


Meal Planning and Special Diets – Facility

Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS)
Juvenile Justice Services (JJS)
Statewide Policy

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APPROVED BY:	Sharon Anderson, Deputy Administrator – DCFS 
DATE:	12/29/2022
SUPERSEDES:	New Policy
APPROVED BY:	Dr. Cindy Pitlock, Administrator – DCFS 
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REFERENCES:	None
ATTACHMENTS:	None

I. SUMMARY

The Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) Juvenile Justice facilities shall plan and prepare meals which are nutritionally balance, meet the requirements of government regulations and safety codes, adhere to special diets as applicable.

II. PURPOSE

To provide guidance to facilities on meal preparation and specialty diets.

III. DEFINITIONS

As used in this document, the following definitions shall apply:

- A. Food Service Staff: Personnel responsible for planning, preparation of, and service of meals.
- B. Food Service Manager: A full time staff member trained in food service management who is responsible for monitoring all aspects of food service and kitchen maintenance.
- C. National School Lunch Program (NSLP): Nutrition program designed to improve the health of youth which encourages healthy eating; increased consumption of fruits, veggies, and whole grains; and portion control.

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- D. Special Diets: Vegan, vegetarian, religious diets, or diets ordered by a physician or other medical professional for acute/chronic health conditions which may restrict foods, preparation of food, or quantity of food.
- E. Substitution: The replacement of a food item with another food item of equal or greater nutritional value.

IV. GENERAL PROCEDURES

- A. Facilities participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) shall follow menu recommendations for breakfast and lunch.
- B. Facilities shall have established mealtimes and allow a minimum of 15 minutes for youth to eat meals.
 - 1. Youth shall be supervised during all mealtimes.
- C. Meals and snacks may be provided in a cafeteria/dining hall, individual rooms, common areas, or other areas in the facility as outlined in the facility Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).
- D. Facilities shall provide three meals per day and offer one snack per day.
 - 1. At least two of the three meals must be hot meals.
 - 2. The facility may offer youth a choice of approved snack items based on facility resources.
 - 3. More than one snack per day may be offered based on facility resources.
- E. Facility provided meals and snacks may not be taken away as a punishment.
- F. In addition to meals and snacks provided by the facility, a youth may purchase and consume food from a facility snack store as part of an incentive or privilege.
 - 1. This does not replace meals or snacks provided by the facility.
- G. The food services manager shall oversee a monthly menu based on nutritional value, government regulations and safety codes, budget considerations, materials, and staffing.
 - 1. The menu may vary based on season, availability of certain food, temporary conditions, holidays, or special occasions.
 - 2. Snacks and/or snack choices is part of the menu.
- H. The monthly menu shall be posted no later than the first day of the month.
 - 1. A revised menu shall be posted if variations to the menu are made mid-month.
- I. The food services manager shall have a master file of allowable dishes and recipes.
- J. Serving size shall be based on nutritional value and government regulations.
- K. All youth shall eat the same meals unless an individual has requested a special diet.

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- L. The superintendent or designee shall determine if staff will be offered meals during working shifts.
- M. The food services manager shall conduct a survey of youth, no less than quarterly, to assess the quality of the food and meals provided.
 - 1. The results shall be documented and provided as necessary.
 - 2. The results shall be used while planning future menus.
- N. Facilities may offer an approved list of substitutions for items youth may not like, based on facility resources.
- O. Youth may use the grievance system to comment about meals and snacks.

V. SPECIAL DIETS

- A. All youth, upon intake, shall be asked if they have orders from a medical professional or would like to request a special diet.
 - 1. This process may be part of the initial nursing contact with youth during intake.
- B. Food services staff shall maintain a list of youth on special diets, including what the special diet consists of.
- C. Written documentation is required for any youth on a special diet.
 - 1. This documentation may be from a parent, guardian, religious authority, or a medical professional. The description of the special diet shall contain the following:
 - a. Medical condition, religious reason, or preference
 - b. Duration of the diet
 - c. Signature of the parent, guardian, religious authority, or medical professional
 - d. Contact information for parent, guardian, religious authority, or medical professional
- D. Facility medical staff may review special diet documentation before it is provided to the food services manager.
 - 1. All questions from food services staff/manager regarding a special diet shall be directed to facility medical staff.
- E. Youth may request a special diet through the facility medical staff.
 - 1. Facility medical staff shall review all special diet requests to ensure they are complete and provide adequate information for the food services staff.
- F. The superintendent or designee may review special diets to ensure adequate resources are available to adhere to it.
 - 1. Medical staff may be consulted to discuss food options if necessary.
 - 2. Budgetary concerns shall be discussed with fiscal staff.

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VI. DOCUMENTATION

- A. The food services manager or their designee shall keep daily records of all meals serviced to:
 - 1. Youth
 - 2. Direct care staff, if applicable
 - 3. Other staff, if applicable
 - 4. Visitors and facility guests, if applicable
- B. The food services manager shall review records of meal services at least quarterly to ensure adherence to the facility's posted menu.
- C. Food services staff may be required to document the ingredients and quantity of ingredients used per meal.
- D. Documentation of total meals serviced shall be forwarded to the Department of Agriculture monthly, or as requested.
 - 1. Other documentation may be requested by the Department of Agriculture and shall be provided.
- E. The retention schedule for documentation related to meals and snacks shall be kept for a minimum of five years.

VII. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

- A. Each facility shall create Standard Operating Procedures consistent with this policy to include:
 - 1. Established mealtimes
 - 2. Allowable locations for youth to eat meals and snacks
 - 3. Publishing and posting monthly menus, including menu revisions
 - 4. Master file location of allowable dishes and recipes
 - 5. List of food substitutions
 - 6. Process for special diet requests, including at intake and throughout youth's stay at facility
 - 7. Process to obtain written documentation of special diets for youth
 - 8. Adherence to special dietary requirements
 - 9. Documentation of youth with special diets
 - 10. Procedures for staff to obtain meals from the facility culinary
 - 11. Meal service documentation, including retention schedule
 - 12. Process for quality assurance to determine adherence to posted menus
 - 13. Surveying youth for meal services and documentation
- B. This policy shall be reviewed every two years, or sooner if deemed necessary.