



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Public Health

Pat McCrory
Governor

Aldona Z. Wos, M.D.
Ambassador (Ret.)
Secretary DHHS


Daniel Staley
Acting Division Director

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CACFP 15-08

Memorandum

To: Institutions Participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

From: Arnette Cowan, Head 
Special Nutrition Programs

Subject: Statements Supporting Accommodations for Children with Disabilities in the
Child Nutrition Programs

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is committed to ensuring that all children have access to healthy meals that meet their dietary needs. FNS has facilitated access for children with special dietary needs through the Child Nutrition Programs, including the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) regulations (CACFP 226.20(m)) and guidance, which includes FNS Instruction 783.2, *Meal Substitutions for Medical or Other Special Dietary Needs* and *Accommodating Children with Special Dietary Needs in the School Nutrition Programs*.

The purpose of this memorandum is to expand the list of acceptable medical professionals that may sign a medical statement for meal accommodations in the Child Nutrition Programs and recommend alternate foods for children whose disability restricts their diets. A broader list of medical providers will improve access to meal accommodations for children with special dietary needs while balancing the administrative burden placed on program operators and participants requesting meal accommodations.

Current regulations and guidance require program operators to provide reasonable accommodations for children whose disability restricts their diet for all meals and snacks when supported by a medical statement signed by a licensed physician. However, in many States, laws permit specific State-recognized medical professionals to treat patients and write medical prescriptions. With this in mind, FNS has determined that along with licensed physicians and at

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Tel 919-707-5800 • Fax 919-870-4818

Location: 5601 Six Forks Road • Raleigh, NC 27609

Mailing Address: 1914 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, NC 27699-1914

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the discretion of a State agency, it is reasonable to also permit other recognized medical authorities to complete and sign a medical statement for meal accommodations in the Child Nutrition Programs and recommend alternate foods for children whose disability restricts their diet. A State recognized medical authority for this purpose is a State licensed health care professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under State law. In North Carolina, medical doctors, nurse practitioners, nurse midwife, and physician assistant can write medical prescriptions. This update is effective immediately.

FNS is working to update its accommodations guidance in order to reflect this update and other issues currently under review.

If you have questions, please contact your regional consultant.

c: SNP Staff