



Children with Disabilities and Special Dietary Needs

Schools participating in a federal school meal program, such as the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, Special Milk Program, Seamless Summer Option, and/or Afterschool Snack Program, are required to make reasonable accommodations for children who are unable to eat the school meals because of a disability that restricts the diet.

Licensed Medical Authority's Statement for Children with Disabilities

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations at [7CFR Part 15b](#) require substitutions or modifications in school meals for children whose disabilities restrict their diets. School food authorities (SFAs) must provide modifications for children on a case-by case basis when requests are supported by a written statement from a state licensed medical authority.

The third page of this document (*Dietary Modification Medical Statement Form*) may be used to obtain the required information from the licensed medical authority. For this purpose, a state licensed medical authority in Virginia includes a licensed physician, physician assistance, or nurse practitioner.

The written medical statement must include:

- an explanation of how the child's physical or mental impairment restricts the child's diet;
- an explanation of what must be done to accommodate the child; and
- the food or foods to be omitted and recommended alternatives, if appropriate.

Other Special Dietary Needs

School food service staff may make food substitutions for individual children who do not have a medical statement on file. Such determinations are made on a case-by-case basis and all accommodations must be made according to USDA's meal pattern requirements. Schools are encouraged, but not required, to have documentation on file when making menu modifications within the meal pattern.

Special dietary needs and requests, including those related to general health concerns, personal preferences, and moral or religious convictions, are not disabilities and are optional for SFAs to accommodate. Meal modifications for non-disability reasons are reimbursable provided that these meals adhere to program regulations.

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, a person with a disability means any person with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities or major bodily functions, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment. A physical or mental impairment does not need to be life threatening in order to constitute a disability. If it limits a major life activity, it is considered a disability.

Major life activities include, but are not limited to: caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working. A major life activity also includes the operation of a major bodily function, including but not limited to: functions of the immune system; normal cell growth; and digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

A child with a disability under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is described as a child evaluated in accordance with IDEA as having one or more of the recognized thirteen disability categories and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with the IDEA and its implementing regulations. When nutrition services are required under a child's IEP, school officials need to ensure that school food service staff is involved early in decisions regarding special meals. If an IEP or 504 plan includes the same information that is required on a medical statement (see section 1, above), then it is not necessary to get a separate medical statement.

School Nutrition Program Contact

For more information about requesting accommodations to school meals and the meal service for students with disabilities at Winchester City Schools (school/division name), please contact:

Food Service Coordinator: Laurie S. Curry

Phone Number: (540)667-4258 ext. 16125

Email Address: curry.laurie@wps.k12.va.us

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800)877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: <https://www.usda.gov/oascr>, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866)632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter 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;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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