

# ADULT DAY STAY: FACT SHEET



## CACFP Meal Pattern for Adults at Adult Day Stay Program

### INTRODUCTION

Adult day stay facilities participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) are required to serve meals and snacks that meet the requirements of the CACFP meal pattern. These meals emphasize good nutritional standards for safeguarding the health and wellness of adults. Knowing the basics for serving meals and snacks that align with the CACFP will help to meet the needs of adult participants best.

### APPLICATION

#### Meals and Snacks

For a meal and snack to be reimbursable, CACFP meal pattern requires the following minimum components and quantities. Reimbursement cannot be claimed for more than two meals and one snack or two snacks and one meal per participant per day.

The facility can be reimbursed for up to two meals and one snack, or two snacks and one meal, provided daily to each participant. Here are the food component requirements for each meal and snack.

#### Breakfast

- Fluid milk
- Fruit, vegetable, or a combination of both
- Grains

#### Lunch/Supper

- Fluid milk
- Vegetable
- Fruit
- Meats and meat alternates
- Grains

## Snack

Select two of the five components:

- Fluid milk
- Vegetable
- Fruit
- Meats and meat alternates
- Grains

Visit [Nutrition Standards for CACFP Meals and Snacks | Food and Nutrition Service](#) for a detailed description of the serving sizes and the meal components.

## Types of Meal Service

CACFP meals can be prepared in-house, provided by a vendor, or catered from a central kitchen. Operators may choose to serve meals:

- With participants moving through a cafeteria-style line
- Pre-plated and served from a line or to the table
- Family style with food served in bowls or dishes on the table

## Offer Versus Serve (OVS)

Adult day stay facilities may use the Offer Versus Serve meal service option. It allows participants to select foods they wish to eat at breakfast, lunch, or supper.

When using OVS, you must offer participants all of the required meal components. However, participants must take the following:

- Breakfast – Take at least three different food items from any of the four food items offered.
- Lunch/Supper – Take at least three of the five meal components offered. At supper, milk is optional and does not need to be offered when serving an OVS supper.

OVS is not allowed for snacks. Participants must be served both snack components. You may provide additional choices of required meal components to increase food intake and decrease plate waste. Visit [https://www.cacfp.org/assets/pdf/USDA-CACFP-02-2025\\_cacfp.org/](https://www.cacfp.org/assets/pdf/USDA-CACFP-02-2025_cacfp.org/) refer to the CACFP 02-2025: Offer Versus Serve and Family Style Meals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

## Special Nutrition Needs

If an adult participant cannot eat certain foods for medical reasons, the CACFP allows for substitutions with the proper documentation. Work with the participant or the participant's caregiver to obtain a written medical statement from a State-licensed healthcare professional or registered dietitian. Documentation of the medical need and lists of alternate foods and all meal component substitutions must be kept on file and in the individual plan of care. A registered dietitian (RD) will need to write menus for participants with special nutrition needs. Refer to the Modifications to Accommodate Disabilities in CACFP and SFSP resources a <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/modifications-accommodate-disabilities-cacfp-and-sfsp> for additional information on medical statements and meeting special nutritional needs.

## REFERENCES

Child Nutrition Programs: Meal patterns consistent with the 2020-2025 dietary guidelines for americans: [https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/buy- american-provisions](https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/buy-american-provisions)

U. S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2024). CACFP 02-2025: Offer versus serve and family style meal in the child and adult care food program. [https://www.cacfp.org/assets/pdf/USDA-CACFP-02-2025\\_cacfp.org/](https://www.cacfp.org/assets/pdf/USDA-CACFP-02-2025_cacfp.org/)

U. S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2017). *Modifications to accommodate disabilities in CACFP and SFSP*. [www.fns.usda.gov/cn/modifications-accommodate-disabilities-cacfp-and-sfsp](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/modifications-accommodate-disabilities-cacfp-and-sfsp)

Nutrition Standards for CACFP Meals and Snacks | Food and Nutrition Service. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/nutrition-standards>

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<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cr/fns-nondiscrimination-statement>

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