



Adults' & Children's Alliance

Fresh Ideas

Fiscal Year 2024
Trimester 3

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Crediting Fluid Milk Substitutes

(program meal patterns)

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Fluid milk is a requirement at breakfast, lunch, and supper. It is an option at snack. However, not all children tolerate cow's milk. Other have religious or ethical reasons for avoiding milk. Fortunately, there are creditable nondairy milk alternatives.

For children who cannot consume cow's milk, or who do not wish to consume cow's milk, non-dairy milk alternatives may be served in place of fluid milk. Non-dairy beverages **must be nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk** and meet the nutritional standards established by USDA.

You will receive a "Fluid Milk Substitutions" handout. This is a handout created by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). It lists the non-dairy beverages which credit as fluid milk substitutes. Note, non-dairy beverages served to children 1 through 5 years old must be unflavored due to the higher sugar content of flavored varieties.

A parent who wants their child to receive a fluid milk substitution must **provide a written and signed request that includes the reason for the substitution**. The written request must be on file with ACA. If the fluid milk substitution is approved on the MDE handout, a Special Diet Statement is not required.

A Special Diet Statement is required when, due to a medical need, a program participant requires a non-dairy substitution that does not meet the nutritional standards of cow's milk. Almond milk would be an example of a product that requires a Special Diet Statement to credit.

You can download the "Fluid Milk Substitutions" handout from ACA's website <https://www.acainc.org/forms.html>

Fluid Milk Substitution

Crediting Fluid Milk

Infants require Iron Fortified Infant Formula or breastmilk at each meal and snack. Children 1 year and older require fluid milk at breakfast, lunch, and supper. It is an option at snack. The type of milk required (whole, low-fat, or fat-free) is determined by the child's age. Use the information below to see what type of milk credits for children in different age groups.

Infants (newborn through 11 months)

- ✓ Breastmilk
- ✓ Iron-fortified infant formula
(*Breastmilk is allowed at any age in the CACFP.*)

Ages 12 months through 23 months (1 year through 1 year and 11 months)

- ✓ Unflavored whole milk
(*Iron fortified formula may be served to children between the ages of 12 months to 13 months to help with the transition to whole milk.*)

Ages 2 years through 5 years (up to 6th birthday)

- ✓ Unflavored fat-free (skim) milk
- ✓ Unflavored low-fat (1%) milk
(*Unflavored whole milk and unflavored reduced-fat milk (2%) milk may be served to children between the ages of 24 months to 25 months to help with the transition to fat-free(skim) or low-fat (1%) milk.*)

Ages 6 years through 12 years

- ✓ Unflavored fat free (skim) milk
- ✓ Flavored fat-free (skim) milk
- ✓ Unflavored low-fat milk (1% milk)
- ✓ Flavored low-fat (1% milk)

Credit: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/serving-milk-cacfp>



“Serving Milk in the CACFP” is a USDA worksheet that can be viewed and download at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/serving-milk-cacfp>

Lactose Free Milk

Lactose-free and lactose reduced-milks are fluid milks that have been modified by the addition of lactase enzymes. The lactose (milk sugar) in the milk has been broken down into simple sugars. Children who cannot digest lactose may benefit from the use of lactose-free or lactose reduced milk.

Lactose-free and Lactose reduced milk **DO NOT** require a special diet statement or written parent request. However, they must meet the guidelines for the type of milks allowed by age (whole, low-fat, or fat-free) listed above.



Pending Enrollments

(claim submission, review procedure, recordkeeping)

When a child is initially enrolled in the food program, their name appears in the KidKare “My Children” Pending section.

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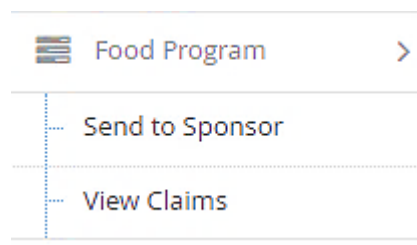
Once ACA received the complete, signed, and dated enrollment for, we activate the enrollment. You will now see the child’s name in the KidKare “My Children” Active section.




Do not submit your claim to ACA if you have a child in pending status and want to be reimbursed for their meals and snacks.

