

## Early Head Start Infant and Toddler Feeding

### Head Start Performance Standard

---

§ 1302.31 (e) (2)

§ 1302.44 (a) (iv) (v) (vii)

§ 1302.44 (a) (v)

§ 1302.44 (a) (vii)

§ 1302.46 (a)

§ 1302.47

CACFP Infant Feeding Guide

### Policy

---

Early Head Start (EHS) supports the developmentally appropriate feeding of infants and toddlers. We encourage breastfeeding as the best source of nutrition for infants; however, we support women who choose not to breastfeed. Infant meals are served in a sanitary, safe, and caring manner.

Age-appropriate meal planning is overseen by the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Supervisor, and the Food Services Specialist with input from staff and parents/guardians. Meals for infants under one year of age will follow the CACFP Infant Meal Pattern (ages 0-5 months and 6-11 months). Meals and snacks served to children 1 to 2 years of age will follow the CACFP Meal Pattern for ages 1-2, and children 3-5 will follow the CACFP meal pattern for ages 3-5. CACFP allows parents of an infant (ages birth through 11 mos.) to supply their own formula, and/or breast milk.

The CACFP Supervisor and the Health Services Supervisor share responsibility for providing training about nutrition guidelines, typical food behaviors associated with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and techniques staff can use to support positive eating habits.

### Infant and Toddler Feeding Guidelines

- Infants are fed on demand up to one year of age, after which time a meal and snack schedule is initiated to encourage socialization and teach feeding skills.
- Infants who are not able to feed themselves shall be held or, if able to sit alone, fed in an upright position.
- Infant formula must be iron fortified\* and regulated by the FDA. This includes the formula offered by the center, and any formula provided by parent(s)/guardian(s). Non-FDA approved formula needs to be approved by a medical provider and a signed **Medical Statement Request for Special Meals and/or Accommodations** form needs to be on file.
- Infants are always held for bottle feeding. Bottles are never propped up. Infants may not be put to bed with a bottle.
- Formula is served up to one year of age. Between 12 and 13 months of age, a child who has been receiving infant formula will be gradually transitioned to cow's milk.
- Formula or breast milk may be served cold or warmed, after which the bottle is shaken well, and the milk temperature tested on the preparer's wrist before feeding. Bottles will be warmed under hot running water or in a bottle warmer. Never use a microwave to warm a bottle, as it may cause "hot spots."

\*Iron fortified is defined as an infant formula with 1mg of iron or more per 100 calories of formula when prepared using label directions (Infant Feeding Guidelines p.35)

**Community Action Head Start  
Washington County, Oregon**

- Children who are breast fed after 1 year of age will be offered foods in addition to breast milk according to the CACFP Food Chart.
- A **Medical Statement Request for Special Meals and/or Accommodations** must be completed for any child 13 months or older who requires infant formula due to a medical or special dietary condition.
  - Breastmilk may be served in place of fluid milk for children one year of age and older. No written requests or Food Substitution Statements are needed.
- Commercially prepared baby foods offered to infants in care must be creditable according to CACFP guidelines.
- Honey or honey containing foods will **not** be offered to infants less than one year of age, including baked goods that contain honey like graham crackers.
- Water will not be offered to children younger than 6 months, and juice will not be offered to children younger than one year old. Children less than one year old will not be given plant-based alternatives for cow's milk without a **Medical Statement Request for Special Meals and/or Accommodations** form.
- Due to the high risk of choking, the following foods will **not** be offered to infants and toddlers:
  - Hot dogs, sausage rounds, and chunks of meat
  - Whole nuts, peanuts, beans, seeds, and grain kernels
  - Whole grapes, cherries, and uncooked dried fruit, including raisins
  - Hard, raw vegetables and fruits
  - Candy, especially marshmallows
  - Pretzels, chips, and popcorn
  - Peanut butter or other nut butters
- Solid foods are added following the CACFP Infant Meal Pattern, in partnership with the family.
- A nutritious snack will be offered to all children at mid-afternoon. Additional snacks will be offered to infants and toddlers if needed to satisfy hunger.

## **Feeding Procedure**

---

1. When an infant or toddler enrolls in our program, the teacher/home visitor conducts a home visit with the child's family to determine what feeding schedule is maintained in the home.

If the infant is being breast-fed, the teacher/home visitor and parent(s)/guardian(s) will plan for the safe transport of breast milk to the center/socialization. Teachers/home visitors may suggest the use of reusable freezer packs; insulated carry bags; and labels with the child's name, date, and the time the milk was expressed.
2. Teachers will have the parent(s)/guardian(s) of infants less than one year of age complete the "Infant Formula Section" of the **CACFP Child Enrollment** form. This section of the form lists the brand of formula that we provide.

Parents/guardians must check one of the boxes to either:

  - a) Accept the program-provided formula, or
  - b) Decline the program-provided formula with the understanding that by declining the program provided formula, the parent/guardian will agree to provide breast milk or work with EHS staff to obtain documentation to provide a substitute formula.

**Community Action Head Start  
Washington County, Oregon**

3. Teachers will forward the completed **CACFP Child Enrollment** form to the CACFP Supervisor. All formulas provided must be on the CACFP approved formula list for the program to be reimbursed for the meal. EHS provides one CACFP-approved formula. If an infant requires a different formula due to a medical or dietary condition, a **Medical Statement Request for Special Meals and/or Accommodations** form must be completed according to the **Food Allergies and Food Substitution** policy and procedure.
4. Prepare bottles of RTF (Ready to Feed) formula in a designated area of the site, following the **Baby Bottle Preparation and Sanitation** policy and procedure.
5. Infants with medical or developmental concerns will be fed as directed by their health care provider. This may include scheduled feedings.
6. Introduce solid foods according to the CACFP Infant Meal Pattern, in partnership with the family. Teacher/ home visitor must regularly communicate with the family about new foods added to the child's diet and about foods tried at home that were not well tolerated.
7. When infants are ready for table foods, cut infant foods into pieces no larger than ¼-inch cubes or thin slices. Cut toddler foods into pieces no larger than ½-inch cubes.
8. Clean used bottles and nipples with a brush and sanitize them in the site kitchen according to the **Baby Bottle Preparation and Sanitation** policy and procedure.
9. Record each infant's and toddler's intake of foods, formula, or breast milk on the **Early Head Start Daily Report** and send a copy home with the parent. Complete the **Daily Infant Menu Production Record** each time an infant is served a meal or a snack per CACFP requirements.
10. The program must have a **Food Substitution Statement** form on file for any child who is:
  - a) Older than 13 months and still requires infant formula due to a medical or special dietary condition.
  - b) Allergic to a specific food.
  - c) Prohibited from eating a specific food for religious reasons.
  - d) Needing non-FDA approved formula, or a low iron or no iron formulaProgram staff must give a copy of the form to the parent to complete. Refer to the **Food Allergies and Food Substitution** policy and procedure for guidance.
11. Provide nutrition guidance and resources to parents/guardians during the child's nutrition assessment, at parent meetings, and as needed throughout the year.