

## **Procedure for Students Requiring Special Diets or Menu Modifications Child Nutrition Service (CNS) of Silver Falls School District (SFSD)**

### **Modifications to Meals:**

Modifications to meals require the submission of Medical Statement Form by the child's health care provider or Meal Preference Request Form as outlined below.

*Medically and/or Disability Documented:* The child nutrition department will comply with all regulations and guidance set by the USDA and Oregon Department of Education (ODE) in providing accommodation and modification to meals to children participating in child nutrition programs. The department will provide reasonable modifications for children with disabilities, Individualized Education Programs (IEP), documented medical statements from state licensed health professionals, or 504 plans.

#### *Non-Medically Documented Modifications:*

- Requests from parent(s) and/or guardian(s) for modification to meals for personal beliefs or lifestyles may be provided within reason on a case-by-case basis.
- Requests for modification for religious, cultural, and ethical beliefs may be provided within reason on a case-by-case basis. Information regarding products can be provided in advance to assist parent(s), guardian(s), and children with making menu selections.
- Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) complete [Meal Preference Request](#) form available on district website, school site, or child nutrition office and return to child nutrition office before meals can be accommodated.
  - Child nutrition will provide accommodation as the menu and product availability permits. All meals must fit within program regulations and to the best of our ability will be sensitive to cultural, ethical, and religious beliefs as outlined by ODE and USDA.

*Examples of Modifications:* The following are examples of modifications to meals that may be made but not limited to:

- Gluten-free products
- Dairy substitutions or alternatives
- Texture changes to fluids and/or solid foods
- Carbohydrate lists for diabetes management
- Alternative offerings to allergen foods
- List of permitted foods or foods that may contain ingredients to avoid

Meal modifications will be made on a case-by-case basis as it relates to the individual's needs. Modifications provided will be at no additional cost to the child.

### **Process of Requesting and Making Modifications to Meals:**

The parent(s) and/or guardian(s) of the child are responsible for informing the school of their child's needs and providing the necessary documentation needed for modification to meals. The process should include:

- Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) complete the [Medical Statement](#) form available on district website, school site, or child nutrition office.
1. Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) submits the Medical Statement for Students with Special Nutritional Needs for School Meals form to the child nutrition office or school cafeteria manager.
  2. The cafeteria manager must retain the copy of documentation for their files for at least three years, provide a physical copy to the school's health clinic, and an electronic copy sent directly to the child nutrition department's nutrition educator.
    - a. If the school's health clinic receives the documentation initially, it should be shared with the school cafeteria manager who can provide the documentation to the nutrition educator and the school cafeteria manager must retain a copy for their files.
    - b. If the nutrition services office received the documentation initially, it will be shared with the cafeteria manager who will provide a copy to the school's health clinic and the cafeteria manager will retain a copy for their files.
    - c. The cafeteria manager will maintain a physical file of all meal modification requests and medical statements in a designated folder and location that is free from view and access of unauthorized person(s)
  3. The nutrition services office will review the documentation submitted. The educator will follow up with the necessary parties to obtain any additional information necessary to provide modification safely to the student, including contacting the health care provider if a more detailed statement is required.
    - a. If the nutrition educator cannot obtain additional information immediately, they will provide modifications based on what is outlined clearly until further documentation and/or clarification can be provided.
  4. The nutrition services office will maintain an up-to-date digital filing system for all documentation received and on-going communication for at least three years, including:
    - a. Meal modification requests
    - b. Medical statements
    - c. Amendments or discontinuation of modifications to plans
    - d. Documented notes of correspondence regarding the child's plan, including communication with parent(s) and/or guardian(s), health care providers, child nutrition staff, and the school's health clinic
    - e. Students approved for modified meals will be recorded in a central database document
    - f. Modified meal plans and recommendations
    - g. Documentation for any meal modification denial including reasoning and communication to the parent(s) and/or guardian(s)
  5. The nutrition services office will provide a response with an initial plan of recommendations within 2-business days if the submitted request is accepted.
    - a. The nutrition services office will send the response directly to the cafeteria manager. This may include a list of foods to avoid, foods that may be allowed, substitutions, or processes to follow. The nutrition

- educator will also work with the cafeteria manager directly on how and what to safely feed the student within their plan.
- b. A copy of these modifications and procedures will also be provided to the assigned child nutrition area manager and school health clinic by the nutrition services office.
  - c. The nutrition services office will contact the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) listed on the Medical Statement for Students with Special Nutritional Needs for School Meals form to provide follow up regarding the request for their child's meal modifications and what actions will be taken by the cafeteria.
6. Meetings with the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) of the child:
    - a. If the meeting requires the presence of the child nutrition department, the meeting should include the assigned child nutrition area manager, cafeteria manager, nutrition services manager, and the school health clinic personnel.
  7. If deemed medically necessary to ensure the safety of a child the school may coordinate with the parent(s) and/or guardian(s), child nutrition, the school health clinic, and other school staff in designating an allergy free zone for consuming meals. This will be an established area that is free from the designated allergen(s) and all students with meals containing stated allergen(s) will not be permitted to protect the safety of the child.
    - a. Proper cleaning and sanitation before and between meal service is required to ensure no cross contact has occurred prior to the student arriving to the designated area.

