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Arkansas Department of Human Services	Procedure: AR CACFP 2013-7
Division of child Care and Early Childhood Education	Section: All Institutions
Child and Adult Care Food Program	Subject: Food Substitutions for Disability and Medical or Special Dietary Needs
	Effective date: 04/16/2013

To claim a meal for reimbursement, the child must be served the required minimum components. Exceptions to this requirement occur under the following circumstances:

**1. Disability**

A person with a disability is any person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such impairment. **Child care centers participating in the CACFP are required to make substitutions or modifications to the meal pattern for a participant with a disability that restricts his/her diet.**

Substitutions must be made on a case by case basis and only when supported by a written statement signed by a licensed medical authority which explains the need for substitutions and includes recommended alternate foods. The medical statement must be kept on file at the center and shall identify:

- The participant’s disability
- The food or foods to be omitted from the participant’s diet and the food or foods that must be substituted.

Reimbursement for meals served with an authorized substitute food to disabled participants shall be claimed at the same reimbursement rate as meals which meet the meal pattern. There shall not be a supplementary charge for the substituted food item to the participant.

Generally, a participant with a food allergy or intolerance is not considered a participant with a disability and institutions are not required to make substitutions. However, when in the physician’s assessment food allergies may result in severe, life-threatening reactions (i.e. anaphylactic), the participant then meets the definition of a participant with a disability.

**2. Medical or Special Dietary Reasons**

Child care centers may make substitutions for participants who are unable to consume a **food item** because of medical or other special dietary needs. Such substitutions may only be made on a case by case basis.

Participants with medical or special dietary needs may have substitutions to the meal pattern only when supporting documentation is on file. The documentation must be signed by a recognized medical authority such as a licensed physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner and must include the following:

- An identification of the medical or other special dietary need which restricts the participant's diet; and
- The food or foods to be omitted from the participant's diet, and the food or foods that may be substituted.

Reimbursement for meals served with an authorized substitute food to participants with special dietary needs must be claimed at the same reimbursement rate as meals which meet the meal pattern. There shall not be a supplementary charge for the substituted food item to the participant.