

Meal Modifications: Accommodating Disabilities In School Meal Programs

As the Cambridge Public Schools participates in a federal school meal programs, it is required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) nondiscrimination regulation, as well as the regulations governing the Child Nutrition Programs to provide reasonable accommodations, at no extra cost, for children who are unable to eat the meals served because of their disabilities. This includes providing substitutions or modifications to the school meals, when such requests are related to the student's disability or limitations caused by the disability and will be offered at no additional cost.

The Cambridge Food and Nutrition Services seeks to work collaboratively with parents/guardians/caregivers to ensure students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in the school meal programs and receive program benefits. More specifically, working on a case-by-case basis, the Cambridge Food and Nutrition Services will work with parents/guardians/caregivers regarding their requests for substitutions or modifications of the meal patterns. If a meal modification for a student's disability can be made within the meal pattern, a medical statement is not necessary. If due to a student's disability a request is being made for modifications outside of the meal pattern, then the request must be supported by a written statement from a state-licensed health care professional or registered dietitian. The written medical statement must include (i) sufficient information about the student's physical or mental impairment to allow Cambridge Food and Nutrition Services to understand how it restricts the student's diet; (ii) an explanation of what must be done to accommodate the child; and (iii) the food or foods to be omitted and recommended alternatives, if appropriate, in the case of a modified meal. If your child has a Section 504 Plan or an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that includes the information required in the medical statement or if such written medical verification of the impairment is provided during the Section 504 Plan/IEP process, a separate medical statement is not needed. Additionally, in accordance with federal requirements, all meal services must be provided in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the disabled participant. Exclusion of any participant from the Program environment is not considered an appropriate or reasonable modification.

School Nutrition Contact

For more information about requesting accommodations to school meals and the meal service for students with disabilities, please notify your child's school and contact the Food and Nutrition Office at 617.349.6858. Accommodations that can be made will be reviewed. Additionally, an alert can be placed in the school's point of sale system that prompts staff to ensure the food your student has selected is free of possible irritants. [Access information about types of dietary medical issues >>](#) (pdf)"

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of the alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

Mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

Fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

Email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.