



Student Meal Modifications Policy Procedure & Guidance

SCHOOL NUTRITION - MEAL MODIFICATIONS

Lowell Public Schools is committed to complying with USDA nondiscrimination regulation (7 CFR 15b) governing the Child Nutrition Program and DESE's Office for Food and Nutrition Programs requirements.

In compliance with USDA and DESE regulations, the District will provide substitutions to the School Nutrition Program's regular school meals at no extra cost for children who are unable to eat meals served because of their disabilities or other special dietary reasons.

Modifications within the USDA Meal Pattern

If a meal modification for a child's disability can be made within the CNP meal pattern, a medical statement is not necessary and the school district is not required to obtain a medical statement.

Modifications outside the USDA Meal Pattern

If a student's disability requires a modification outside the meal pattern, the request needs to be supported by a medical statement signed by a state-licensed healthcare professional. The medical statement (Meal Modification Request Form template) must include:

- Information about the child's physical or mental impairment that is sufficient to allow the school nutrition department to understand how it restricts the child's diet,
- An explanation of what must be done to accommodate the child's disability, and
- The food or foods to be omitted and recommended alternatives, in the case of a modified meal.

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- Our School Nutrition Program will ensure that school meals offered through the district meet the meal pattern requirements set by the USDA.
- We will make substitutions to meals at no extra charge for students with disabilities or other special dietary reasons that restrict the student's diet on a case-by-case basis.

- Families must complete the necessary request form that can be provided by the District Nursing Team or School Nutrition Program staff, or accessed via Meal Modification Request Form template
- The School Nutrition Program may not require the written medical statement to provide a specific diagnosis by name or use the term "disabled" or "disability," though the State licensed healthcare professional may use these terms when submitting a medical statement.
- If the child's IEP or 504 Plan includes the information required in the medical statement, or if written medical verification of the impairment during the IEP/504 Plan process is obtained by the District Nursing Team, it is not necessary for the School Nutrition Program to also obtain a separate medical statement

LEGAL REF: USDA SP 59-2016: Policy Memorandum on Modifications to Accommodate Disabilities in the School Meal Programs and CACFP 14-2017, SFSP 10-2017 Modifications to Accommodate Disabilities in the Child and Adult Care Programs (SFSP) sponsors

[DESE Meal Modifications in Child Nutrition Programs Meal Modification Request Form](#)

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mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

1400 Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

email:

Program.Intake@usda.gov

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