Do not submit your claim to ACA if you have a child in pending status and want to be reimbursed for their meals and snacks. Only children in active status are eligible for meal and snack reimbursement. We are not allowed to reconsider claims with pending enrollments. That means if we receive the enrollment form after we have requested your funds from MDE, we cannot do a second funds request for the additional money.

Fortunately, KidKare provides a warning before you submit your claim to ACA if you have claimed meals and snacks for a pending child. The warning is found in the KidKare “Food Program: View Claims section.



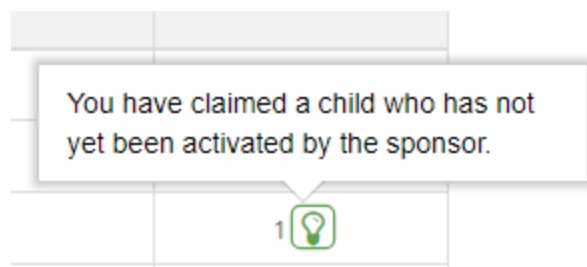
Pending Enrollments

Days with Meals	1
Children Claimed	1
Pending Children	1 
Total Meals	1

Fortunately, KidKare provides a warning before you submit your claim to ACA if you have claimed meals and snacks for a pending child.



Noice the light bulb next to “Pending Children”. If you hover your curser over it, you will see the message below.



Do not submit your claim is you want reimbursement for the pending child’s meals and snacks. If you think ACA should have the enrollment, contact our office. Once the enrollment is activated, the light bulb will disappear, and your claim can be submitted.

Current Reimbursement Rates (Program reimbursement system)

Tier rates are effective July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025.

	Breakfast	Lunch/Supper	Snack
Tier 1	\$1.66	\$3.15	\$0.93
Tier 2	\$0.60	\$1.90	\$0.26



The current reimbursement rates and a history of reimbursement rates can be found at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/reimbursement-rates>

Tier rates are effective July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.

New Income Eligibility Guidelines

(Program reimbursement system)

Each July the income scale used to qualify for Tier 1 reimbursement rates is reviewed and updated by USDA. Below is the updated scale and rates effective July 1, 2024.

Household Income Eligibility Guidelines for Tier I Eligibility July 1, 2024–June 30, 2025

Household Size	\$ Per Year	\$ Per Month	\$ Twice Per Month		\$ Per 2 Weeks	\$ Per Week
1	27,861	2,322	1,161		1,072	536
2	37,814	3,152	1,576		1,455	728
3	47,767	3,981	1,991		1,838	919
4	57,720	4,810	2,405		2,220	1,110
5	67,673	5,640	2,820		2,603	1,302
6	77,626	6,469	3,235		2,986	1,493
7	87,579	7,299	3,650		3,369	1,685
8	97,532	8,128	4,064		3,752	1,876
Add for each additional household member	9,953	830	415		383	192

If you need Household Income Statements for your families or yourself, you can print them from ACA's web site. Go to www.acainc.org. Click on members only > forms. Print as many forms as you need. If you do not have internet access, call our office and we will mail the forms to you.

Ways to Qualify for Tier 1 Rates

A Provider becomes eligible to receive Tier 1 rates in one of three ways: area eligibility, categorically eligible, or income eligible.

Area Eligibility

A Provider's home may be area eligible due to school eligibility or census eligibility. Area eligibility is determined by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). If a home is classified as Tier 1 by area, all enrolled day care children's meals are reimbursed at Tier 1 rates regardless of the income of the Provider's family or the day care children's families. Area eligibility is valid for 5 years.

Categorical Eligibility

Providers

A childcare home is eligible for Tier 1 meal reimbursement if any member of the Provider's household currently participates in any of these 3 programs: Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDRIP).

If you believe your household is categorically eligible for Tier 1 rates, you must complete a Provider Household Income Statement (PHIS) and supply the required documentation. Providers who are categorical Tier 1 eligible may claim their own children's meals for reimbursement when at least one day care child is also present for the meal. The eligibility is valid for one year.

Childcare Families

A CACFP participating child's home is eligible for Tier 1 meal reimbursement if the child's household currently participates in any of these 3 programs: Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDRIP).

A complete and approved Household Income Statement (HIS) is required to be on file in our office.

Foster Children

Foster children are categorically eligible to receive Tier 1 reimbursement for their CACFP meals. A foster child is defined as a child for whom a welfare agency or court has legal responsibility.

