



Fresh Ideas

Fiscal Year 2025
Trimester 1

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A Brief Review of Infant Meal Patterns

(Meal pattern)

The CACFP meal patterns contain 2 infant age groups. They are **birth through 5 months** and **6 through 11 months**. (See *Infants Meal Patterns* chart.) On a child's first birthday, they stop following the infant meal patterns and begin following the child meal patterns for ages 1-2.

Breastmilk or Iron Fortified Infant Formula (IFIF) is the only meal pattern requirement for infants in the birth through 5 months age group. The minimum serving size for all meals and snacks is 4-6 fluid ounces.

Note: If you offer an infant the minimum amount of breastmilk or IFIF required by the CACFP meal pattern, you can claim the meal or snack for reimbursement, even if the infant does not drink all the breastmilk or formula offered.

As a CACFP participant, you must offer to provide at least one type of IFIF. Speak with the parents about the types of formula you provide. The parent may decide to:

1. Accept the IFIF you provide.
2. Decline the offered IFIF and bring their own IFIF.
3. Provide breastmilk only or breastfeed on site.
4. Provide breastmilk and supplement with the IFIF you provide.
5. Provide breastmilk and supplement parent supplied IFIF.

You may claim reimbursement for an infant's meals and snacks containing only parent provided breastmilk or IFIF. However, once an infant begins eating solid foods, you must supply the solids.



Infants in the 6 through 11 months group also require breastmilk or IFIF at each meal and snack. For breakfast, lunch, and supper the minimum requirement is 6-8 fluid ounces. Snacks require a minimum of 2-4 fluid ounces. Additionally, the meal patterns for infants in this age group contains solid foods. (See *Infants Meal Patterns* chart.)

Prior to 6 months of age, most babies do not have the muscle control and coordination to eat solid foods. They are not **developmentally ready**.

For more information about when a baby is developmentally ready for solid foods see *Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*, chapter 1.

The exact time an infant is developmentally ready for solid foods varies from child to child, but it is generally around 6 months. Talk with the baby's parents, so you know when they have started giving their baby solid foods. If the parents inform you their baby is ready to eat solid foods, you must begin offering solid foods to claim reimbursement for the infant's meals and snacks. Additionally, you must record the foods served on the infant menus. **It is unacceptable to serve an infant solid food and not record the food in KidKare.**

The amounts of solid foods listed in the infant meal pattern are provided as a range, such as 0–2 tablespoons. This provides you with the flexibility to offer the right amount of solid food based upon the baby's developmental readiness. You would give 0 tablespoons of a solid food if the baby has not yet started eating solids. You might give the baby less than 1 tablespoon of a solid food if he or she just started eating a solid food. Once the baby has been introduced to the solid food, you would offer the baby the full 2 tablespoons of the solid food

Take a moment to review the infant meal pattern and ask your Program Advisor any questions you may have. If questions arise in the future, please call or send ACA an email. We are here to assist you.



Click on the picture or link to view or download USDA's *Feeding infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*.

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/cacfp/feeding-infants>

Open On a Holiday

(record keeping, review procedures)

Is your childcare business open on holiday? If so, it is important you record "Open on Holiday" in your Kidkare Provider Calendar to avoid claim deductions. This documentation is necessary to verify you were indeed open on the holiday and did not make an entry error.

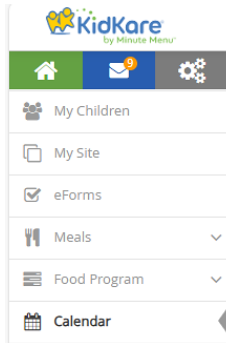


Follow the link to learn about managing calendars in KidKare.

