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Georgia Dept of Early Care and Learning

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Area Memo: Meals/Food Service

Policy and Procedure for Reclaiming Meals due to a Milk Shortage, July 8, 2022 (v.6)

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to assist Administrative Sponsors (Sponsors) with: (1) calculating the number of meals, per facility, that was served with milk; and (2) determining the number of meals to reclaim per facility due to a milk shortage. As a reminder, sponsors must ensure their facilities purchase enough milk to meet the meal pattern requirements and to accommodate the number of meals served. This guidance was established to assist sponsors in making these determinations.

This policy supersedes DECAL Policy Memorandum, *Policy and Procedure for Reclaiming Meals due to a Milk Shortage*, October 1, 2020. Additionally, this version mentions flavored low-fat (1%); flavored low-fat (2%), whole or fat free milk is permitted for children ages 6-18 and adults effective July 1, 2022 as per Question and Answer Guidance on the Final Rule Child Nutrition Programs: Transitional Standards for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium, Effective July 1, 2022 (v.2.) and that meals will be reclaimed for one-year-olds when insufficient whole milk is purchased/served.

Requirements

FY 2026 - USDA Expands Fluid Milk Options

On May 8, 2026, the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) published the final rule with comment period, Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs (91 FR 25073), effective June 8, 2026. This rule expands fluid milk options by allowing schools and child and adult care providers participating in Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) to offer whole and reduced-fat milk to participants two years and older.

This rule codifies milkfat requirements following enactment of the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act of 20251 (WMFHKA) (P.L. 119-69) and supports the statutory requirements for meals to align with the goals of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2025–20302 (Guidelines). By removing previous fluid milkfat-content restrictions, this deregulatory rule restores flexibility to Program operators, allowing them

to offer a greater variety of fluid milk options, including whole and reduced-fat milk, to meet the nutrition needs and preferences of the children and adults they serve.

Specifically, effective June 8, 2026, CNP operators participating in NSLP (including NSLP afterschool snacks, the preschool meal pattern, and Smart Snacks in School), SBP (including the preschool meal pattern), CACFP, and SMP may offer children age 2 and older and adult participants whole, reduced-fat, low-fat, and fat-free fluid milk to meet fluid milk requirements in these programs. The updated fluid milk requirements for each age group are summarized below:

• Fluid milk served to children age 1 must be unflavored whole milk;

• Fluid milk served to children ages 2 through 5 may be unflavored whole, reduced-fat, low-fat, or fat-free milk; and

• Fluid milk served to children age 6 and older and adult participants may be unflavored or flavored, whole, reduced-fat, low-fat, or fat-free milk.

This rule modifies these restrictions and permits schools and child and adult care providers to offer child and adult participants expanded fluid milk options.

PROCEDURES

1. The sponsor must calculate the total meals required to be served with milk based on the required serving size by age for the selected review month.
2. Infant meals should not be included.
3. AM/PM Snacks should only be included if the meals were served with milk.
4. For PM Snack, if milk was served as one of the 2 required components, then it SHOULD be included in the milk calculation. If milk was served as an additional component for PM Snack (i.e., 2 other creditable components were served), then it should not be included in the milk calculation.
5. The Sponsor must calculate the total meal counts from the meal count forms based on age and serving size to determine the required amount of milk needed for the review month. (i.e., Total of meals served with milk times required ounces).
    - 1 year old @ 4 oz. (Must be served **Whole**, unflavored milk)
    - 2-year-old @ 4 oz. (Unflavored low-fat (1%), unflavored reduced fat (2%), whole, or fat free milk)
    - 3-5-year-old @ 6oz. (Unflavored low-fat (1%), unflavored reduced fat (2%), whole, or fat free milk)
    - 6-12-year-old @ 8 oz. (Unflavored low-fat (1%), unflavored reduced fat (2%), unflavored whole, unflavored fat-free, flavored low-fat (1%), flavored reduced fat (2%), flavored whole, or flavored fat-free milk)
    - 13-18-year-old and Adults @ 8 oz. (Unflavored low-fat (1%), unflavored reduced fat (2%), unflavored whole, unflavored fat-free, flavored low-fat (1%), flavored reduced fat (2%), flavored whole, flavored fat-free milk)
6. Next, obtain all milk receipts for the selected review month. The sponsor may credit and include milk purchases from the **last 5 days** of the prior month in the total amount of milk

purchases.

