

**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**  
**Community Nutrition Programs**  
**Child and Adult Care Food Program**

**Guidance Memorandum 13C:** For Child and Adult Care Food Program Sponsoring Organizations and Independent Centers (Child Care Component)

Topic: Purchase of Meals

Date: October 2012

In accordance with CACFP regulations, child care centers may choose to purchase meals from vendors such as public or private schools, other child care centers, restaurants, nursing homes, hospitals, or food service management companies. Specific procedures and contracts are used when negotiating the purchase of these meals to ensure

- open and free competition in the purchase of products or services,
- that the agency receives the best product or service at the lowest price, and
- CACFP meal pattern requirements for components and amounts are met.

The child care institution has the responsibility of insuring that CACFP regulations are met when meals are provided by an outside source. The vendor is responsible for maintaining production records showing the quantity of food prepared for the children and delivery records showing amounts of food supplied daily in accordance with the negotiated agreement and the requirements listed in *Guidance Memorandum 9C: Recordkeeping Requirements for the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Part C* and *Guidance Memorandum 12C: Meal Pattern Requirements*. During a program review by DPI consultants, agencies that purchase meals from a vendor must be prepared to show how they monitor the delivered meals to ensure they are receiving the required quantities of food from the vendor. For example, routinely examining vendor's production records, requesting CN label information or comparable manufacturer's information for commercially prepared combination items like chicken nuggets and fish sticks, verifying size and number of portions received, etc.

Federal procurement requirements are specified in *Guidance Memorandum 4: Procurement Requirements for the Purchase of Food, Supplies, and Services*. The procurement practices required for the purchase of meals from a vendor are summarized on page 4 of *Guidance Memorandum 4*.

Three materials included in this guidance memorandum will assist the sponsoring organization and the vendor to meet the CACFP requirements. This information should be given to prospective vendors and discussed prior to the signing of an agreement.

- NUTRITION INFORMATION addresses ways to increase the nutritional quality of the meals within the framework of the CACFP meal pattern.
- VENDOR AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE MEALS/SNACKS is used to specify details of the arrangement to provide meals and/or snacks and to hold each party responsible for their respective parts of the agreement.
- ATTACHMENT A shows current CACFP meal pattern requirements for children ages 1 through 12 and infants. It must be part of the signed vendor agreement.

If the total cost of the meals/snacks to be purchased per year is estimated to be less than \$150,000, complete a record sheet showing that at least three different possible vendors were contacted in an attempt to obtain a bid. See page 3 of this Guidance Memorandum for a sample "Record of Vendors Contacted" form that can be used to document these contacts. A copy of the record of contacts must be submitted to the Department of Public Instruction/ Community Nutrition Team, along with the completed, signed agreement whenever a new vendor contract is executed. It is not necessary to obtain competitive price quotations from three vendors when meals are purchased from a public or private nonprofit school. It is not necessary to obtain competitive price quotations from three vendors when an existing contract is renewed or updated for an additional period of time. All contracts to purchase meals need a beginning and ending date specified.

If the total cost of the meals/snacks for a year is projected to be \$150,000 or more, the procurement procedures for either a Request for Proposal (RFP) or an Invitation to Bid (ITB) outlined in *Guidance Memorandum 4: Procurement Requirements for the Purchase of Food, Supplies, and Services*, must be followed.

## NUTRITION INFORMATION

The following guidelines have been developed to assist you in providing meals that maximize the nutritional benefit to preschool children. Eating habits that last a lifetime are formed during the early childhood years. Presenting children with nutritious foods and limiting their access to “empty calorie” foods is an important way to help children learn to make nutritionally sound food choices.

It is especially important that preschool children are provided with a well-balanced diet from a variety of foods, as the need for the essential basic nutrients is compounded by their rapid growth and body tissue formation. Children need to consume adequate vitamins, minerals, and protein. Therefore, foods that provide calories without many nutrients must be avoided. Vendors should make an effort to ensure that children are served meals that are moderate in the amounts of fat, sugar, and salt.

Moderating fat, sugar, and salt in the meals can be accomplished by

1. Reducing the frequency of serving food items that contain large amounts of fat, sugar, and sodium.
  - a. Omit high-sugar dessert items such as cakes, cookies, pies, Jell-O, puddings. For the purpose of meeting CACFP requirements, the eggs used in these items cannot be credited toward meeting the quantity requirement for the Meat/Meat Alternate Component. Fruit and/or vegetables in Jell-O or pudding must be available in at least a one-eighth cup serving per child in order to be credited for the CACFP.
  - b. Omit or limit condiment type items such as pickles, cranberry sauce, ketchup, and mustard. These items add very little nutritionally to the meal but contain extra sodium and sugar.
  - c. Omit or limit the gravies frequently served on meat and potatoes and the butter used on vegetables. Serve salad dressing on the side rather than mixing it with the salad ingredients. These items add extra calories to the meal and promote the development of a taste for rich, fatty foods.
2. Controlling the amount of fat, sugar, and sodium used in food preparation.
  - a. Serve lower fat meats and meat alternates, such as fresh or frozen lean meat, poultry, fish, or cooked dry beans and peas. Use low-fat milk and cheese made from skim milk, such as mozzarella and cottage cheese.
  - b. Limit meat/meat alternate items in the menu to the amount needed to meet the minimum quantity requirements. Extra protein sources such as cheese slices or peanut butter may be necessary to meet quantity requirements for older children.
  - c. Limit the amount of grains and breads served initially to one-half slice of bread or one-fourth cup of cooked pasta, rice, or cereal products. While whole grains or enriched flour products provide essential B vitamins, filling up on bread may prevent a child from getting adequate amounts of vitamins A and C which are most often found in fruit and vegetables. Second helpings of these items should be available to children.

Casserole items consisting of pasta or rice and meat/meat alternate may fall short of meeting the meat/meat alternate requirement. While such dishes often appear to be more than adequate in quantity, this is often the result of an over-production of the pasta or rice component. If the casserole contains more rice or pasta per serving than the one-fourth cup cooked minimum quantity, it is unlikely a child will eat enough to obtain a full serving of meat.

**CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM  
RECORD OF VENDORS CONTACTED (Under \$150,000)**

Name of Vendor	Date of Contact	Specifications (menu, delivery, packaging, time period, number of meals, etc.)	Bid Price	Bid Accepted
1.				
2.				
3.				