



The Child and Adult Care Food Program

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Institutions Participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

FROM: *Norma Birckhead*
Norma Birckhead, Manager, CACFP and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

SUBJECT: State Agency Policy on Combination Foods -- UPDATE

DATE: April 25, 2014

STATE AGENCY MEMO: CACFP #9-2014

This memorandum supersedes CACFP #04-10, issued by the State Agency on March 22, 2010. In that memorandum, the State Agency limited the number of components in a combination food that could be counted toward the meal pattern requirements to no more than two (2) components.

A combination food is any food that is served as a single item but contains two or more components. As a reminder, the components in the CACFP meal pattern are fluid milk, fruit/vegetable, meat/meat alternate, and bread/bread alternate. Casserole, lasagna, soup, stew, pizza, sandwich, and burrito are common combination foods. Under the previous policy, as casserole that contained pasta (bread/bread alternate), cheese (meat/meat alternate), and tomato sauce and spinach (fruit/vegetable) could be counted as providing no more than two of those three components. The policy was enacted due to concerns over participants receiving inadequate portions of required components.

The State Agency would first like to distinguish between combination foods in which each component is portioned individually and combination foods in which the components are mixed together before being portioned as a whole. The first type of combination food includes items like sandwiches: each ingredient is measured for each sandwich, making it easy to ensure that each sandwich contains adequate amounts of each ingredient and component. The State Agency will allow individually portioned combination foods to be counted toward as many components as allowable under current regulations and instructions. The menu must clearly reflect all ingredients that count toward a component. For example, rather than listing “turkey sandwich” on the menu, specify “turkey (1 oz) and cheddar cheese (1 oz), whole wheat bread (2 slices), lettuce (1/4 cup).”

The second type of combination food includes items like casseroles and soups: all of the ingredients are mixed together during preparation, and each participant receives a single portion that contains all of the components, like a ladle of soup that contains chicken, noodles, and vegetables. In this case, the item must be prepared with enough of each ingredient to provide all participants with the appropriate portion of each component, and each participant must be served the correct total amount of the combination food. It is more difficult to ensure that participants receive adequate amounts of each component in this case, but it is not impossible. Therefore, the State Agency will allow institutions, facilities, and their food service management companies to serve such items and credit them toward more than two components **if there is a recipe or production record on file** to



demonstrate that the item fulfills the meal pattern requirements. The recipe or production record must include the amount of each ingredient, the yield (or number of servings that it makes), the serving size or serving instructions (ex. “one cup per person” or “cut each pan into 12 pieces”), and the crediting information (ex. “one serving provides 1.5 oz meat/meat alternate, ½ slice equivalent bread/bread alternate, and ¼ cup fruit/vegetable”).

If you have questions regarding the information contained in this guidance, please contact your CACFP Specialist or me at (202) 442-4010 or norma.birckhead@dc.gov.