7. If all the receipts do not specify a milk type, calculate the milk purchased based on quantity only for all age groups.
8. If all receipts specify a milk type, calculate the milk purchased separately for the one-year old age group, 2-12-year-old age group and 13-18-year old age group, if applicable (At-Risk only).
    - Whole milk may only be credited for the one-year old age group.
    - Low-fat, reduced fat (2%), whole, milk may only be credited for the 2-12-year-old or 13-18-year-old age group.
    - Any other milk type that is not listed as a creditable milk should not be included in the total milk purchased by age group.
    - Non-dairy beverages nutritionally equivalent to milk can be substituted and credited in the appropriate age group that received the substitution.
    - Non-dairy beverages that are not nutritionally equivalent that require a medical statement may be credited in the appropriate age group that receives the substitution as long as the medical statement is on file at the facility.
    - **Flavored Milk:** If flavored milk is served, include quantities in the calculation. If the quantities are split by age group, calculate in the 2 -12-year-old group. Even though it is not creditable to serve flavored milk to children under 6 years of age, the sponsor will not segregate quantities in the 2 to 5-year-old age groups but instead will evaluate the requirement to only serve flavored milk to children 6 years and older by visual observation.
9. If the sponsor determines there is no milk shortage, then no further action is required.
10. If the sponsor determines there is a milk shortage, the sponsor must determine if the shortage was from the one-year old age group (whole milk shortage) and/or the 2-12 year old or 13-18-year-old age group (fat free, whole, 1%, or reduced fat (2%) milk shortage).
    - Meals will be reclaimed for the 2 to 12-year-old age group if appropriate quantities are not purchased/served.
    - Meals will be reclaimed for the 1-year old age group if enough whole milk is not purchased/served.
11. When there is a shortage of milk only, sponsors should disallow meals beginning with snacks served with milk first, followed by breakfast meals, and if necessary, followed by lunch and/or supper meals.
12. When there is a shortage of milk and meals with missing components or non-creditable meals, sponsors should disallow beginning with meals with missing or non-creditable components, followed by snacks served with milk, then by breakfast, lunch and/or supper meals.
13. The sponsor must maintain a copy of the Weekly Meal Count records and all milk receipts if there is a milk shortage and reclaim and finding is issued.

For Adult Facilities

1. For supper, if the center opted to serve milk as an additional component, they should NOT be included in the milk calculation since the milk was not served as a required component.

2. For PM Snack, if milk was served as one of the 2 required components, then it SHOULD be included in the milk calculation. If milk was served as an additional component for PM Snack (i.e., 2 other creditable components were served), then it should not be included in the milk calculation.
3. If an Adult center is using Offer vs. Serve (OVS), the milk may be recycled as long as it is in unopened containers (example: half-pints). Any milk poured into a cup cannot be recycled/ reused and must be discarded. The facility must maintain written documentation of any recycled or declined milk to receive credit.
    - Recycled Milk- Milk served to participants but not consumed may be returned if in unopened containers. The facility must maintain documentation of recycled milk to obtain credit in its milk purchases.
    - Declined Milk-When using OVS, milk may be one of the declined components. The facility must maintain documentation of declined milk to obtain credit in their milk purchases.

Procedure for Milk Shortage/Reclaims:

MILK SHORTAGE ONLY

Snacks with milk **>** Breakfast **>** Lunch/Supper

The sponsor should first determine if snacks were served with milk and deduct those snacks first up to the total number of snacks served with milk. This should start with AM/PM Snacks served with milk, then At-Risk snacks served with milk (if applicable). Then any breakfast meals should be reclaimed, then if necessary, lunch and/or supper. If a snack served with milk or other meal was not served/claimed, the sponsor would proceed to reclaim applicable meals until the milk shortage is satisfied.

