**POLICY ALERT**

**Date:** January 15, 2008  
**Reference:** # NSLP/SBP 2008-5  
**To:** National School Lunch Program/School Breakfast Program (NSLP/SBP) Contractors  
**Subject:** Meal Pattern Charts – Infants  
**Effective Date:** Immediately

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**Purpose**

This Policy Alert REPLACES your NSLP/SBP Handbook Chapter 4, Managing the Program:

- Section, Planning the Meals, Subsection, Feeding Infants and Preschool Age Children;
- Section, Meal Patterns, Subsection, Infant Meal Pattern; and

**Implementation**

Immediately

**Procedure**

**INFANT MEAL PATTERN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meal Type</th>
<th>Birth through 3 Months</th>
<th>4 Months through 7 Months</th>
<th>8 Months through 11 Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BREAKFAST   | • 4-6 fluid ounces (fl oz) of formula or breastmilk.  

and

• 0-3 tablespoons (Tbsp) of infant cereal.  

and

• 1-4 Tbsp of fruit or vegetable or both. |
|             | • 4-8 fl oz of formula or breastmilk.  

and

• 2-4 Tbsp of infant cereal.  

and

• 1-4 Tbsp of fruit or vegetable or both. |
|             | • 6-8 fl oz of formula or breastmilk.  

and

• 1-4 Tbsp of fruit or vegetable or both. |

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1 Infant formula and dry infant cereal must be iron-fortified.

2 Breastmilk or formula, or portions of both, may be served; however, it is recommended that breastmilk be served in place of formula from birth through 11 months.

3 For some breastfed infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breastmilk per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount of breastmilk may be offered, with additional breastmilk offered if the infant is still hungry.

4 A serving of this component is required only when the infant is developmentally ready to accept it.

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This Policy Remains in Effect Until Further Notice
**Procedure continued**

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<th>Meal Type</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LUNCH</strong></td>
<td>• 4-6 fl oz of formula (^1) or breastmilk (^2,3).</td>
<td>• 4-8 fl oz of formula (^1) or breastmilk (^2,3); and • 0-3 Tbsp of infant cereal (^4,5); and • 0-3 Tbsp of fruit or vegetable or both (^6).</td>
<td>• 6-8 fl oz of formula (^1) or breastmilk (^2,3); and • 1-4 Tbsp of fruit or vegetable or both; and • 2-4 Tbsp of infant cereal (^1); and/or • 1-4 Tbsp of meat, fish, poultry, egg yolk, cooked dry beans or peas; or • 1/2-2 oz. of cheese; or • 1-4 oz. (volume) of cottage cheese; or • 1-4 oz. (weight) of cheese food, or cheese spread.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SNACK</strong></td>
<td>• 4-6 fl oz of formula (^1) or breastmilk (^2,3).</td>
<td>• 4-6 fl oz of formula (^1) or breastmilk (^2,3).</td>
<td>• 2-4 fl oz of formula (^1) or breastmilk (^2,3); or fruit juice (^5); and • 0-1/2 slice of bread (^4,6) or 0-2 crackers (^4,6).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Infant formula and dry infant cereal must be iron-fortified.

\(^2\) Breastmilk or formula, or portions of both, may be served; however, it is recommended that breastmilk be served in place of formula from birth through 11 months.

\(^3\) For some breastfed infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breastmilk per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount of breastmilk may be offered, with additional breastmilk offered if the infant is still hungry.

\(^4\) A serving of this component is **required** only when the infant is developmentally ready to accept it.

\(^5\) Fruit juice must be full-strength.

\(^6\) A serving of this component must be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour.

**Note:** Meal component substitutions to any component of the infant meal pattern due to an infant’s disability must be supported by a licensed physician’s signed statement, or in the case of a medical or special dietary need, by a recognized medical authority. Refer to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) publication, *Accommodating Children with Special Dietary Needs in the School Nutrition Programs*, available through a USDA link at [www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Guidance](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Guidance).
**Procedure continued**

Foods for infants must have a texture and consistency appropriate for their ages. Infants must be fed during a time consistent with the child’s eating habits. Breast milk provided by the infant’s parent (or guardian) may be served instead of iron fortified infant formula. Whole milk may not be served as part of a reimbursable meal for infants younger than one year of age.

Schools and residential child care institutions (RCCIs) must offer at least one infant formula that meets the infant meal pattern requirements. A parent (or guardian) may decline the infant formula that is offered by the school/RCCI and supply an alternate infant formula that meets the meal pattern requirements. The school/RCCI must have a statement from the parent (or guardian) declining the infant formula offered by the school to claim the meal.

