



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 5101:2-12-22 Meal preparation/nutritional requirements for a licensed child care center.

Effective: October 29, 2021

(A) What are the requirements for meals and snacks in a licensed child care center?

The center is to:

- (1) Serve varied, nutritious, and appropriately timed meals and snacks as described in appendix A to this rule.
- (2) Follow the portion sizes and nutritional requirements for meals and snacks described in appendix B to this rule.
- (3) Serve food that is not a choking hazard, and that is developmentally appropriate in size, amount and texture.
- (4) Provide meals and snacks according to the posted current weekly menu, and spaced no more than four hours apart.
 - (a) The menus shall be posted in a visible place readily accessible to parents.
 - (b) The menus shall include all meals and snacks being served by the center, any substitutions shall be noted at the time of the change.
- (5) Serve only one hundred per cent, undiluted fruit or vegetable juice, if used to meet the fruit or vegetable requirement for meals and snacks. Other fruit or vegetable juice is permitted as a beverage alternative.
- (6) Ensure that supplemental food is on-site at the center and that no child goes more than four hours without at least a snack or meal, except when sleeping.



(7) Obtain a physician's written instructions if administering a medical food to any child or if an entire food group is eliminated. When special diets are required for cultural or religious reasons, the center shall obtain written, dated and signed instructions from the child's parent unless the special diet is part of a center program.

(8) Set its own policy regarding the accommodation of a parent's alternate diet for a child when the center provides the meal. The center shall ensure that any alternate diet, except those required for religious, cultural, or medical reasons as specified in paragraph (A)(7) of this rule, include items from each of the following food groups: meat or meat alternative, grain, fruit/vegetable, and fluid milk.

(9) Provide for the safe storage of all food, including milk (formula and breast milk for infants). If safe storage of milk is not available on routine trips or field trips, milk may be served at snack instead of at the meal.

(10) Have provisions for safe storage of parent provided food.

(11) Have drinking water freely available to children. If drinking fountains are used, there shall be sufficient water pressure so that the child's mouth does not come in contact with the water dispensing mechanism.

(12) Ensure that individual servings or individual packages of food or drink that have been served to a child are discarded or sent home with the child if not consumed during meal or snack time. Food or drink that is individually packaged and the package has not been opened may be stored at the center to be served again or sent home.

(13) Not have screens (television, computer, etc.) on during meals and snacks.

(B) What requirements shall a center implement for safe, independent self-feeding?

The center shall ensure that:

(1) Food is not served on bare tables. Food for infants may be placed directly on an individual



highchair tray if the tray is removed, washed and sanitized in accordance with appendix A to rule 5101:2-12-13 of the Administrative Code.

(2) Eating utensils and dishes are suitable for the age and developmental level of the children.