be placed on the national disqualified list. In addition, the basis for all actions taken shall be provided with procedures for appeal.

If placed on the National Disqualified list, centers shall remain on such status for a period of 7 years.

SERIOUS DEFICIENCY (CORRECTIVE ACTION)

Corrective Actions Guidelines:

1. Upon receiving notice of serious deficiency, centers will be expected to submit an acceptable corrective action plan. Corrective Action Plan (CAP)must include:

    - Responsible Individuals (RP/Is)'s full name, address, and date of birth.
    - The date ECCI conducted the monitoring visit to your facility.
    - What are the serious deficiency (ies) and the procedure that you will implement to prevent the serious deficiency (ies) from reoccurring in future?
    - Who will address the SD and be responsible to implement the Corrective Action Plan? List personnel responsible for this task.
    - When will the procedure for addressing the SD be implemented? Provide a timeline for implementing the procedure (i.e., will the procedure be done daily, weekly, monthly, or annually, and when will it begin)
    - Where will the Corrective Action Plan documentation be retained?
    - How will the staff and facility or center be informed of the new policies and procedures (e.g. Handbook, training, website, etc.)?
    - Responsible Individuals (RP/Is)'s signature and the signature date.

2. Center will be given no more than 30 days to correct the Serious Deficiency.

3. If problems persist once a corrective action plan is written by the center, a Notice of Proposed Terminate and Proposed Disqualification will be sent to the center.
4. Upon Proposed termination of agreement, centers are given 15 calendar days to submit a written appeal. Please refer to the Serious Deficiencies Procedure Manual.

Corrective Actions will result in either:

1. Temporarily deferral of the serious deficiency determination will be issued, if the corrective action(s) are received in timely matter and follow up review indicates that findings has been corrected.

2. Proposed Terminate and Proposed Disqualification from CACFP, if the corrective action(s) are not received in timely matter and/or center fails to permanently correct the findings.

Proposed Termination of Agreement Procedure

If center fails to permanently correct the serious deficiency(ies) in the time allotted for corrective action or any time after the original SD notice has been deferred, a Notice of Proposed Termination and Proposed Disqualification will be sent to the center with a proof of delivery. A copy of the notice will be forwarded to the PIU. The Notice will contain the following:

a. Reference to the SD notice and the reason why corrective action was not acceptable (or that the center failed to submit a corrective action document within the time allotted)

b. Offer the center the opportunity to appeal the PTPD, and provide appeal procedures.

c. Notify the center that the termination of the center's CACFP agreement will result in termination for cause and disqualification of the center and the RP/Is from the CACFP.

d. Voluntary termination of the CACFP agreement after receipt of the proposed termination/disqualification notice will still result in the proposed disqualification

e. Center may continue to participate in the CACFP through the appeal deadline, or, if an appeal is requested, until the hearing officer issues a decision

If the center submits a CAP to ECCI prior to or with a request for appeal, ECCI may consider the CAP. If ECCI determines that the CAP permanently corrects the SD findings, the ECCI may rescind the proposed termination and proposed disqualification actions and temporarily defer the SD determination.

If the request for appeal has been forwarded to ECCI's hearing officer, and the center submits documentation to the hearing officer that the hearing officer identifies as an acceptable CAP, the hearing officer may refer the documentation back to ECCI for their review and approval. If ECCI accepts the center's documentation, ECCI will notify the hearing officer in writing that ECCI accepts the center's CAP. The hearing officer will then issue a letter to ECCI and the center that dismisses the appeal.

If the hearing officer determines that ECCI's findings are unsubstantiated or, without input from ECCI, determines that the center's CAP permanently corrects the SD, the hearing officer may make a determination to overturn ECCI's proposed actions. If the hearing officer determines that ECCI has properly implemented the SD process and the center has not provided adequate proof to overturn the proposed actions, the hearing officer must uphold the proposed actions. A copy of the hearing official's decision will be sent to the PIU.