According to NSLP/SBP requirements, in order to claim meals for reimbursement for infants 4 through 7 months, the school/RCCI is **required** to serve infant cereal and other foods when the infant is developmentally ready to accept them. Schools/RCCIs must include in their program documentation the following elements in order to claim reimbursement for meals that are served to infants:

- Infant’s name;
- Infant’s date of birth;
- Name of school/RCCI;
- The name and type of infant formula the school/RCCI will provide;
- Whether the parent (or guardian):
  - Will bring the breastmilk;
  - Will bring the infant formula (adequate information must be provided by the parent (or guardian) about the alternate infant formula to determine whether the infant formula meets infant meal pattern requirements (e.g., the name brand of the infant formula and whether the infant formula is iron-fortified);
  - Will bring solid foods that the infant is developmentally ready to accept;
  - Wants the school/RCCI to provide the infant formula;
  - Wants the school/RCCI to provide infant cereal and other food items that the infant is developmentally ready to accept according to the Infant Meal Pattern;
- Parent’s (or guardian’s) signature; and
- Date of signature.

**Note:** As situations change, such as a licensed physician or recognized medical authority changing the infant’s formula, the school/RCCI must update the information in the infant’s file. The school/RCCI must update the information within one month of the infant moving from one age category to the next.

An infant formula is considered to meet program requirements when it:

- Meets requirements of the infant meal pattern; or
- Does not meet the infant meal pattern requirements, but you maintain a medical statement to support the substitution.
BIRTH THROUGH THREE MONTHS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If the...</th>
<th>Then the SFA may claim reimbursement when the school ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School/RCCI provides the infant formula,</td>
<td>Provides the infant formula/breastmilk(^1) in the minimum quantity specified in the infant meal pattern.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Parent (or guardian) provides the infant formula/breastmilk\(^1\), | • Has a statement from the parent (or guardian) declining the infant formula offered by the school/RCCI;  
• Provides the infant formula/breastmilk\(^1\) in the minimum quantity specified in the infant meal pattern; and  
• Staff feeds the infant. |

FOUR THROUGH SEVEN MONTHS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If the...</th>
<th>Then the SFA may claim reimbursement when the school ...</th>
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<tr>
<td>School/RCCI provides all of the required meal components,</td>
<td>Provides the infant a complete meal (including required(^2) meal components) in the minimum quantity specified in the infant meal pattern.</td>
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<td>Provides the infant a complete meal (including required(^2) meal components) in the minimum quantity specified in the infant meal pattern.</td>
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</table>
| Parent (or guardian) provides the infant formula/breastmilk\(^1\), | • Has a statement from the parent (or guardian) declining the infant formula offered by the school/RCCI; and  
• Provides the infant a complete meal (including required\(^2\) meal components) in the minimum quantity specified in the infant meal pattern. |
| Parent (or guardian) provides more than the school/RCCI for the meal components, | • Has a statement from the parent (or guardian) declining specific meal components (e.g., infant formula or solid food) offered by the school/RCCI; and  
• Provides at least one of the required\(^2\) meal components in the minimum quantity specified in the infant meal pattern. |

\(^1\) This includes breastmilk provided to the parent (or guardian) by a wet nurse.  
\(^2\) If the infant is developmentally ready for solid foods, then the optional meal component(s) are required and no longer considered as options and must be served on a gradual basis to the infant. The determination to be developmentally ready should be made by the infant’s parent (or guardian).
### Procedure continued

#### EIGHT THROUGH 11 MONTHS

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<tr>
<td>School/RCCI provides all of the meal components,</td>
<td>Provides the infant a complete meal (including required meal components) in the minimum quantity specified in the infant meal pattern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School/RCCI provides the infant formula,</td>
<td>Provides all other required meal components in the minimum quantity specified in the infant meal pattern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent (or guardian) provides the infant formula/breastmilk(^1),</td>
<td>• Has a statement from the parent (or guardian) declining specific meal components (e.g., infant formula offered by the school/RCCI; and&lt;br&gt;• Provides all other required meal components in the minimum quantity specified in the infant meal pattern.</td>
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<td>Parent (or guardian) provides more than the school/RCCI for the meal components,</td>
<td>• Has a statement from the parent (or guardian) declining specific meal components (e.g., infant formula or solid food) offered by the school/RCCI; and&lt;br&gt;• Provides at least one of the required meal components in the minimum quantity specified in the infant meal pattern.</td>
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\(^1\) This includes breastmilk provided to the parent (or guardian) by a wet nurse.

\(^2\) If the infant is being served a snack, and the infant is developmentally ready for bread or crackers, then the optional meal component(s) for a snack are required and no longer considered as options and must be served on a gradual basis to the infant. The determination to be developmentally ready should be made by the infant’s parent (or guardian).

### Resources

Attached to this Policy Alert is:

- A reference tool, *NSLP/SBP Infant Feeding Preference*, that schools may implement to document the above stated elements. This attachment is not required; however, it is being provided as a reference tool to document preferences for feeding infants in the NSLP/SBP; and
- The full-page version of the Infant Meal Pattern.

### Adverse Action

Failure to comply with the requirements of this Policy Alert may result in adverse action up to and including termination of your NSLP/SBP contract.

### Authority

7 CFR 210.10, 7 CFR 220.8, 97-CN-8

### Contact

If you have any questions please contact your Food and Nutrition Field Operations Office.

### ATTACHMENTS