

AMENDMENTS TO THE INFANT MEAL PATTERN  
in  
THE CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

**PURPOSE:** To amend the requirements of the infant meal pattern in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

**SCOPE:** Licensed child care centers, registered day care ministries, Head Start centers, and family day care homes.

**DESCRIPTION:** The regulations for the Child and Adult Care Food Program have been amended to eliminate the option of serving whole cow's milk as part of reimbursable meals for infants under one year of age and to require, instead, that all reimbursable meals include either breast milk or iron-fortified formula. The principal effect of this change will be to enhance the nutritional benefits of meals served to children in the CACFP.

The USDA is also amending regulations to permit reimbursement for meals served to *infants younger than 8 months* that contain only breast milk and no other items. This provision is being adopted in recognition of the special contribution breast milk makes to the health, well-being, and development of the child and *does not apply* to those situations in which infant formula is the only required item and is provided by the parent. In addition, meals served to infants 8 months of age and older, which require at least one item in addition to breast milk, continue to be ineligible for reimbursement unless the provider also furnished at least one item.

Care givers are permitted to serve less than the minimum regulatory serving of breast milk to infants who do not regularly consume that amount of breast milk. If the full portion is not initially offered, the care giver must offer additional breast milk if the infant is still hungry. This provision is being implemented solely in recognition of the reduced needs of some infants and the desire to avoid wasting already limited quantities of breast milk. *Under no circumstances* could providers offer less than the stipulated minimum serving of infant formula or other components of the meal pattern.

Additionally, meal providers must take care to ensure that breast milk is stored and handled properly to prevent possible tainting or spread of disease. All breast milk given to the meal provider should have a label stating the child's name, and providers must make sure that each child receives only the breast milk supplied by its mother. Sponsors must include breast milk handling techniques as part of their training activities.

Furthermore, the definition of *infant formula* has been revised to mean any iron-fortified formula intended for dietary use solely as a food for normal, healthy infants; excluding those formulas specifically formulated for infants with inborn errors of metabolism or digestive or absorptive problems. Infant formula, as served, must be in liquid state at recommended dilution.

*Milk* means pasteurized fluid types of unflavored or flavored whole milk, lowfat milk, skim milk, or cultured buttermilk which meets State and local standards for such milk, except that, *in the meal pattern for infants (0 to 1 year of age), milk means breast milk or iron-fortified infant formula.*

CACFP Infant Meal Pattern

	Birth through 3 months	4 through 7 months	8 through 11 months
Breakfast	4-6 fluid ounces formula or breast milk	4-6 fluid ounces formula or breast milk 0-3 Tbsp. Infant cereal	6-8 fluid ounces formula or breast milk <b>and</b> 2-4 Tbsp. Infant cereal and 1-4 Tbsp fruit and/or vegetable
Lunch or Supper	4-6 fluid ounces formula or breast milk	4-6 fluid ounces formula or breast milk 0-3 Tbsp. Infant cereal 0-3 Tbsp. Fruit and/or vegetable	6-8 fluid ounces formula or breast milk <b>and</b> 2-4 Tbsp. Infant cereal; <b>and/or</b> 1-4 Tbsp. Meat, fish, poultry, egg yolk, cooked dry beans or peas; or ½-2 ounces cheese; or 1-4 Tbsp. Cottage cheese, cheese food, or chesses spread; <b>and</b> 1-4 Tbsp. Fruit and/or vegetables
Supplement (snack)	4-6 fluid ounces formula or breast milk	4-6 fluid ounces formula or breast milk	2-4 fluid ounces formula, breast milk, or fruit juice; 0-½ bread or 0-2 crackers

- U Infant formula and dry infant cereal shall be iron-fortified.
- U It is recommended that breast milk be served in place of formula from birth through 11 months.
- U Fruit juice shall be full-strength.
- U Bread and bread alternates shall be made from whole-grain or enriched flour or meal.

This provision shall become effective on December 15, 1999.

SOURCE: Food and Nutrition Service, USDA, Interim Rule, published November 15, 1999.