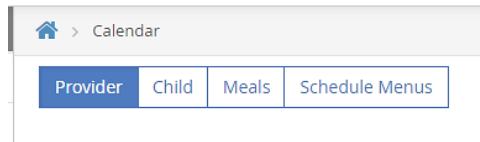
<https://help.kidkare.com/help/calendar>

To record "Open on Holiday" in KidKare do the following:

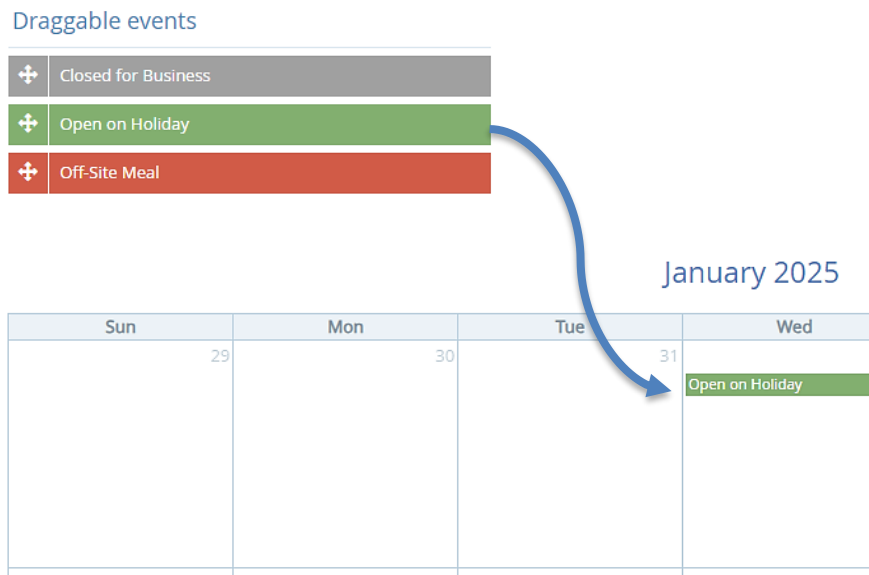
- 1) Log into KiKare and click on Calendar.



- 2) Click on "Provider" to display the provider calendar. It should be highlighted in blue after you click on it.



- 3) Drag the "Open on Holiday" tag to the correct day on the calendar.



Failure to record "Open on Holiday" for a major holiday will result in claim disallowances.

When your claim is processed, you will be paid for all qualifying meals/snack served on the holiday. Remember, failure to record "Open on Holiday" for a major holiday will result in claim disallowances. The following are considered major holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day.

Recording Whole Grain-rich Foods

(program meal patterns, recordkeeping, review procedures, program reimbursement system)

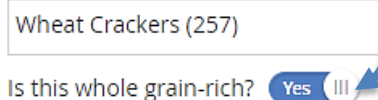
Food Program regulations require you serve at least one whole grain-rich food per day. Claim deductions are made on days when this requirement is not met. Don't lose money for something you served. When you serve a whole grain-rich food, indicate a whole grain-rich food on your menu.

In KidKare, you indicate a food is whole grain-rich by moving the slider to "Yes".

Bread/Alternate

Wheat Crackers (257)

Is this whole grain-rich? Yes No



When you use a preplanned menu, such as Scheduled Meals, E-Z Menus or Select-A-Menus, be sure to indicate when a whole grain-rich food is served. For example, a preplanned menu may call for pasta. You choose to serve whole wheat pasta. Unless you move the slider to "Yes", we do not know a whole grain-rich product was served.

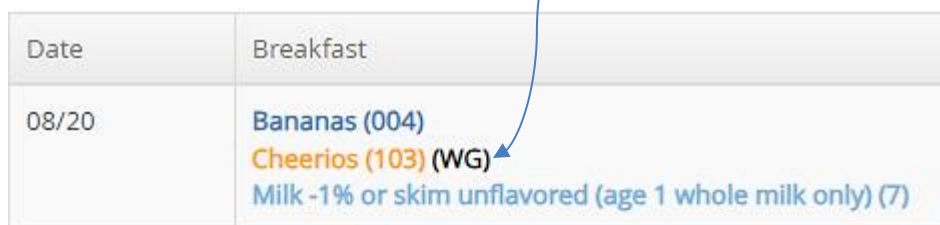
You will notice for some foods the whole grain slider automatically moves to yes. These are foods that by definition are whole grain-rich. Some of these foods include oatmeal, quinoa, and brown rice. A product cannot be labeled as oatmeal if it is not a whole grain product.

