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Terms to Know:	
Infant:	A child from birth through 11 months old (less than one year of age)
IFIF:	Iron-fortified Infant Formula
IFIC:	Iron-fortified Infant Cereal

INFANT MEAL REQUIREMENTS

All CACFP programs providing infant care must offer to supply the following to all enrolled infants:

1. At least one creditable iron-fortified infant formula (IFIF)
 - Programs should select a formula that meets the needs of the majority of infants in care.
2. Creditable, developmentally-appropriate infant foods

Infant formula and foods must be offered even when infant meals are not claimed for CACFP reimbursement. Programs cannot avoid this requirement by stating infants are not “enrolled” in the CACFP or by citing administrative or cost barriers to offering infant meals.

Families may choose whether they would like their infant to receive the program-supplied formula and foods, or if they would like to supply breast milk, a different formula, and/or foods. **Families cannot be required to provide formula or foods.**

Each program must:

1. Complete the [Infant Menu](#) indicating the formula and foods offered
2. Post the completed *Infant Menu* and [Infant Meal Pattern](#) in each infant room
3. Notify families, in writing, of the type of IFIF and infant foods offered (choose one of the following):
 - Distribute the completed *Infant Menu & Infant Meal Pattern* in the enrollment packet for infants
 - Post the completed *Infant Menu & Infant Meal Pattern* in a visible location in the facility

Refer to the [CACFP Infant Recordkeeping Requirements](#) for more information.

INFANT MEAL PATTERN

Meals and snacks must meet CACFP infant meal pattern requirements with creditable foods in at least the minimum serving sizes per the CACFP infant meal pattern.

- [Infant Meal Pattern and Grains Chart](#): Required food components and minimum serving sizes for meals/snacks
- [CACFP E-Learning Course: Infant Meal Pattern](#) lesson reviews meal pattern requirements

Developmentally Ready

The CACFP infant meal pattern age groups are guidelines for when to serve foods to infants. It is recommended to only serve breastmilk and/or formula for the infant's first 6 months and introduce foods around 6 months of age. However, some infants are ready to eat foods before 6 months while others will not be ready to eat foods until after 6 months. For this reason, food amounts listed in the meal pattern begin with zero (0) because USDA recognizes that not all infants are developmentally ready to eat solid foods at a certain age. It does not mean serving the food is optional. Once an infant is developmentally ready to eat solid foods, including infants younger than 6 months, programs are required to offer them to the infant.

An infant's developmental readiness determines when to introduce foods, how often to serve foods, which foods to feed, the texture of foods, and which feeding styles to use. For example, new foods may be introduced one at a time over the course of a few days or an infant may eat a food item one week and not the next. Programs should be in constant communication with families to determine what and when to introduce specific foods. Refer to the [Developmental Readiness](#) handout for more information.

FOOD COMPONENTS

Breastmilk

Breastmilk may be served to infants and children of any age, there is no age limit.

- Support mothers who breastfeed by encouraging them to breastfeed on-site or supply breastmilk while their infant is in care. Offer a quiet, private area that is comfortable and sanitary when they breastfeed on-site. For more information on how to promote breastfeeding, refer to the [Ten Steps for Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Centers Toolkit](#).

Iron-Fortified Infant Formula (IFIF)

A creditable IFIF is any infant milk or soy-based formula regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and labeled as "iron-fortified," "infant formula w/ iron" or other statement on the front of the package.

The FDA defines IFIF as containing 1 milligram (mg) or more of iron per 100 kilocalories when prepared according to the manufacturer's directions. The mg of iron is found on the Nutrition Facts Label.

NON-CREDITABLE Infant Formulas:

- **Low-iron Infant Formulas:** formulas labeled as low-iron (or have less than 1 mg iron per 100 kcals)
- **FDA Exempt Infant Formulas:** formulated for infants with inborn errors of metabolism, low birth weight or unusual medical or dietary problems. For more information: [List of Exempt Formulas](#).
- **Serving Formula to Infants 13 Months or Older:** IFIF is creditable if served to infants until 13 months of age as long as it is served as part of the weaning process from formula to cow's milk. While weaning, infants should be provided both formula and cow's milk at the same meal service to gradually encourage an infant's acceptance of cow's milk. **IFIF served to infants over 13 months of age is not creditable.**
- **Formulas Purchased Outside the U.S.:** these are most likely not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

To serve non-creditable infant formulas, a valid medical statement must be on file. Refer to the [Special Dietary Needs and the CACFP](#) for more information.

Infant Foods

Foods creditable to the infant meal pattern include homemade baby food, table food and certain store-bought jarred and packaged baby food. An overview of these types of foods is provided below. The following resources provide a detailed list of creditable and non-creditable foods:

[Crediting Infant Foods](#)
[Foods for Infants](#)

- **Homemade Baby Foods:** Whole fruits, vegetables and meat/meat alternates may be pureed, ground or mashed to the appropriate size and texture. The resource, [Homemade Baby Food](#) provides information on how to prepare homemade infant foods.

