

FOOD AND NUTRITION PROCEDURES

Miami-Dade County Public Schools

B8

Subject: **SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide the necessary steps in accommodating students with disabilities that have special dietary needs.

PROCEDURE

A school breakfast and/or lunch can be prepared for children with special dietary needs. By law, a person with a disability as defined in 7 CFR Part 15b, is one who has "... a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities..." Major life activities are defined to include, but not limited to, functions such as "caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working."

Special Dietary Needs

Per USDA SP 59-2016 *Modification to Accommodate Disabilities in the School Meal Programs* and 7 CFR 15b, School Food Authorities (SFA) are required to make reasonable substitutions and modifications, including special meals, for children with a disability that restricts the child's diet at no extra charge. School Food Authorities are not required to accommodate special dietary needs that do not constitute a disability (e.g., food intolerances, allergies that do not have life-threatening reactions, religious or moral convictions or personal preferences.). But SFA have the option to accommodate dietary needs if the requested modification can be accomplished within the Program meal pattern. The substitution or meal modification will be made on a case-by-case basis and only when supported by a written but have the option to accommodate statement from a State licensed medical authority (someone authorized to write medical prescriptions under State law).

To provide substitutions or modified meals to students, the **Medical Statement for Meal Modifications** [FM5425](#) must be completed for each student as outlined below.

- A. The **Medical Statement for Meal Modifications** [FM5425](#) must be completed and signed by a State licensed medical authority for each student who requires special meals.
- B. The original form must be placed in the student's health record at school and a copy must be provided to the food service manager/satellite assistant to be implemented immediately.

FOOD AND NUTRITION PROCEDURES

Miami-Dade County Public Schools

B8

Subject: **SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS**

- C. The food service manager/satellite assistant must forward the **Medical Statement for Meal Modifications** to the Department of Food and Nutrition, Attention: Food and Menu Management.
- D. Food and Menu Management will review the **Medical Statement for Meal Modifications**. If a meal substitution is required for an item that is not part of the regular menu, arrangements will be made for delivery of the approved item(s) to the school site.

The **Medical Statement for Meal Modifications** is valid for up to one (1) year from the medical authority's evaluation date and should be updated as often as determined by the medical authority.

Ordering Meals with Texture Modifications

The **Food Texture Modification Order Sheet** ([Attachment A](#)) is used to provide the food service manager/satellite assistant with the total count of special meals required by students in their school on a daily basis. The **Food Texture Modification Order Sheet** should be completed daily by teachers or staff members with students who require modified texture of meals. All order sheets should be submitted to the food service manager/satellite assistant's office with adequate time for meal preparation. Food service managers/satellite assistants must maintain order sheets with daily paperwork.

Alternates specified on the menu may serve as substitutions. Food service managers/satellite assistants should use the Menu Modifications for Special Meals table ([Attachment B](#)) as a guide for providing special meals to students. Contact the student's teacher and/or the Department of Food and Nutrition for specific questions regarding modified textures or acceptable food substitutions.

Fluid Milk Substitutions

The United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) issued the final rule *Fluid Milk Substitutions in the School Nutrition Program* (73 FR 52903) on September 12, 2008, which states, in part:

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B8

Subject: **SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS**

...Specifically, schools are required to provide milk substitutes for children who have a disability which substantially limits one or more life activities and would be affected by the consumption of dairy milk, such as diabetes. However, schools are also given the option of providing milk substitutes for children with milk allergies, religious or ethical beliefs or other needs that preclude the consumption of milk but do not constitute a medical disability....

Under Offer vs. Serve (OVS), a meal without fluid milk can be reimbursable, and a milk substitution is not necessary. If there is no OVS, a reimbursable meal must include milk or an acceptable milk substitute except for a student with a recognized disability. For a student with a disability, the school can omit, or substitute fluid milk based on the written statement from a State licensed medical authority.

Note: Any non-dairy beverage offered as a fluid milk substitute, must be nutritionally equivalent to fluid milk and provide specific levels of calcium, protein, vitamins A and D, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, riboflavin, and vitamin B12.

This is to ensure that individual students who are provided a substitution for cow's milk for reasons other than disability, receive the important nutrients found in milk.

To provide a milk substitution or to omit milk from the meal, the **Medical Statement for Meal Modifications [FM5425](#)** must be completed for each student as outlined below.

- A. The **Medical Statement for Meal Modifications [DRAFT-FM5425](#)** must be completed and signed by a State licensed medical authority.

- B. A copy must be provided to the food service manager/satellite assistant.

FOOD AND NUTRITION PROCEDURES

Miami-Dade County Public Schools

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- C. The food service manager/satellite assistant must notify the Department of Food and Nutrition by forwarding the Medical Statement for Meal Modifications at School's request immediately to the Department of Food and Nutrition, Attention: Food and Menu Management.
- D. Food and Menu Management will review the Medical Statement for Meal Modifications. If a milk substitution is approved for an item that is not part of the regular menu, arrangements will be made for delivery of the approved item(s) to the school site.

Procedures for entering all meal substitutions and/or restrictions.

The food service manager/satellite assistant must enter a note in the student's account to notify the cashier(s) of the student's meal substitution and/or restrictions:

- Query student account in "Student"
- Click on "Edit"
- Click on "Limits" tab
- In "POS Message", type reason (e.g., *cannot have milk, eggs/special juice etc.*)
- Check the box that reads "is allergic message"
- Click "Update"

For Action By: Principals, Food Service Managers and Satellite Assistants

Refer Questions to: Department of Food and Nutrition

Revised: July 2003 (2nd), July 2005, July 2006, July 2010, July 2014, July 2022, July 2023, July 2024
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