

**Tri-County Community Council, Inc.**  
**Head Start/Early Head Start**

**Part:** 1302 Program Operations

**Subpart:** D- Health Program Services

**Section:** 1302.44 Child Nutrition

**Subject:** Head Start/Early Head Start Meals

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**Policy:**

It is the policy of Tri-County Community Council, Inc. Head Start/Early Head Start to provide nutritious meals as well as opportunities for learning to all children attending the program.

**Procedure:**

1. Head Start/Early Head Start will use USDA/CCFP funds to provide meals.
2. Head Start/Early Head Start will conduct its food service operation using guidelines set forth in the Policy and Procedure Manual for Sponsoring Organizations of Child Care Centers participating in the Child Care Food Program.
3. Foods served will be nutrient dense and low in sugar, salt and fat. A variety of foods will be served to broaden each child's food experiences.
4. All meals served will comply with USDA/CCFP meal patterns for both components and quantity.
5. As a full day program, Head Start/Early Head Start will provide enrolled children with 2/3 of their daily nutritional needs, including a nourishing breakfast. Any child arriving after breakfast has been served, but more than an hour before lunchtime, will be served a nutritious breakfast containing all the components for breakfast as required by USDA/CCFP. If a child arrives less than an hour before lunchtime and is hungry they will be given a snack of fruit and/or milk to tide them over to lunch, but not ruin their appetite for lunch.
6. Parents of enrolled children will be provided with educational opportunities to assist them with food preparation and healthy eating decisions through parent meetings and newsletter articles.
7. Food will not be used as punishment or reward. Children will be encouraged, but not forced, to eat or taste their food and beverages.
8. To contribute to the socialization and development of each child enrolled in the program, all Head Start center staff (Center Director, center assistant, teachers, teacher assistants, family service worker, cook) and volunteers will eat family style with the

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children and will eat the same menu as the children. If a staff person cannot eat the same food as the children, they must provide their Center Director and the Nutrition Staff with a written statement from their medical provider stating the condition and the foods not allowed.

9. Infants and toddlers will be fed at the level of developmental readiness of each individual child.
10. Family style service includes children serving themselves at meal service. Children should serve themselves all food items per USDA/CCFP guidance either by themselves or with adult assistance. When a food is served by an adult, because it is hot or messy (ex. soup), the adult will be provided with and will use serving utensils in the correct portion size to meet the CCFP Meal Pattern requirement.
11. Children will use silverware appropriate in size and type for the foods served (i.e., spoon for cereal, soup; fork for spaghetti, turkey breast).
12. Each child will be allowed sufficient time to eat their meal.
13. Staff will provide enrolled children the opportunity to participate in food related activities that are developmentally appropriate and nutritionally sound.
14. Centers will post evidence of compliance with applicable state, tribal and local food safety and sanitation laws through inspection reports in an area that is readily accessible to the public.
15. Centers must also post 4 items mandated by the CCFP (Child Care Food Program). These will be current copies of the “And Justice for All” poster, “WIC” poster, “Building for the Future” poster in both English and Spanish. These postings will be provided to the Center Director by the Nutrition staff. These postings must be displayed prominently in a location where all parents entering the center will see them, they must also be posted in any room where CCFP meals are served. The current and correct menu must also be posted in the same locations.
16. All vendors serving Head Start/Early Head Start food service operations will be licensed by the state of Florida.
17. All food served in the center will be prepared at the center by center staff and/or properly trained volunteers unless prior approval has been given by the Nutrition Staff and the Center Director. Any foods brought from home must conform to all Head Start/Early Head Start policies regarding food safety, wellness and nutrition. In addition, foods to be shared among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers.
18. Parents, staff, and appropriate community agencies will be involved in menu planning and evaluation of Head Start/Early Head Start nutrition services. This involvement will include surveys, the self-assessment process, and menu approval by the Policy Council

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and the Health Services Advisory Committee to ensure menus are culturally and developmentally appropriate.

19. Drinking water will be available to all children at all times during the program day.
20. Infants are never laid down with a bottle. Bottle fed children are always cuddled in an upright position when being fed a bottle, they are never laid down with a bottle, and bottles are never to be propped for a child.