A PHIS or HIS may be completed separately for a foster child, or the foster child may be included on a PHIS or HIS with other non-foster children in the household.

Income Eligibility - Provider

A childcare provider is eligible for Tier 1 meal reimbursement if a provider's household incomes fall within household size and income guidelines.

A Provider whose home is not in a Tier 1 area may still receive Tier 1 reimbursement rates for all enrolled children if the Provider's household meets the household size and income guidelines shown above. Additionally, an income eligible Provider may claim meals for his or her own children's meals when day care children are present. If you believe your family meets the income guidelines for a Tier 1 household, complete a Provider Household Income Statement (PHIS) and supply all required income documentation to ACA. The PHIS is reviewed by ACA staff. You will be notified in writing as to whether you meet income guidelines. All information is confidential. If approved, income eligibility is valid for 1 year.

Income Eligibility - Childcare Families

Providers living in Tier 2 areas who are not themselves income eligible may be reimbursed at Tier 1 rates for day care children whose households meet Tier 1 household size and income guidelines. Parents must submit and have approved by ACA a Household Income Statement (HIS).

If you are a Tier 2 Provider and your family does not meet the income guidelines, you may give each family with a child in your care a HIS to review. Families that believe they qualify for Tier 1 rates should be encouraged to complete the form and return it to ACA. They may also complete the form and return it to you in a sealed envelope. Mail the unopened envelope to our office. If the HIS is approved, you will receive Tier 1 rates for those children's meals. Approved applications are valid for 1 year.

The income information submitted by the parents is confidential. Because the information is confidential, we cannot tell you which children in your care qualify for Tier 1 rates or which parents have returned the HIS. However, your check or direct deposit stub will indicate how many meals/snacks were reimbursed at Tier 1 rates and how many meals/snacks were reimbursed at Tier 2 rates.

Please contact ACA if you have any Tiering questions.

Foster children are categorically eligible to receive Tier 1 reimbursement for their CACFP meals.

Because the information is confidential, we cannot tell you which children in your care qualify for Tier 1 rates.

Record Retention

(Record keeping)



Records for fiscal year 2024 (October 1, 2023-September 30, 2024), must be kept until January 1, 2028.

The USDA requires Food Program participants 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.” These records should include documentation of attendance, enrollments (including re-enrollments), meal counts, and menus. Records for fiscal year 2024 (October 1, 2023-September 30, 2024), must be kept until January 1, 2028.

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.

Records can be kept in hard copy or electronic format, provided they are readily available to reviewers.

The purpose of this record retention requirement is to facilitate reviews, to enhance Program integrity, and to assure Providers they are being properly reimbursed by their sponsor.

Daily Recordkeeping Requirement

(Record keeping, meal counts)



You must enter your food program menus and meal counts into KidKare by 11:59 pm on the day they are served.

As a CACFP participant, you have agreed to keep daily food program records. This means you must enter your food program menus and meal counts into KidKare by 11:59 pm on the day they are served.

Occasionally, a situation might occur which prevents you from accessing KidKare. For example, your internet may be down, or your laptop may be broken. In these situations, you must keep written records of your menus and meal counts **EXACTLY** as you would enter them in KidKare. The menus must list each meal component, and meal counts must list the names of the children who were present at each meal or snack. Time in and time out forms are not acceptable.

Fortunately, KidKare has a report, the “Daily Meals Worksheet Report”, designed to assist you in keeping USDA acceptable written menus and meal counts. To print this report open KidKare the go to:

Reports > Worksheets > Daily Meal Worksheet.

Click on “Run” and the report will generate. You can print the report or save it to your device. Once you can access KidKare, you may enter the menus and meal count from the Daily Meal Worksheet. Keep the completed Worksheets with your Food Program records.

Fiscal Year '25 Food Program Application

(Claim review procedures)

The CACFP is a federal program and runs on the federal a fiscal year. The new fiscal year begins on October 1, 2024. During this visit, your food program application information (days of care, hours of care, meals service times) will be reviewed and updated if needed. This data is used to schedule home visit and to process your Food Program claims.

If your application date changes later in the fiscal year, please let ACA know in writing. You may send an email or a letter with the information.

ACA's Office Closed

July 4 – Independence Day
September 2 – Labor 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.

Enjoy
the
Summer!

