Special Dietary Needs Policy

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OVERVIEW

El Puente High School aims to provide all participating students with nutritious meals through participation in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs. This includes ensuring students with disabilities as defined under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, have an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the USDA Child Nutrition Programs.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations 7 CFR Part 15b requires the school district will make reasonable modifications to accommodate students with disabilities including providing special dietary accommodations to students with a disability which restricts their diet.

The special dietary accommodation coordinator shall be primarily responsible for managing special dietary accommodations within the food service program.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Special Dietary Accommodation Coordinator

Monica Beltran monica@escuelaverde.org

SCHOOL CONTACTS
Molly Imbrie - Co-Director El Puente High School molly@elpuentehs.org
Renee Morrow - Co-Director El Puente High School renee@elpuentehs.org

ACCESS TO FOOD SERVICE PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

It is the policy of the school district to ensure that it does not discriminate against any person based on a protected status or classification as identified by law or herein in admission to or access to programs, services or activities offered by the district. The school district will ensure that individuals with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs and have appropriate access to facilities and areas where meals are provided.

REQUEST FOR A SPECIAL DIETARY ACCOMMODATION

Medical Statement

A parent/guardian requesting special dietary accommodations for a student with a disability that restricts the diet must provide the Medical Statement for Special Dietary Needs signed by a state authorized medical authority. The request must contain the following information:

- An explanation of how the student's physical or mental impairment restricts the diet

- The food(s) to be avoided
- The food(s) to be substituted

State Authorized Medical Authority

A state authorized medical authority is a licensed health care professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under state law. This could include a physician, dentist, optometrist, podiatrist, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner.

Incomplete Medical Statements

If a Medical Statement for Special Dietary Needs is unclear or lacks sufficient detail, the special dietary accommodation coordinator or school district's healthcare team may seek appropriate clarification from the parent/guardian or the healthcare practitioner so that a safe meal can be provided.

Where to Submit

A special dietary accommodation for a student who has a disability that restricts the student's diet must be supported by a Medical Statement for Special Dietary Needs, which should be submitted to the Special Dietary Accommodation Coordinator: Monica Beltran monica@escuelaverde.org

Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan

A student with a disability may have an IEP or 504 plan that requires specific instruction, services, or accommodation related to the student's nutritional needs. If a student's IEP or 504 plan contains the same information that is required on a Medical Statement for Special Dietary Needs, then it is not necessary to obtain and submit a separate Medical Statement for Special Dietary Needs.

PERSONAL REQUESTS

When a request for a special dietary accommodation is not supported by an authorized Medical Statement for Special Dietary Needs or included in a student's IEP or 504 plan, the school district cannot provide modified meals that are not in compliance with USDA Child Nutrition Program requirements.

Fluid Milk Substitution [Choose One]

I. The school district shall have no legal obligation to accommodate a student's or a parent's/guardian's preference for a fluid milk substitute if there is no Medical Statement for Special Dietary Needs on file. However, the district will assist the student in choosing a reimbursable meal through offer versus serve (OVS).

II. The school district shall offer a federally approved milk substitute with a written and signed request from a parent or guardian that identifies the reason for the special dietary accommodation.

Religious Reason [Choose One]

I. The school district shall have no legal obligation to accommodate a student's or parent's/guardian's request for accommodations based on religious requests. However, the district will assist your student in choosing a reimbursable meal through offer versus serve (OVS).

II. The school district will provide substitutions based on religious requests to any student, for any religious reason with a written and signed request by a parent or guardian that identifies the reason for the accommodation. A substitution for a religious request must meet USDA Child Nutrition Program meal pattern requirements.

Personal Request [Choose One]

I. The school district shall have no legal obligation to accommodate a student's or parent's/guardian's general health, nutrition, or food preferences. However, the district will assist your student in choosing a reimbursable meal through offer versus serve (OVS).

II. The school district will provide substitutions based on lifestyle preferences to any student with a written and signed request by a parent or guardian that identifies the reason for the accommodation. A substitution for a personal request must meet USDA Child Nutrition Program meal pattern requirements.

IMPLEMENTATION AND DISCONTINUATION

Review

Upon receipt of a request for a special dietary accommodation, the special dietary accommodation coordinator shall review the request to ensure it is supported as required by federal law and district policy.

Implementation

When the need for a special dietary accommodation is supported by a Medical Statement for Special Dietary Needs signed by a state authorized medical authority, the district will offer a reasonable modification that effectively accommodates the student's disability. Following USDA Child Nutrition Program regulations, the school district may consider factors such as cost and efficiency and is not required to prepare a specific meal, provide a specific brand of food, or provide a meal beyond the meals provided to other students.

For students who have an IEP or 504 plan that requires specific food related accommodations, the school district shall provide the accommodation as required by law, seeking clarifying medical information, as necessary.

A special dietary request will be approved and implemented upon submission of a completed authorized Medical Statement.

Notification

Parents/guardians will be notified of clarifications needed or approval of a special dietary request.

Student Absence

If a student receiving a special dietary accommodation is absent or does not wish to participate in school lunch on a day an accommodation is planned, contact the special dietary accommodation coordinator by [9:00am] the same day.

Renewing A Special Dietary Request

An authorized Medical Statement does not need to be updated annually. However, the special dietary accommodation coordinator may annually seek clarification or updates on special dietary requests.

Discontinuation of a Special Dietary Request

A special dietary request or part of a request may be discontinued by a parent/guardian by submitting the request in writing to the special dietary accommodation coordinator.

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

The school district staff will collaborate with parents/guardians and the student's healthcare team to appropriately share pertinent information regarding a student's food related disability with the goal of providing a safe environment.

Allergy Related Disability Strategies

The school district shall establish a method of ensuring that relevant information is shared with all supervising persons of a student identified with a life-threatening allergy.

The school district shall establish preventative strategies to minimize allergen risks and provide a safe environment for all students. Strategies may include:

- Carefully monitoring students with allergies.
- Encouraging students not to exchange food or utensils with other students.
- Washing surfaces, toys and equipment clean of allergen containing foods to the extent practicable.
- Provide staff updates, as necessary.
- Encouraging parents/guardians to instruct their children in how to avoid contact with substances to which they are allergic.

Carbohydrate Counting

School food service staff will provide menus, recipes, product labels, and planned portion sizes for various menu items. The student's parents/guardians, health care team or school healthcare team should use this information to determine carbohydrate totals to help ensure a safe meal and proper medication dosage.

Disclaimer

Nutrition information is accurate to the best of our knowledge; however, product substitutions or manufacturer formulas changes can occur. Ingredients and menu

items are subject to change. Please consult a medical professional for assistance in planning or treating medical conditions.

COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION

Parents and guardians have the right to examine the record and file a grievance in situations where a requested modification is not granted. Schools or districts should follow their procedures for grievances and complaints alleging civil rights discrimination (including Wisconsin protected classes) in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs

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) 632-9992, 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 an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **mail:**
   U.S. Department of Agriculture
   Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
   1400 Independence Avenue, SW
   Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:**
   (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
   program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

12/4/2023