



## Instructions and Tips for Creating Compliant Documents: Menus for Home Child Care (O. Reg. 137/15, s. 43(4))

### Mandatory Requirements

The following menu-related requirements **must be met** in order to comply with the [Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014](#) and [O. Reg. 137/15](#):

- Where the child is present at meal time, a meal must be supplied and provided by the provider.
- Where a child receives child care for six hours or more, the provider must ensure that the total food offered to the child includes, in addition to any meals provided, two snacks.
- The home child care provider must plan menus in consultation with a parent of the child and a home child care visitor.
- All meals, snacks and beverages must meet the recommendations set out in the Health Canada documents, “Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide”, “Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide – First Nations, Inuit and Métis” or “Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants”, as amended from time to time, as the case may be.

### **Other Related Requirements**

- Where special dietary and feeding arrangements have been made between the licensee and parent, the arrangements must be carried out in accordance with the written instructions of a parent.

### Other Considerations

The following are some tips and considerations for developing a menu. These are not mandatory, but they will support the development of more comprehensive and high-quality menus for children.

### **General**

- Ensure that the food provided will meet the needs of children in the home, including children with allergies, restrictions and special dietary and feeding arrangements.
- Provide copies of the menu to parents.
- Consider requiring providers to develop and post their menus as well as a list of allergies and restrictions in cooking and serving areas.
- Note specific food choices on the menu in order to inform parents (e.g., “apples” instead of “fruit”). This is important if a child is allergic or intolerant to a specific item or ingredient and the parent will be providing an alternative.
- Adapt the menu to address the developmental needs of varying groups of children (e.g., softer foods for infants).
- When substituting a menu item:
  - Cross out the item and mark the substitution.

- Identify for which meal the change has been made (e.g., AM Snack: carrots substituted for celery).
- Identify the food group (as set out in the [Health Canada](#) documents) for each menu item (e.g., Fruit: oranges, Dairy: cheddar cheese).
- Consult the [Ontario Dietitians in Public Health – Menu Planning and Supportive Nutrition Environments in Child Care Settings document](#) for more information about how to interpret and implement Canada's Food Guide.
- Where programming includes children participating in a cooking activity, note this meal or substitution in the posted menu.
- Consider whether Ministry of Education director approval will be requested for meals and snacks brought from home (bagged lunches) in the case of kindergarten or older children.
- Where a Ministry of Education director approval has been granted for bagged lunches, providers should monitor the contents of bagged lunches and discuss with parents when there are concerns regarding the nutritional adequacy of snacks and meals. Any associated conditions that appear on the licence must be implemented (where applicable).