

2008 CACFP Training Questions and Answers
Please add this to your files for your reference

Question: Do commercial bean/pea soups have enough beans/peas to credit for the meat alternate component for lunch/supper?

Answer: Yes, if enough soup is served. Check your Food Buying Guide for specifics. If using a ready-to-serve commercially prepared bean soup you would need to serve 1 cup soup to credit 1/2 cup beans for the meat alternate component for 6-12 y.o. and 3/4 cup soup to credit the 3/8 cup beans for the meat alternate component for 3-5 y.o.

Note: if you are claiming beans for the meat/meat alternate, you may not also claim beans for the vegetable component at that meal.

Question: Can you serve seeds/nuts as the full component of meat alternate?

Answer: No, they can only be used as 1/2 the meat alternate component for lunch or supper.

Question: Can peanut butter be used as the full component of meat alternate?

Answer: Yes, but make sure you look at how practical this is. If the peanut butter is served on bread the full amount will be too much for small children. Using less peanut butter on the sandwich and augmenting it with string cheese is a good alternative. You may wish to serve peanut butter with cut up fruits or vegetables as a dip instead.

Question: Does D.E.C. require that a butcher cut and package wild game or can the hunter or child care center?

Answer: D.E.C. does not require a butcher to cut and package wild game in order for it to be used in the child care center. The center who is receiving the wild game needs to feel comfortable with where it is coming from and that it has been handled properly. Either the hunter or the child care center can cut and package the meat as long as it has been transported and stored cleanly and kept cool. Any more preparation (such as cutting and cleaning) is done separately from other food (different time or a different place) and the food is labeled and stored separately from other food. See the Child Nutrition Services website for further information.

Question: Is commercially prepared wild game/fish D.E.C. allowable?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Does the Quest card qualify an individual or a family for verification of income eligibility?

Answer: Yes, the Quest Card is the new Food Stamp Card.

Question: Is yogurt creditable for infants?

Answer: No, it is an extra only.

Question: Is juice in jello creditable?

Answer: Yes, as long as there is a recipe that has an analysis included with serving size and juice amount for each serving.

Question: Is tatter tot casserole creditable?

Answer: If there is a recipe for tatter tot casserole that has an analysis included with serving size and amount of each component. There can only be two components credited for each combination menu item. (It used to be 3, but this has changed this year)

Question: Do center administrators need prior approval from EED to claim for meals served on field trips?

Answer: No but a sign should be posted at the site to let parents and state monitoring officials know where the children are. The meal time should be adhered to and a fully reimbursable meal should be served. Make sure you've maintained food safety during the outing.

Question: If a child cannot have milk due to an allergy can you serve juice instead?

Answer: No, substituting for an allergy needs to remain in the same food component group. The food substitution should be listed on the medical statement.

Question: If parents provide any portion of the meal for a child over the age of 1 year can the center claim the meal?

Answer: No, the center must provide all the meal components to be able to claim the meal. Only meals served to infants up to 1 year old are exceptions to this rule. If a parent provides creditable portions of an infant's meal the center may claim reimbursement due to the labor of feeding the infant. If the parent provides both a component and the labor of feeding the infant the center may not claim the meal.

Question: If you serve two components for a snack can you serve water in addition?

Answer: Yes, as long as milk is not one of the snack components.

Question: Can both water and milk be available at a meal?

Answer: No. (From USDA) Young children, in particular, need to consume nutrient-dense foods to make sure they get adequate intakes within the recommended calorie level. Given that fluid milk is especially important for bone health and provides significant amounts of calcium, magnesium, and potassium, young children could get less of these nutrients if they had the option to take water at the meal instead of milk. Just as in NSLP, the CACFP meal pattern requires fluid milk as a beverage; there is no beverage choice. Additionally, “family-style” meal service is not intended as a true “offer versus serve” situation in which a child can decline a component and take something else instead.

While water is important for hydration, it should be offered after the meal service, rather than during the meal, for those children who are still thirsty.

FNS Instruction 783-9 Rev. 2 indicates, "During the course of the meal, it is the responsibility of the supervising adults to **actively** encourage each child to accept service of the full required portion for each food component of the meal pattern." Thus, simply placing a pitcher of milk on the table would not be sufficient to meet this requirement in a family style meal service.

Question: How many components may be claimed when serving combination foods?

Answer: Two components may be claimed and both of these cannot be the fruit and vegetable group. A new policy is being written, but begin claiming only two components now.

Question: Do we have to keep the actual CN label each time we serve a processed food such as chicken nuggets?

Answer: You must have a CN label on file for all processed food you are serving (ie. Chicken nuggets, corn dogs, fish sticks). If you always serve the same brand you don't have to keep the label off of each box/bag, but you should periodically check and make sure the CN labels are the same. If you have processed foods on your menu the program reviewer will check that you have the CN label when on site.