Missing/Non-Creditable Meal Components and Milk Shortages

Missing/non-creditable meal components **>** Snacks with milk **>** Breakfast Lunch/Supper

Note: It is important to note that if meals from a particular meal type (i.e. breakfast, lunch or supper) are disallowed because non-creditable component(s) were served, and meals must also be disallowed due to a milk shortage, then the same meals cannot be disallowed twice. Do not reclaim meals served with missing/non-creditable meal components, then disallow meals due to a milk shortage. The total meals to reclaim due to a milk shortage should be reduced by the total meals reclaimed due to missing/non-creditable meal components if those meals were served with milk.

Since milk is required at every meal except snacks, if meals are missing a component and are subsequently disallowed, then it is not necessary to disallow the same meals due to a milk shortage.

The only time it would be valid to disallow both for the same meal type is when the number of meals to be disallowed due to a milk shortage is greater than the number of meals to be disallowed for missing/ non-creditable meal components. In this case, the meals for the missing/non-creditable component should be disallowed, and then the difference between the meals to be disallowed for missing/non-creditable components and the milk shortage should also be disallowed.

Examples of the Milk Shortage Procedures

Example 1:

For the month of January, **Little Kids Early Learning Center** had a milk shortage, in which 300 meals had to be disallowed. For the month of January, the center submitted for reimbursement 575 breakfast, 650 lunch, and 400 pm snacks. ***Thirty pm snacks were served with milk***.

In this example only 30 PM Snacks are eligible to be reclaimed due to a milk shortage. However, you needed to reclaim a total of 300 meals due to the milk shortage. Therefore, the sponsor will follow the reclaim procedure and take 30 PM Snacks served with milk first, then 270 breakfast until 300 meals are reclaimed due to the milk shortage.

Reclaim due to Milk Shortage:

30 Snacks with milk **> 270** Breakfast **> 0** Lunch/Supper

	Breakfast	**Lunch**	**PM Snack**
Original Claim	575	650	400
Meals to be disallowed	270	0	30
Approved Meals to Claim for reimbursement	**305**	**650**	**370**

Example 2:

For the month of December, **Beautiful Kids Daycare, Inc**. had a milk shortage in which 189 meals had to be disallowed. For the month of December, the center submitted for reimbursement 627 breakfast meals, 758 lunch meals, and 693 snacks. None of the 693 snacks were served with milk.

In this example no PM Snacks were served with milk, therefore, those meals are not eligible to be reclaimed due to a milk shortage. However, you needed to reclaim a total of 189 meals due to the milk shortage. Therefore, the sponsor will follow the reclaim procedure, since PM Snacks are not eligible, then breakfast is the next eligible meal to reclaim. You would be able to reclaim all 189 meals from the breakfast meals and satisfy the milk shortage.

Reclaim due to Milk Shortage:

0 Snacks with milk **> 189** Breakfast **> 0** Lunch/Supper

	Breakfast	**Lunch**	**PM Snack**
Original Claim	627	758	693
Meals to be disallowed	189	0	0
Approved Meals to Claim for reimbursement	**438**	**758**	**693**

Example 3:

For the month of March, **All My Children, Inc.** did not serve milk; instead, they served juice with all meals. For the month of March, the center submitted for reimbursement 864 breakfast meals, 977 lunch meals and 1004 snacks.

In this example no PM Snacks were served with milk, therefore, those meals are not eligible to be

reclaimed due to a milk shortage. However, since milk is a required component for breakfast and lunch, all of the meals must be reclaimed since no milk was purchased in the review month.