Temporary Deferral of Serious Deficiency, Proposed Termination, and Proposed Disqualification After Center Wins Appeal

If the hearing official overturns ECCI's proposed termination and proposed disqualification actions, ECCI will issue one of the following:

- Temporary Deferral of Serious Deficiency, Proposed Termination, and Proposed Disqualification (after center wins appeal)

- Temporary Deferral of Serious Deficiency, Suspension, Proposed Termination, and Proposed Disqualification: Imminent Threat to Health or Safety (after center wins appeal)

A letter will be sent to the center by using a method of delivery that confirms receipt and/or delivery of the notice (either by certified mail or email), and a copy of the notice will be sent to the PIU.

Agreement Termination and Disqualification

If the center does not submit a timely request for appeal, or if the hearing official upholds the sponsor's proposed actions, ECCI will immediately terminate the center's agreement to participate in the CACFP and disqualify the center and responsible individuals (RP/Is) from future CACFP participation. If the hearing official upholds the Evergreen's proposed actions, ECCI will issue to the center one of the following:

- Notice of Termination and Disqualification

- Notice of Termination and Disqualification: Imminent Threat to Health or Safety

The letter will be sent to the center by using a method of delivery that confirms receipt and/or delivery of the notice, and a copy of the notice will be sent to the PIU.

The date of the termination and disqualification will be the date of the hearing official's decision.

If the center did not request an appeal, ECCI will issue to the center one of the following:

- Notice of Termination and Disqualification (following failure to appeal)

- Notice of Termination and Disqualification: Imminent Threat to Health or Safety (following failure to appeal)

The letter will be sent to the center by using a method of delivery that confirms receipt and/or delivery of the notice (either by certified mail or email), and a copy of the notice will be sent to the PIU. The effective date will be the day after the appeal deadline.

Program Payments

ECCI will continue to pay the valid portion of any claims until the SD(s) is/are corrected or the agreement is terminated, including the period of an appeal, unless the center is suspended. No payments are made during suspension.

Suspension – Imminent Threat to Health and Safety

If a center is cited for a serious health or safety violation by state or local health officials, or by a licensing official, ECCI will immediately suspend the center's CACFP participation, even before any formal action has been taken to revoke the center's license. If ECCI determines that there is imminent threat to the health or safety of participants in the center, or the center engages in activities that threaten public health or safety, ECCI will immediately notify state or local licensing officials. For all imminent threat to health and safety issues, ECCI will issue the Combined Notice of Serious Deficiency, Suspension, Proposed Termination, and Proposed Disqualification

Notice: Imminent Threat to Health or Safety notice, including appeal procedures, to the center. The notice will be sent either by certified mail or email. A copy of the SD notice will be forwarded to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS).

The notice will include:

- The center's participation in the CACFP has been suspended, that the center has been determined as seriously deficient, and that Evergreen is proposing termination and disqualification.
- Specify the SD(s) found and the center's opportunity to request an appeal of the proposed termination.

- Current status of the participation, including all program payments, will remain suspended until the appeal is concluded.
- If the appeal official overturns the PTPD, this also overturns the suspension and the center may claim reimbursement for eligible meals served during the suspension.
- Termination of their CACFP agreement will result in the placement of the center and RP/Is on the **National Disqualification list** (NDL).
- Voluntarily terminate their CACFP agreement after receiving the suspension notice, the center will be terminated for cause, disqualified, and all RP/Is will be placed on the NDL.

Centers that previously listed on the NDL

After a center is removed from the NDL, in order for that center to re-apply for participation in the CACFP, the center must submit a CAP to Evergreen addressing the SD(s) that caused them to be placed on the NDL. Upon receiving a CAP from the center that fully and permanently corrects the previously cited SD(s), ECCI will decide whether to approve the CAP or chose not to. For any reason, if Evergreen refuses to approve the center's CAP, we will notify the center in writing of the reason why the CAP was not accepted.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

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Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **mail:**
   U.S. Department of Agriculture
   Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
   1400 Independence Avenue, SW
   Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. **fax:**
   (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. **email:**
   Program.Intake@usda.gov

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