Other products are often whole grain-rich, but not are required to be. With these products you must manually move the slider to yes to indicate a whole grain-rich item was served.

Regular Cheerios, for example, currently credit as a whole grain-rich product, but nothing requires Cheerios to remain whole grain-rich. General Mills could change the recipe at any time. With this type of product, moving the slider to yes indicates you have checked the label, and the product continues to meet the whole grain-rich requirement.

It is a good idea to review your menus each evening to be sure you have not forgotten to indicate a whole grain-rich food. In KidKare you can run the Foods Served reports. This report places a **(WG)** next to the foods indicated as whole grain-rich (Reports > Meals and Attendance > Foods Served > Select Month).

Date	Breakfast
08/20	Bananas (004) Cheerios (103) (WG) Milk -1% or skim unflavored (age 1 whole milk only) (7)



Record Retention Requirement

(Record keeping)

The USDA requires Food Program participants to maintain Program records for “three years and 3 months after the date of the submission of the final claim for the fiscal year to which they pertain.”

The USDA requires Food Program participants to maintain Program records for “three years and 3 months after the date of the submission of the final claim for the fiscal year to which they pertain.” This provision is intended to facilitate reviews, to enhance Program integrity, and to assure Providers they are being properly reimbursed by their sponsor.

Providers are required to keep copies of each child’s enrollment form (including re-enrollment forms), daily records of the number of children in attendance and the number of meals, by type, served to enrolled children (meal counts and menus). **This requirement means Food Program records for fiscal year 2024 (October 1, 2023-September 30, 2024) must be kept until January 1, 2028.**

USDA has stated Providers must have on hand for immediate review all records that support their program activities for the current month as well as the previous twelve months of operations. Providers may store the remaining two years offsite; however, they must still be in the control of the Provider and accessible within a reasonable amount of time. If no offsite storage is used, Providers must retain the three years of records, onsite at the family childcare home.

Menus and Meal Counts

(Meal counts, Review procedures)

The best way to ensure menu and meal count requirement are met, is to record them in KidKare by the end of each day.

CACFP participant agree to keep daily menu and meal count records as a condition of receiving USDA reimbursement for qualifying meals and snacks.

Menus must meet the meal pattern guidelines, and each required meal component must be recorded. **Menus may be completed in advance.**

Meal counts must provide the names of enrolled children who were present and served meals/snacks meeting program requirements at each meal/snack service. **Meal counts may not be completed in advance.**

Time-in time out forms and daily attendance sheets are not meal counts. At breakfast you must record the name of each child who was served breakfast. At lunch/supper you must record the name of each child who was served lunch/supper. At snack you must the record the name of each child who was served snack.

Both menus and meal counts must be recorded by 11:59 pm on the day they occur.

The best way to ensure menu and meal count requirement are met, is to record them in KidKare by the end of each day. KidKare was designed to help you meet the USDA requirements. Frequently, handwritten menus and meal count do not meet the USDA requirements. This result in claim deductions. It can also result in a Finding or Serious Deficiency being issued.

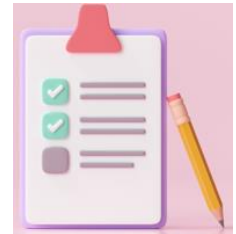
Claim Review Procedures

(Review Procedures, claims submission)

Food Program claims are due in ACA's office by the 3rd of the month following the month being claimed. For example, February claim should be submitted by March 3rd.

