

SECTION XIV: DCYF NUTRITION STANDARDS & POLICY GUIDELINES



In an effort to promote health and nutrition, DCYF has adopted the following nutrition standard for food and beverages made available to children and youth in all funded programs. This standard applies to any grantee offering food or snacks as part of its program.



DCYF NUTRITION STANDARD

Program makes healthy food and beverages available to participants, limits unhealthy foods, emphasizes appropriate portion sizes, and encourages staff to model healthy eating behaviors. Program encourages youth to drink water, and avoids serving sugar-sweetened beverages such as soda or sports drinks.

DCYF's nutrition standard is not intended to restrict food resources, but instead support nutrition and create healthier environments for children, youth and families. DCYF's policies are intended to support programs as they adopt the DCYF nutrition standard.

POLICY GUIDELINES FOR NUTRITION STANDARD IMPLEMENTATION

For the 2018-23 grant cycle, all programs serving food to youth must have in place a formal, written nutrition policy. This policy must describe the type of food and beverage that will be provided to youth and the program's approach to how and when these items will be served. All policies must be submitted to DCYF no later than January 1, 2019.

In order to be compliant with the DCYF Nutrition Standard, all policies must include the following basic elements:

- Healthy foods must be made regularly available, while unhealthy foods are limited.
 - › For purposes of the DCYF Nutrition Standard, healthy foods include fruits and vegetables, foods low in added salt or sweeteners, foods that are minimally processed without unnecessary preservatives, foods made with whole grains, and foods made with low fat dairy and/or lean sources of protein.
 - › For purposes of the DCYF Nutrition Standard, unhealthy foods include foods with trans fat, whole-milk dairy products and non-lean protein, fried snacks (such as chips and fries), foods high in added sugar and/or added sodium, candy and baked goods (such as pastries or cookies).

- Water must be available at all times, and youth are encouraged to drink water. Youth must have regular access to tap water.
- Per San Francisco law, under no circumstances can programs serve sugar-sweetened beverages. A sugar-sweetened beverage includes any beverage with added sugar (not naturally occurring). Sugar can be listed under a variety of names, which may include: sugar, high-fructose corn syrup, corn sweetener, corn syrup, dextrose or fruit juice concentrates. Sugar-sweetened beverages include soda, sports drinks and fruit punch. 100% fruit or vegetable juice and low-or non-fat milk are acceptable alternatives to water. Chocolate milk is allowed if it contains no more than 40 grams of total sugar (naturally-occurring and from added caloric sweetener) per 12 ounces. Programs must provide a healthy snack if operating for two hours or more. The snack can be served at a time designated by the program.
- All food must be served in a safe, clean environment.
- Any food served in a program must be properly stored, including both perishable and nonperishable items. Sites serving snacks that require refrigeration, such as milk or cheese, must have appropriate equipment on site.
- Healthy nutrition must be embedded in program content and actively promoted by staff.

Listed below are some additional suggestions for creating an environment that supports healthy food and beverage choices:

- Program must emphasize appropriate portion sizes. Appropriate portion sizes vary greatly for youth and can depend on many factors, such as age, body composition, and physical activity level. Generally, youth should be provided with enough food to avoid hunger, but will not encourage over eating or excessive portion sizes. For more information about how to communicate appropriate portion sizes, visit http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Healthy/nc_portions.html or <http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/index.html>
- Program staff model healthy eating behaviors. One of the most important ways staff can model healthy behaviors is simply by not consuming unhealthy foods or beverages around youth. In addition, staff can model healthy behaviors by eating the same snacks as youth eat and sitting down with youth during snack or meal time. If staff bring in any outside beverages or food, it should fit within the overall nutrition standards; staff may even want to encourage youth to try some of their food or snack (if program allows).
- Programs should serve a variety of foods with a goal of offering a diverse range that reflects their participants' culture and traditions whenever possible. Youth should be exposed to new and different foods.
- Families should be engaged with program's healthy food and beverage efforts. Families should receive a copy of the program's nutrition policy and consider hosting events such as a healthy family night.
- When unhealthy food is served at celebrations or special events, make sure that healthy food items are also available. Ideally, these foods should be presented together so that they look equally appealing and give youth the opportunity to make healthy choices.
- To the extent possible, food should never be used as a prize or punishment. Limit using food as a way to reward youth success or good behavior; conversely, do not limit or take away food as a punishment or form of behavior management.

LIMITATION ON SPENDING FOR FOOD

DCYF encourages grantees to provide healthy food and beverages while making responsible financial decisions about how to source their items. The department has set as a maximum amount a program can spend on a single meal at **\$2.50 per youth**. To meet this cap programs should consider buying food in bulk whenever possible. Grantees offering food should reflect in their workplans the amount per youth, per meal they are budgeting.

DCYF NUTRITON PROGRAM

Programs participating in a DCYF-sponsored nutrition program, such as the Summer Lunch Program or School Year Supper and Snack program, will automatically be considered in compliance with the department's nutrition policy. These programs have been fully vetted by the department and have been found to meet our standard.

Grantees are strongly encouraged to participate in these programs in order to provide youth access to healthy foods at no cost to the agency. DCYF, in partnership with the USDA, pays for all food and delivery fees to bring summer lunches and school year suppers and snacks directly to programs. The cost savings to a program can be significant. For example, if providing snacks to 20 youth three times a week during the school year a program will pay over \$5,000 for food, not to mention staff time to purchase and prepare the items. Participation in the DCYF nutrition program will eliminate this expense and free the funds for other program use.

If you are interested in DCYF's nutrition programs, contact your Program Specialist for more information.

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