



Section 10

Meals, Snacks and Menus



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Meals, Snacks and Menus

This section looks at requirements for food provided at child care facilities. It covers:

- nutritional standards
- requirements for developing menus
- safe food handling
- how often children must eat
- the feeding needs for infants
- dealing with allergies and other special concerns
- drinking water

10

27

(1) Nutritious foods from guidelines provided by a qualified nutritionist must be provided by the operator or by the child's parent or guardian, for each child attending the child day care facility.

(2) The food referred to in this section may include country food, where the operator has obtained a license to serve country food from the department responsible for renewable resources.

31

(1) Menus must be prepared and posted a week in advance in a conspicuous place in the child day care facility.

(2) Any changes to the menu for a meal must be posted before the meal is served.

Regulations 27(1) and (2)

Nutritional Standards and Country Food

Regulations 31(1) and (2)

Post Menus and Changes in Advance

Why

- To ensure that food served to children is appropriate and nutritious
- To ensure that parents are aware of the food that is planned for meals and snacks

What it means

- The operator must serve nutritious food, following the *Nunavut Food Guide*.
- The annual inspection by the Regional Early Childhood Officer will include checking menus. See *What to do if an inspector requires improvements*, after Regulation 2(7).
- The operator can provide the food or the parent can provide the food.
- Country food can be included in the menu planning.
- Menus must be posted at least one week in advance. (They could be posted for a few weeks at a time.)
- Any menu changes must be posted *at least one day* before the food is served.

How

- Save time by planning written menus for a four week period or longer, and then repeating the menus.
- Ask a nutritionist to help, or to review the menus.
- Review the menus regularly and revise if necessary – for example, to take into account seasonal produce, seasonal events, community hunts, etc.
- Post menus on the information board at least one week in advance, and up to several weeks in advance.
- Post any menu changes as soon as possible, but *at least* one day ahead. Highlight changes to draw parents' attention to them.
- Serve country food as often as you can.
- Be aware of known allergies in menu planning. If a child has life threatening food allergies it may be simplest to eliminate those foods from menus altogether, rather than risk exposure to those foods as even traces of them can be deadly for some children.
- Review groceries on hand each week to determine what you need or if a menu change is in order – for example, if you have extra oranges you're going to want to make sure they're on the menu.
- If a parent brings food for a child, ask them to label the food with the name of the child, how it needs to be stored (e.g., in the fridge) and how it needs to be served (e.g., heated up).
- If a parent provides food that is not nutritious – e.g., chips for snack – tell the child to put the food away and take it home, give the child a healthy snack, and talk to the parent when the child is picked up.
- Give parents examples and ideas for nutritious snacks and lunches, as well as foods to avoid.

32

Every operator shall comply with all health regulations and guidelines pertaining to food storage, handling and serving.

Regulation 32

Safe Food Storage, Handling and Serving**Why**

- To ensure that food is stored, handled and served safely
- To limit bacteria and the spread of germs

What it means

- Procedures for storing, handling and serving food must meet or exceed all health regulations and guidelines.
- Annual inspections by the Regional Early Childhood Officer and EHO will include reviewing procedures for storing, handling and serving food. See *What to do if an inspector requires improvements*, after Regulation 2(7).

How

- Ask the Regional Early Childhood Officer or EHO for information, suggestions and guidelines at any time. Don't wait for your annual inspections.
- Store perishable foods like milk, cheese, yogurt, eggs, meat and fish in the refrigerator, making sure the thermometer is working and keeping the refrigerator at 4°C (40°F) or colder.
- Store frozen foods at -18°C (0°F) or colder. Defrost under cold water, or in the refrigerator. Store other foods according to the directions on package labels.
- Keep foods in their original packaging – less handling means less chance of cross-contamination.
- The key to safe food handling is frequent hand washing, and washing and sanitizing surfaces such as counters and cutting boards.
- Post hand washing instructions in food preparation and serving areas and ensure staff follow them – hot, soapy water for at least 20 seconds before handling food, and after handling raw meat or poultry, using the bathroom, changing diapers, smoking or touching pets.
- Use plastic or wooden cutting boards. Use different cutting boards for meat and other foods.

- Wash cutting boards, knives, utensils and counter tops with hot soapy water after preparing each food, before going to the next one. Sanitize these with a mild bleach solution at least once a day.
- All fresh fruit and vegetables need to be washed before preparing or serving. Gently rub fruit and vegetables under cool running water.
- Keep raw meat away from ready to eat foods. Store raw meat on the bottom shelf of the fridge to prevent juices from dripping on other foods.
- Store raw meat in separate containers to reduce cross contamination.
- Ensure you kill harmful bacteria by cooking food until it reaches the proper temperature:
 - 71°C (160°F) for ground beef,
 - 74°C (165°F) for leftover food, and
 - 85°C (185°F) for whole poultry.
- Get country food from an experienced hunter.
- Do not serve raw (uncooked) polar bear or walrus as it may have *trichinella*. Cooking the meat well will kill the bacteria.
- Cook leftover country food that was served raw.
- Eat cooked food while it is still hot. Bacteria can grow when food is allowed to cool down slowly.
- Store leftovers in clean containers, in the refrigerator.
- When in doubt, throw it out.

28

A child under 18 months of age must be:

- (a) attended by an adult while eating; and
- (b) given only foods of low choking potential.