### **Medical Statements:**

Silver Falls School District Child Nutrition must have documentation on file signed by a state licensed healthcare professional, identified by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as a doctor, nurse, nurse practitioner, or a physician assistant. Statements must include the following:

- Information regarding the child's physical or mental impairment that allows the child nutrition department to understand how it restricts the child's diet
- An explanation of what must be done to accommodate the child's needs
- The food or foods to be omitted and recommended alternatives or how the diet must be modified to meet the nutritional needs of the child

District policy requires medical statements to be dated within the current school year as medical conditions, allergies, and sensitivities can change rapidly. This includes a new medical statement at the start of a new school year.

A member of child nutrition staff may contact the child's health care provider for further clarification if the medical statement does not fully explain the safe and appropriate modification necessary. The child nutrition department will make all modifications that are clearly stated until further direction is provided. This process may include contact directly with parent(s) and/or guardian(s) for further direction and clarification based on the child's needs and routine outside of school.

### **Modifying or Discontinuing a Diet Modification:**

The child nutrition department will make changes to any child's existing diet modification on an as needed basis.

- Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) are asked to provide an updated medical statement when there are changes to a child's diet plan
- Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) are asked to provide a written statement requesting the child nutrition discontinue providing meal modifications with the following:
  - What modifications should be discontinued
  - Date the changes to modifications should be discontinued
  - Child's first and last name
  - Child's date of birth
  - Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) written first and last name
  - Date of request
  - Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) signature
- Cafeteria manager will attach this documentation to the child's original modification request.
  - A physical copy will be provided by the cafeteria manager to the school health clinic
  - An electronic copy will be provided by the cafeteria manager to the nutrition educator

### **Meal Modification Denial**

The child nutrition department commits to following regulations outlined by the USDA and Oregon Department of Education in making accommodations and modifications to meals however there may be instances where a request may be denied, such as a parental request or if fundamentally alters the child nutrition program.

- The nutrition services office will contact the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) directly to inform them of the denial with supporting reasoning and their right to appeal.
- The nutrition services office will provide the same information to the cafeteria manager.
  - The cafeteria manager will inform the school health clinic of denial.
- The nutrition services office will document the date of denial, reasoning, and correspondence with the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) and cafeteria manager. This documentation will be filed for three years.

### **Child Nutrition Cafeteria Staff Standards**

- Child nutrition staff will receive training annually at a minimum on proper procedures for modifying student meals. Staff will be provided follow up training as menu modifications are made and on as needed basis. Trainings to include but not limited to:
  - Meal modification process as outlined in this document
  - Allergen food handling practices to ensure student safety
  - Process to modifying texture and consistency to foods and/or beverages
  - Maintaining and protecting child confidentiality for files and medically sensitive information

- Requesting special diet foods and equipment needed to make modifications
- Student identification
  - Child nutrition staff will put safeguards in place to ensure children with special diet needs are provided a safe environment despite a changing landscape while maintaining child confidentiality to the best of their ability.
  - The nutrition services office will provide the school cafeteria manager with an updated list of students on special diets with a detailed list of modifications that should be provided. The cafeteria manager should keep this confidential document in their office in the situation that someone filling in has access to this information as a safeguard to our students.
- Product labels and substitutions
  - When product is substituted and there is no longer an identified alternative for the child, the cafeteria manager is responsible for contacting the nutrition services office for clarification on appropriate product to use that is safe for the child.
  - Cafeteria managers are encouraged to review product labels as a safeguard
- Ordering special diet food(s) and/or beverage(s)
  - Cafeteria managers are responsible for ordering and requesting the special diet foods they need to make menu modification
    - Cafeteria managers may order most milk alternatives directly with the milk company.
    - Cafeteria managers should send all other product requests to the general manager monthly before the last week of the month for the following month's menu. Product will be delivered to the cafeterias by a member of the child nutrition administration team.
- School transfer process
  - When a child transfers schools, the cafeteria manager of the current school is responsible for providing an electronic copy of all the meal modification files associated with that child to the cafeteria manager of the new school.
  - Any special diet foods that were purchased for the individual child will be transferred to the child's new school site.
  - The cafeteria manager will also notify the nutrition educator and the nutrition educator will update their files to reflect this change.
  - The cafeteria manager at the new school for the child will provide a physical copy of the meal modification files to their school health clinic.
- Meal Service
  - If the school is operating in an offer vs serve pattern the child on a modified diet will be allowed to participate in the offer vs serve pattern similar to their peers when medically allowable. This allows the child to have access to a larger variety in the diet and their choices and limits alienation from other children.
    - Alternatives will be available and offered as an option but can be declined in an offer vs serve pattern as the child selects their own meal.

- Some children may have restrictive diet needs that offer vs serve may not be medically appropriate.
- Forms and communication can be provided to in additional languages by visiting [ODE website](#) or [SFSD](#) online or by phone, (503)873-5303.
- Additional Guidance
  - The child nutrition department will refer and adhere to the guidelines and directions provided by the USDA and Oregon Department of Education for any directive or questions not included in these documents.