

## Planning for Children with Food Allergies and Special Diets

**Policy:** Staff and families will work together to plan appropriate meals and snacks for children who need dietary modifications.

### **Procedure:**

- During enrollment, staff will work with families to identify any special diet needs for a child while at Head Start.
- Any dietary modifications that are required for children with disabilities will be made as soon as appropriate documentation has been submitted. Other dietary requests that are not medically necessary will be honored, provided USDA CACFP meal patterns are met.
- A Special Diet Statement signed by an authorized professional as specified by the USDA Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP) is required in the following situations to alter a child's diet at Head Start:
  - For a child **with** a disability: Any special meal or dietary accommodation, including adaptive equipment, required for a children with a disability or medical condition must be followed. While dietary needs may be noted in a child's IEP, an Individual Health Plan (IHP) may be developed to provide further guidance
  - For a child **without** a disability: Any dietary requests that are not medically necessary will be accommodated if USDA CACFP meal patterns can still be met by making these changes.
  - Requests for fluid milk substitutes require only a parent signature. The alternate milk selected must be approved by CACFP as a product that meets nutrient standards for non-dairy beverages.
- Other dietary requests due to religious or ethical reasons will be honored if: 1) the USDA CACFP meal patterns can still be met and, 2) the requested item(s) does not exceed more than 10% our usual cost and, 3) the requested item(s) is available where staff usually purchase supplies. No Special Diet Statement is required, but the modifications should be posted in the classroom as noted below.
- All special diets and food allergies/intolerances will be clearly posted in the food service area, using identifying information that is recognizable by staff, but not the public, to maintain confidentiality. If a child develops a new food allergy/intolerance or other dietary need, staff will contact the Health Manager as soon as possible and update their site's posted child information.
- Any food modifications or restrictions will be shared with contracted food service vendors to ensure all children receive appropriate meals and snacks while at Head Start.
- Food from sources outside the control of Arrowhead Head Start's sites or contracted and licensed food service vendors is not allowed.

This policy complies with Head Start Performance Standard 45CFR Sections 1304.23, 1304.40, and 1304.41.

Approved by the Policy Council on February 16, 1999.

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