Question: In family style dining can you claim a child's meal if they haven't come to the table and participated with the rest of the group?

Answer: No, a child must sit at the table in order to be counted as being offered a meal. They should be encouraged to try all of the food components, although they do not have to eat any of the components.

Question: In the At-Risk programs do children need to sit with the group and eat the meal in order to claim the meal?

Answer: Yes, the same rules apply to the at-risk program as family style dining. Some at-risk programs have children go through the food line and in this case they need to have accepted all the food items in order to be claimed. You would count these meals at point of service.

Question: If there are a certain number of children enrolled does the cook need to prepare enough for all children, even if there is usually a lower number that are present?

Answer: There needs to be enough food prepared for all children to eat full portions at each meal. You may choose to count the children present shortly before the meal service so you are not over-preparing for the meals. Many times this becomes an issue on holidays. It is suggested that you have parents sign up ahead of time if their child will be in attendance on a specific holiday. This will help the cook anticipate the amount they will have to prepare at least a day in advance.

Question: If a parent declines to give their social security number on the income eligibility applications can I still count the child in the free or reduced category (if income eligible)?

Answer: No. This has changed from past years – if a parent declines to give their social security number they are automatically categorized as over-income, even if they are income eligible. This is viewed as an incomplete application. If the parent has not signed the application it will also be automatically categorized as over-income.

Question: How many years do centers need to retain their records to be compliant with regulation?

Answer: 3 years plus the current year, as long as your program is not under investigation, or under any kind of review which progresses into the next year. You start the 3-year countdown when the year in question is truly closed.

Question: If the center provides a late afternoon snack (ie 5:00 p.m.) and do not claim reimbursement for this snack can the children take food with them when their parents pick them up?

Answer: Yes, as long as the center is not getting reimbursed for these snacks.

Question: How long do the children need to be in attendance during the meal time in order for the center to claim for reimbursement for the meal?

Answer: As a rule of thumb, children need to be in attendance for at least 10 minutes of the breakfast and snack meals and 15 minutes of the lunch and supper meals. (i.e. child is in attendance for supper which starts at 5:00 p.m. and parents come to pick them up at 5:10 p.m. then the center cannot claim for this meal. The child has not had time to eat the meal). Some centers are tempted to let the child leave with a portion of the meal, which would constitute a “Meal to go”. No portion of any meal is allowed to be eaten off-site in the CACFP. Centers may need to adjust their supper meal service if this is a big issue – the intent of a supper meal service is for children who’s parent’s do not pick them up at the customary 5-6 p.m. timeframe where they would go home and fix the meal for the child. Scheduling a later supper meal service is suggested in this case. Or you may choose to do a later snack service. We find the same issue when children are dropped off at a center in the morning and catch a bus to school. They need to be in attendance for at least 10 minutes of the breakfast meal service to be claimed.

Question: Can confidential income eligibility applications be kept in an unlocked filing cabinet in an office that’s locked after-hours?

Answer: All income eligibility information must be kept in a locked filing cabinet on the center premises. Keeping the information in an office is not sufficient as other staff members (besides those designated to categorize the applications) may have potential access throughout the day.

Question: If a disabled child requires food substitutions and the parent wants to bring the substitutions can the center claim the child’s meals for reimbursement.

Answer: No, the same rules apply to allergies – the center must supply the substitutions in order to be creditable. When a child is designated disabled (with medical statement) the center **MUST** provide the substitution. There is no longer the choice to offer or not offer.

Question: With multi-site centers does each site have to have the same 30-day study period?

Answer: No, but they need to be submitted to CNS together with the Rate % Certification Statement.

Question: When serving cereal and milk for breakfast can juice be served?

Answer: Yes, if the milk is being poured over the cereal. You cannot serve juice and milk if both are the beverage.

Question: When serving milk as a beverage for breakfast can a combination of fruit and fruit juice be served to equal the fruit component?

Answer: No, a full serving of fruit needs to be served for the fruit component.

Question: How will centers know that there is a new CACFP Bulletin on the CNS website that needs to be read?

Answer: An e-mail will be sent to all centers who are on-line claiming. A hard copy bulletin will be sent to all centers who are sending in hard copy claims. There will also be a notice on the CNP web welcome page, which you see as you're entering the database to submit a claim on-line.

Question: If a meal time is from 5:00-6:00 p.m. and the cook doesn't start serving until 5:15 p.m. can the meal time be extended until 6:15 p.m.?

Answer: No, you must serve within your stated meal time.

Question: Do I have to have a large 11"x 17" And Justice for All Poster in more than one spot at the center?

Answer: You must have an 11"x17" And Justice for All Poster in every serving area. If you serve in separate classrooms you must have a poster in each classroom.

Question: Can the Infant Feeding Selection form be kept in the infant's file?

Answer: Yes.