Once claims are received in our office, we process them to determine how much reimbursement each Provider will receive. Every claim is reviewed for errors. Claim errors result in reduced reimbursement. Below are some of the errors we often encounter.

- There is not a whole-grain rich food recorded on a day's menus.
- A required meal component is left blank.
- A meat/meat alternate is used to replace the fruit/vegetable component at breakfast. A meat/meat alternate can be used to replace the grain at breakfast up to 3 times per week.
- Flavored milk is recorded for meals/snacks served to children less than 6 years old.
- Milk equivalent is recorded without a valid parent request on file with ACA.
- Provisional milk is recorded without a Special Diet Statement on file with ACA.
- A child is claimed without an Enrollment Form being received by ACA.



CACFP Updates

(Meal Patterns)

USDA has made some minor changes to the CACFP meal patterns. These changes were made to better align the CACFP meal patterns with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

July 1, 2024:

- Adds registered dietitians to the health care professionals that can sign a Special Diet Statement.
- Allows nuts and seeds to credit for the full meat/meat alternate component at breakfast, lunch, and supper.

October 1, 2025:

- Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of **added sugar** per dry ounce. Currently, the limit is 6 grams of total sugar per dry ounce. This change should expand the number of cereals that credit.
- Yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of **added sugars** per 6 ounces. Currently, the limit is 23 grams of total sugar per 6 ounces. This may reduce the number of yogurts that credit.

USDA is currently updating its resources to reflect the upcoming change to the sugar limits. We will pass the information along to you once we receive it.



Office Closed Dates

November 28, 2024 – Thanksgiving
November 29, 2024

December 24, 2024 – Christmas Eve
December 25, 2024 – Christmas Day
December 31, 2024 – New Year's Eve

January 1, 2025 – New Years Day
January 20, 2025 – Martin Luther King Day

February 17, 2025 – Presidents Day

You may leave us an email, or a voice mail and we will get back to you on the next business day.

Email – cacfp@acainc.org

Phone – (651)481-9320

ACA's Drop Box

Enrollment forms and other documents can be mailed or dropped off in the white mailbox near the front door of our office. The address is:

Adults' & Children's Alliance • 10 Yorkton Court • St. Paul, MN 55117

ACA is in Think Small's building. If you drop off documents, please remember to write ACA on the envelope to ensure your documents go to the correct organization.

Thank you!

Thank you for....

Nurturing children,

Participating on the Food Program,

Supporting ACA.

We Appreciate all you do.



Infant Meal Pattern

Meal	Birth through 5 months	6 through 11 months
Breakfast, Lunch, Supper	4-6 fluid oz breastmilk ¹ or iron-fortified infant formula	6-8 fluid oz breastmilk ¹ or iron-fortified infant formula AND ² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-4 tbsp iron-fortified infant cereal, meat, fish, poultry, whole egg, cooked dry beans, cooked dry peas OR • 0-2 oz cheese OR • 0-1/2 cup cottage cheese OR • 0-4 oz (volume) or 0-1/2 cup yogurt³ OR • A combination of the above AND ² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-2 tbsp vegetable or fruit or a combination of both⁴
Snack	4-6 fluid oz breastmilk ¹ or iron-fortified infant formula	2-4 fluid oz breastmilk ¹ or iron-fortified infant formula AND ² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-1/2 oz eq bread⁵ OR • 0-2 crackers⁵ OR • 0-4 tbsp iron-fortified infant cereal⁵ OR • 0-4 tbsp ready-to-eat breakfast cereal^{5,6} AND ² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-2 tbsp vegetable or fruit or a combination of both⁴

¹Breastfeeding on site is creditable as part of a reimbursable meal or snack.
²Foods from the following components are required when developmentally ready.
³Yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces.
⁴Juice is not creditable for infants.
⁵A serving of grains must be whole grain-rich, enriched meal, or enriched flour.
⁶Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce.

Effective 10/1/2019