

FOOD PROGRAM Memo



CACFP COVID-19 Waiver Request - MEAL PATTERN

On March 25, 2020, the USDA issued COVID-19: Nationwide Waiver to Allow Meal Pattern Flexibility in the Child Nutrition Programs. This waiver allows meal pattern flexibility to CACFP institutions and facilities experiencing disruptions to the availability of food products resulting from the impacts of COVID-19 public health emergency. This waiver is effective March 25, 2020, until April 30, 2020, or until expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is soonest.

In order to participate in this waiver you must review this important information and complete the Waiver Form linked at the bottom of this email.

Below are ways to handle food shortages while still meeting CACFP meal pattern requirements. **To the extent possible, make changes to your menu so meals meet meal pattern requirements, and document substitutions on your menus.**

- You must attempt to purchase different food products to meet meal components throughout this period, since they may or may not be available at different times. If the food product becomes available again, you must incorporate it into meal service as soon as possible.
- If stores are limiting the number of items that can be purchased at one time (i.e. gallons of milk, loaves of bread, etc.), it is recommended that you talk with the store manager and inform him/her that you are a child care facility that provides meals for more than one household. You may want to bring a copy of your certificate/license to the store with you.
- All required CACFP documentation must be maintained on file (i.e. documenting substitutions/omissions, etc.).
- Milk - If you are temporarily unable to purchase or receive milk, or if you are unable to purchase milk with the correct fat content for the ages of children, you must still attempt to purchase milk throughout this period, since milk may or may not be available in stores at different times.
- Bread and other Whole Grains - Even though there has been a shortage of bread in stores, specifically whole grain rich (WGR) bread, institutions and facilities are still required to serve at least one WGR item per day. There are many other WGR items besides bread that are still available [ex. tortillas, crackers (Wheat Thins, Triscuits, Goldfish, etc.), rice cakes, English muffins, bagels, cereal, oatmeal, quinoa, pasta, brown rice, wild rice, etc.]. Another option is to make homemade WGR items like bread or muffins with whole wheat flour. There are standardized recipes on the Child Nutrition Recipe Box [website](#) - click on "Search Recipes" and type in "muffins". That will bring up some WGR recipes for the CACFP including one for Breakfast Muffins and a WGR Dinner Roll.
- Other Foods - There may also be shortages of other foods such as meats, eggs, and fresh fruits/vegetables. The CACFP meal pattern has other options that may be served in place of these items such as peanut & nut butters, legumes, canned beans (black, pinto, etc.), yogurt, cheese, canned fish/tuna, and canned or frozen fruits and vegetables. For menu ideas including shelf stable foods, check out this [link](#). Also check out DPI's [Facebook page](#) for other posted recipes:

- **Infant Formula** - If the brand of infant formula normally purchased is not available at the store, you must still purchase at least one type of infant formula to provide meals to the enrolled infants, even if the formulas available are more expensive. You may also try ordering the formula normally purchased directly from the manufacturer.

WAIVER FORM - ACTION REQUIRED

If your family child care is currently experiencing difficulty purchasing one or more components of the meal pattern requirements, you must request approval from 4-C CACFP by completing [this survey](#).

Please complete this survey ONLY if your family child care is currently experiencing disruptions to the availability of food products to meet meal pattern requirements.

4-C CACFP will review each waiver request and approve on a case-by-case basis. You will receive notification when your request is approved or denied.

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