Regulation 28

Feeding Infants**Why**

- To ensure that young children are supervised and safe while eating

What it means

- An adult must be with infants at all snack and meal times.
- Food for children under 18 months must be small and/or soft.

How

- Make sure a staff member is with infants when they are eating.
- Choose soft foods whenever possible.
- Cut food into small bite-size pieces, approximately the size of an adult's thumb tip.
- Do not serve children popcorn, nuts, raisins or hard, round candies.
- Slice grapes in half or quarters.
- Slice hot dogs and sausage in strips. Cut the strips into bite-size pieces.
- Cut fruit into bite-size pieces. Remove pits and seeds.
- Spread peanut butter thinly. Never serve peanut butter from a spoon. Avoid chunky peanut butter.
- All bones should be removed from food.
- Children should be sitting upright at the table or high chair while eating.

29

When a child attending a child day care facility is bottle fed, an adult must hold the child and the bottle at all times during the feeding.

Regulation 29

Bottle Feeding

Why

- To ensure safe and supervised infant feeding

What it means

- An adult must hold the infant and the bottle at all times during bottle feeding.

How

- Provide a quiet and comfortable place for staff to sit calmly with a child while bottle feeding.
- At twelve to fourteen months children should be weaned off bottles and drink from a regular child-size cup.
- Never prop a bottle for an infant.
- Do not put an infant in a crib with a bottle.

30

There must be no more than:

- 3 hours between meals or snacks for children over 10 years of age; and
- 2½ hours between meals or snacks for children 10 years of age and under.

Regulation 30

Meal and Snack Schedule

Why

- To ensure age-appropriate time periods between snacks and meals

What it means

- Children over 10 years of age must have a snack or meal at least every 3 hours.
- Children 10 and under must have a snack or meal at least every 2½ hours.

How

- Include in the daily schedule times for morning and afternoon snack, and lunch, making sure the schedule meets the time requirements in the shaded box.
- Provide an after school snack for school-age children.
- Make sure children have access to water at any time during the day.

Regulation 31(1)

Post Menus a Week Ahead

This regulation has already been explained with Regulation 27, *Nutritional Standards*.

Regulation 31(2)

Post Menu Changes Before Serving the Meal

This regulation has already been explained with Regulation 27, *Nutritional Standards*.

33(1)

Children in attendance at a child day care facility must have ready access to a pressurized drinking water supply approved by the Health Officer.

33(2)

Every operator shall maintain disposable or separate drinking cups in a manner acceptable to the Health Officer.

Regulation 33(1) and (2)

Safe Drinking Water and Cups**Why**

- To ensure that children have safe and easy access to drinking water throughout the day
- To prevent the spread of germs, illness and disease

What it means

- The drinking water supply must meet the approval of the EHO.
- Children must have access to water at any time throughout the day, as needed.
- Cups must be either disposable, or the operator must have a separate cup for each child, approved by the EHO. Sanitize cups after each use.
- Annual inspections by the Regional Consultant and EHO will include reviewing procedures for drinking water. See *What to do if an inspector requires improvements*, after Regulation 2(7).

How

- If the facility is on trucked water, clean and disinfect the storage tank regularly. Ask the EHO for help.
- Store drinking cups so that children can access them, and water, independently.
- Teach children what to do with cups after drinking to prevent the spread of germs. For example, put disposable cups in the garbage, or put reusable cups in the sink for washing.
- If cups are disposable place a garbage container near the tap.
- If cups are disposable, when possible use environmentally friendly cups that are all paper. Otherwise use styrofoam or plastic cups.
- Wash reusable cups in hot, soapy water after each use.
- Instead of having a cup for each child, have plenty of clean cups. Teach children to take a clean cup from "here" and place it "there" after use.

Recommended

Some children require special attention due to food allergies, special diets, or feeding requirements.

Post information regarding food allergies in the food preparation area and the serving area.

Recommendation

Allergies, Special Diets and Feeding Arrangements

Why

- To protect children with known food allergies
- To meet the needs of children with special dietary requirements or feeding arrangements

What it means

- A food allergy is the body's negative reaction to part of a food that it feels is foreign. Allergic reactions can be mild to life-threatening.
- Common signs include: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, skin rash, hives, red and itchy skin, swelling of lips, eyes and face, trouble breathing, wheezing, coughing, shock or complete collapse.
- Ask parents if their child has any allergies. Seek education regarding the allergies and procedures for emergency measures if an allergic reaction occurs.
- Special diet requirements are foods the child needs to have or needs to avoid. For example: a child with anemia needs more iron-rich foods, like seal meat; a child with celiac disease needs to avoid gluten, which is in some grain products like wheat.
- Special feeding requirements could include the child needing extra time, assistance, supervision or special equipment when eating.

How

- Ask parents if their child has any allergies, special diets, or feeding requirements.
- Inform staff of any child with allergies and/or special diet or feeding requirements.
- Post the information about the child's allergies and/or special diet or feeding requirements in the food preparation area and serving area.
- Post a list with each child's name, photo (if possible) and allergies, special diet or feeding requirement in the food preparation area. Also, post the allergy (without the child's name or photo) in the food serving area and on the parent bulletin board.
- If a child has a life-threatening allergy, it may be simplest to eliminate that food from the facility, rather than risk exposure to that food. Even traces of some foods can be deadly for some children. If you decide to ban a food from the facility – for example, nuts – post a “no nuts” sign where it can be easily seen by parents and staff.