Florida Department of Health Child Care Food Program

Special Dietary Needs

Meal Modifications Due to Preference

A ***dietary preference*** refers to eating certain foods or eliminating foods from the diet due to a general health concern or personal choice.
For example: “I request that soy milk is given to my child because she doesn’t like the taste of cow’s milk; not because she is lactose intolerant.”

When a parent makes a ***dietary preference request***, the provider will verify that request is not related to a disability, but to a non-disability dietary need, such as:

- Religious (eliminating beef, pork, or eggs)
- Ethnic
- Lifestyle preference (organic, vegetarian)
- Other (health reason not supported by a completed medical statement, e.g., gluten free diet because parent believes it is healthier for the child)

Programs are **not required to accommodate dietary preference request** but are *strongly encouraged* to do so. All substitutions **must meet CCFP meal pattern requirements.**

Required Documentation for Dietary Preference Request

Special Dietary Needs Preference Request Form

- Form must be fully completed and signed by the parent or guardian.

-OR-

Written Statement from Family

- Identifies the non-disability special dietary need, including items not to be served and allowable substitutions.

Accommodating Requests Within the CCFP Meal Pattern

- Preference requests **must** be managed within the CCFP meal pattern requirements.
- The provider will work with the parent or guardian to determine how and if the request will be accommodated.
- The parent may supply **one** meal component (that meets the meal pattern requirements), and the provider will supply all other meal components for a reimbursable meal.

Examples of how a provider would accommodate a dietary preference request:

- Offer one type of creditable soymilk to accommodate participants requesting a non-dairy beverage (refer to the **CCFP Milk Substitutions List**). Because this modification is creditable, the meal meets CCFP requirements and is reimbursable.
- Accommodate vegetarian participants by serving creditable meat alternates.

Reference: www.fns.usda.gov/cn/modifications-accommodate-disabilities-cacfp-and-sfsp

For more information, visit FloridaHealth.gov/CCFP or call 850-245-4323.

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