

Spokane County Head Start/ECEAP/EHS SPECIAL DIET LETTER

Dear Parent/Guardian:

If your child has a food allergy or a special dietary need, certain steps must be taken **before your child may attend a Head Start/Early Head Start classroom.**

1. If your child is allergic to a food that causes a life threatening (anaphylactic) reaction when the child is exposed to the food allergen and/or interferes with your child's ability to participate in our scheduled daily activities, then your child will receive dietary substitutions as prescribed by your child's doctor.
 - Your FSC will provide you with a copy of the **Food Allergy/Intolerance Information** form to be filled out by your medical provider; **or**
 - Your FSC will give you the **Medical Disability Statement for Food Substitution(s)** if your child has a disability and cannot drink cow's milk or soy milk.
2. If your child has other special dietary needs such as a food allergy (but does not have a life threatening reaction), you must document what the special dietary need is on the **Health, Dental, and Diet History** form and fill out the **Special Diet Request: Food Allergy/Intolerance** form.
 - For milk allergies requiring a substitute for milk to drink, yogurt and cheese, you must have an RMA fill out the **Milk Allergy/Intolerance Information** form to identify the substitutes needed. Currently in Washington State there are only 4 approved beverages that can replace cow's milk in the meal pattern.
 - If your child only needs a replacement for milk to drink, you must fill out the **CACFP Parent/Guardian Request for Fluid Milk Substitution** form.
 - For other foods, the program's Nutrition Specialist may determine that you need to provide a statement signed by a RMA which identifies the following:
 - ✓ The medical or other dietary need which restricts the child's diet;
 - ✓ The food or foods to be omitted from the child's diet; and
 - ✓ The food or foods to be substituted.
3. If your child has a chewing or swallowing problem and needs to have the food texture modified (such as chopped or ground meats or cooked rather than raw vegetables), an RMA must provide a list of foods the child cannot have. You also must fill out the **Special Diet Request: Menu Adaptations** form.
4. If your child has a medically prescribed diet, an RMA must provide documentation of this. You must also fill out the **Special Diet Request: Menu Adaptations** form.

In addition to the above requirements, HS/EHS requires you to take two more steps to ensure that we don't give your child any food he/she cannot have.

1. You must fill out one or both of the **Special Diet Request** forms that lets the kitchen and classroom staff know what food or foods your child cannot eat.
2. You must review menus monthly with the site cook and identify all foods that could be a problem and make a suggestion for a substitution. The cook may decide whether to continue menu reviews after the first month.

Thank you,

Claudia Hume, R.D.
Nutrition Specialist
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