Reclaim due to Milk Shortage:

0 Snacks with milk **> 864** Breakfast **> 977** Lunch/Supper

	Breakfast	Lunch	PM Snack
Original Claim	864	977	1004
Meals to be disallowed	864	977	0
Approved Meals to Claim for reimbursement	**0**	**0**	**1004**

Examples of the Non-creditable/Missing Meal Component and Milk Shortage Procedures

Example 4:

For the month of June, **Children's First Early Learning** had both missing meal components and a milk shortage. The center did not serve 100% fruit juice in 824 PM Snacks or fruit/vegetable components in 121 breakfast meals. In addition, a total of 946 meals must be disallowed due to a milk shortage. For June, the center submitted for reimbursement 877 breakfast meals, 927 lunch meals and 824 snacks.

In this example 824 PM Snacks were reclaimed for a non-creditable component. Also, milk was not served at the PM Snack, therefore, no PM Snacks will be eligible for reclaim due to a milk shortage. Then, a total of 121 breakfast meals were disallowed due to a missing meal component. Breakfast meals require milk as a component. However, the sponsor should not disallow the 121 breakfast meals for missing components and meals for missing milk. You will only disallow the difference. There are only 756 eligible breakfast meals to reclaim and you need to disallow 825 meals due to a milk shortage. Therefore, the sponsor will follow the reclaim procedure, since PM Snacks are not eligible, then breakfast is the next eligible meal to reclaim. The sponsor will reclaim all remaining 756 breakfasts, plus 69 lunches to satisfy the milk shortage.

Reclaims for Non-creditable/Missing Meal Components:

121 Breakfast (A meal that requires milk)

824 PM Snack (Milk was not served as one of the components)

Reclaim due to Milk Shortage:

0 Snacks with milk **> 756** Breakfast **> 69** Lunch/Supper

		Breakfast	Lunch	PM Snack
Original Claim Data		877	927	824
Meals to be disallowed (missing component)		121	0	824
Difference		756	927	0
Meals to disallow due to milk shortage	756 (946 total milk shortage-121 breakfast meals already reclaimed equals 825. But only 756 breakfast meals left to reclaim. Balance of 69 meals must be		69	

	taken from lunch)		
Approved Meals to Claim for reimbursement	**0**	**858**	**0**

Example 5

For the month of June, **Children's First Early Learning** had both missing meal components and a milk shortage. The center did not serve 100% fruit juice in 412 PM Snacks and the remaining 412 PM Snacks were served with milk. In addition, a fruit/vegetable component was not served in 121 breakfast meals. A total of 946 meals must be disallowed due to a milk shortage. For June, the center submitted for reimbursement 877 breakfast meals, 927 lunch meals and 824 snacks.

In this example 412 PM Snacks were reclaimed for a non-creditable component. However, milk was served for the other 412 PM Snacks, therefore, only 412 PM Snacks will be eligible for reclaim due to a milk shortage. Also, a total of 121 Breakfast meals were disallowed due to a missing meal component. Breakfast meals require milk as a component. The sponsor should not disallow the 121 breakfast meals for missing components and meals for missing milk. You will only disallow the difference. This leaves 825 meals that need to be disallowed due to the milk shortage. The sponsor will follow the reclaim procedure and reclaim all 412 PM Snacks served with milk, then 413 breakfast is the next eligible meal to reclaim to satisfy the milk shortage.

Reclaims for non-creditable/missing meal components:

121 Breakfast (A meal that requires milk)

412 PM Snack (Milk was not served as one of the components)

Reclaim due to Milk Shortage:

412 Snacks with milk **> 413** Breakfast **> 0** Lunch/Supper

	Breakfast	**Lunch**	**PM Snack**
Original Claim Data	877	927	824
Meals to be disallowed (missing component)	121	0	412
Difference	756	927	412
Meals to be disallowed due to milk shortage	413 (946 total milk shortage-121 breakfast meals already reclaimed equals 825. Therefore, 412 PM Snacks served with milk can be reclaimed. Then, you need an additional 413 breakfast meals to satisfy the milk shortage.)		412
Approved Meals to Claim for reimbursement	**343** **(756 available breakfast meals – 413 disallowed due to milk)**	**927**	**0**

Comments

For questions concerning this memorandum, please contact the Policy Administrator at (404) 651-8193.