

FY 2016 Bureau Notes –8/29/2016

Water Availability

CACFP regulations require that child care organizations including centers, At-risk Programs, and emergency shelters make water available to children upon request throughout the day and at meal times. A new requirement is to offer water to children throughout the day. Offering means asking the children whether they would like water a different times throughout the day. These requirements do not apply to adult day care centers; however, adult centers are encouraged to ensure drinking water is offered and made available throughout the day.

Water can be made available in a variety of ways, including having cups available next to faucets, water bottles for each child, water pitchers or dispensers and cups set out, a water fountain in the classroom, or providing water if requested. Water may, but does not have to be available for self service. For very young children, this may require visual cues such as showing the cup or pitcher while verbally offering water.

While drinking water must be available to children during mealtimes, it does not have to be served with meals. Water is not part of a reimbursable meal and may not be served instead of fluid milk. If water is offered during a meal, consider offering it toward the end of meal and/or in smaller amounts. We recommend serving water with snacks when no other beverage is served and served instead of non-creditable sweetened beverages.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends that facilities routinely test drinking water for lead and perform regular maintenance to ensure that drinking water is safe. Contact the lead supervising official at the local health department or the public water provider for information. Costs required to make water available may be allowable if reasonable and necessary.

USDA has issued two memos providing detailed information about these requirements: CACFP 18-2016 “Resources for Making Potable Water Available in Schools and Child Care Facilities” and CACFP 20-2016 “Water Availability in the CACFP”. Both and will be posted on the Department of Education website.

At-Risk Flexibility: Taking Food off Site

USDA memo CACFP 22-2016, “Taking Food Components Off-site in the At-Risk Afterschool Component of the CACFP” extends the flexibility to take certain food items off-site. Children are now allowed to take one vegetable, fruit, or grain item off-site to eat at a later time. The food item must be from the child’s own meal or snack, or left on a share table by another child who did not want it. See USDA memo CACFP 13-2016 “The Use of Share Tables in Child Nutrition Programs” posted in the 7/15/16 Bureau CACFP Memos and Updates for more information about share tables.

Use of this flexibility is encouraged to increase children’s consumption of vegetables and fruit, and help reduce food waste. State agency approval is not required prior to implementing this flexibility but compliance with State health and safety codes is required. Organizations must have the capacity to monitor the site when food items are being taken off-site to prevent food safety or integrity issues from arising. If a State agency determines during a review that oversight is inadequate, and the risk of food safety and integrity issues are increased, the State agency may prohibit an organization from using this flexibility. This decision is not an appealable action.

New Consultant

Julie Breshears was hired to start September 2 as a new CACFP consultant serving Southern Iowa. Julie lives in Lamoni and came from Centerville School District where she was a family and consumer sciences teacher.

Consultant Review Assignments

Due to the increasing complexity of Child Nutrition Programs, Bureau of Nutrition and Health consultants will now be working in either the CACFP or school program, but not in both programs. Due to this change review assignments have changed for some consultants starting in October 2017. Jaci Graves, formerly Jaci Yetmar, will start be working fulltime in CACFP starting in October. Jaci had been working in the school lunch and CACFP home program. Jaci lives in Badger and will serve northwest and north central Iowa. Jan Steffen and Marlene Jepsen, who covered southwest and northwest Iowa will be retiring.

A new directory will be provided when it becomes available.