

# **Head Start/Early Head Start Policies and Procedures**

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## **Special Diets**

### **Policy**

**Rationale:** In accordance with SETA Head Start Program Performance Standards 45 CFR 1304.23 (b)(1)(i) Guidance and USDA, Child and Adult Care Food Program.

**Policy:**

It is the policy of Head Start/Early Head Start that medical substitutions for special dietary needs be provided if documentation is provided by a physician. In addition, Head Start/Early Head Start will provide food substitutions for preference-based diets.

**NOTE:** Parents cannot, under any circumstance, provide food for their child without the approval of the Health/Nutrition Services Unit.

# Head Start/Early Head Start Policies and Procedures

## Special Diets

### Procedure

**Guidance:** Performance Standard 1304.23(c) (6) requires that SETA Head Start ensure nutritional services are provided to all children and all dietary requirements are accommodated (see Special Diets Policy).

**NOTE:** Parents cannot, under any circumstance, provide food for their child without the approval of the Health/Nutrition Services Unit.

#### **Procedure:**

1. Upon enrollment, food allergies/intolerances/preferences should be identified from enrollment forms (Health/Nutrition Histories, Enrollment Questionnaire) and information provided by the parent/guardian. **NOTE:** To ensure all appropriate documentation is submitted, please refer to the Follow Up Services Checklist.
2. A Special Diet Order Form must be completed by the center as part of a routing or referral package and submitted to the Health/Nutrition Services Unit.
3. For medically-based Special Diets:
  - a. Have a licensed health care provider (i.e. physician, physician's assistant, dietician, nurse practitioner) complete the Special Diet Order Form as proof of the need for a substitution. Maintain a copy of this form in the child's file.
  - b. The health care provider must identify the medical or special dietary need or the child's disability, as well as food(s) to be omitted and food(s) that may be substituted.
4. If the licensed health care provider has not provide substitutions for all of the child's allergies, the program's registered dietician consultant will be contacted for further guidance.
5. Once the Special Diet is processed, Food Services will be informed of the new diet and will inform the Health/Nutrition Services Unit of the earliest date the diet will be provided. Food service production records will reflect menu modification/substitutions.
6. Once a start date is received, file copies of the Special Diet paperwork, and a Special Diet Alert will be returned to the center. **The child is not eligible to start until this documentation is received by the center.**

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**Note:** The Special Diet Alert form contains the child's name, birth date, and diet specifications. This form must be posted in the classroom on the refrigerator and/or kitchen area where the meals are prepared. The blue card must include the child's picture on the front. This document may be modified only by the Health/Nutrition Services Unit. **If a child requires a special diet, they may not attend school until the special diet is complete. This includes children who have been found to need a special diet after enrollment; they must be temporarily excluded from the program until a diet can be completed.**