- **Table foods:** Foods on the regular menu for children older than 1 year may be served to infants when they are developmentally ready to eat them. The infant meal pattern must be followed (all required components offered) even when the infant is consuming some or all table foods.
- **Store-bought baby food:** There is a variety of commercially-prepared foods for infants and not all are creditable to the CACFP. Below is an overview of what to look for when purchasing these foods.
 - Iron-Fortified Infant Cereal (IFIC): Must be single grain (e.g. rice, oatmeal, wheat) or multigrain
 - Fruits and Vegetables: Must be single fruits, vegetables or a mixture of fruits and/or vegetables
 - Meats: Must be single meats or poultry; gravy and broth are ok

NON-CREDITABLE Store-bought Baby Foods:

1. Dry infant cereal containing fruit (e.g. infant cereal with apples)
2. Jarred or packaged purees (e.g. fruit and yogurt purees,)
3. Freeze-dried fruit yogurt snacks (yogurt melts)
4. Infant combination dinners, entrees or meals with multiple component ingredients (ex. turkey rice dinner or chicken noodle dinner) unless the product's label includes volume information that credits one or more food components

View the *Creditable Infant Foods* lesson in the [CACFP E-Learning Course](#) for more information.

Allergen Foods

Foods that contain one or more of the eight major food allergens identified by the FDA (milk, egg, fish, shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat and soybeans) are appropriate for infants and can be part of a reimbursable meal. The American Academy of Pediatrics states there is no current convincing evidence that delaying the introduction of allergen foods has an effect on the development of food allergies. Consult with families to learn about any concerns of possible allergies and their preference on how solid foods are introduced.

SERVING AND CLAIMING CREDITABLE INFANT MEALS

In order to claim meals and snacks served to an infant:

- Foods must be creditable to the meal pattern
- Meals must meet infant meal pattern requirements according to the infant's developmental readiness
- All required components of the meal are offered during a timeframe consistent with the infant's schedule (i.e. formula at 9 AM, IFIC at 9:30 AM). Foods do not have to be served at the same time.
- **The program must supply all components or all but one component:** The CACFP allows families to provide only **one** component for a meal or snack that is claimed. If families provide more than one component, **the meal cannot be claimed.**

Breastmilk and Iron-Fortified Infant Formula (IFIF)

Breastmilk and/or IFIF are a required component at all meals and snacks. They are considered one component.

- When breastmilk and/or formula is the only component served at a meal or snack, the meal is creditable and can be claimed. This includes when the family declines the program-provided infant formula and supplies a different formula, or when the family provides breastmilk and supplements formula.
- Breastmilk is creditable when:
 - It has been expressed and is served to the infant in a bottle and/or the mother breastfeeds her infant on-site
 - A staff member breastfeeds her enrolled infant onsite during work hours, a work break and off-work hours if the infant is enrolled and signed in for care
- Less than the minimum required amount of breastmilk may be offered when additional breastmilk or infant formula is available and offered to the infant when hungry.



Foods

Foods are required to be served once the infant has started to eat them and must be offered according to the infant's eating habits.

When an infant is drinking breastmilk/formula and eating one or more foods at a meal or snack:

- Meals **can** be claimed when the program provides all, or all but one, component. Examples:
 - Family provides breastmilk/formula and the program provides all foods
 - Program provides formula, fruits and vegetables, and the family provides infant cereal
- Meals **cannot** be claimed when the family provides two or more components. Examples:
 - Family provides breastmilk and infant cereal, and the program provides fruits and vegetables
 - Program provides formula and the family provides fruits, vegetables and infant cereal

Programs may not be able to claim all meals and snacks served each day depending on who supplies the components at each meal/snack. For example, a breakfast and lunch served to an infant that includes breastmilk and family-provided foods cannot be claimed; however, a snack served to this same infant that includes breastmilk and program-provided crackers can be claimed.

RECORDING INFANT MEALS TO CLAIM

When a creditable meal is served, it must be recorded one of the *Infant Meal Forms* below or other DPI-approved infant form. Instructions on how to complete the Infant Meal Form are on the form. These forms are then used to total the number of infant meals and snacks claimed for reimbursement. They must be kept on file to support the monthly claim.

[Infant Meal Form \(Breakfast, Lunch, Snack\)](#)

[Infant Meal Form \(All Meals\)](#)

- Do not complete the Infant Meal Form for infants whose meals and snacks will not be claimed.
- Do not record infant meals on any other program meal count form, e.g. the meal count sheets used for older children. Only record infant meals on the Infant Meal Form.

[CACFP E-Learning Course: Infant Recordkeeping & Claiming Requirements](#) lesson provides information on the CACFP requirements for serving, recording and claiming infant meals.