

Summary of Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Final Rule Released December 12, 2018; Effective School Year (SY) 2019-2020

The *Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium* are intended to codify the menu planning flexibilities previously provided by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and create consistency across nutrition programs. This final rule extends the previous flexibilities for milk, grains, and sodium. These flexibilities are effective July 1, 2019.

This final rule applies to the following programs: Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Special Milk Program (SMP).

Milk Component

This flexibility applies to CACFP NSLP, SBP, and SMP. Note, SFSP already has this option.

Effective July 1, 2019

Contracting Entities (CEs) may serve flavored, low-fat milk for the milk component at each meal service.

New Guidance for the Use of Flavored, Low-Fat Milk

- For CACFP operators, this flexibility applies to children 6 years and older.
- For NSLP and SBP operators, the CE must also offer an unflavored low-fat or fat-free milk choice at the same meal/milk service if a flavored milk choice is offered. This flexibility does not apply to the pre-kindergarten (pre-K) meal pattern.
- For SMP operators, this flexibility does not apply to pre-K students.
- CEs are not required to request approval to implement this flexibility.

Grains Component

This flexibility applies to NSL and SBP.

Effective July 1, 2019

CEs may serve a combination of whole grain-rich and enriched grain products for the grains component each week.

New Guidance for the Whole Grain-Rich and Enriched Grain Products

- At least 50% of the grains served for the grains component for each week must be whole grain-rich; the remaining percentage of grains served each week must be enriched.
- Any grain product served at breakfast, lunch, supper, or snack that is not whole grain-rich or enriched is not creditable toward the grains component.
- CEs are not required to request approval to implement this flexibility.

Sodium Dietary Specifications

This flexibility applies to NSLP and SBP.

Effective July 1, 2019

CEs may continue to serve Sodium Target 1 through the end of SY 2023-2024.

New Guidance for Sodium Targets

- CEs may continue to meet Sodium Target 1 for weekly menus through the end of SY 2023-2024. Sodium Target 2 will be required for SY 2024-2025. Sodium Target 3 has been eliminated.
 - CEs may choose to implement Sodium Target 2 at an earlier date.
 - CEs are not required to request approval to implement this flexibility.
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