

Nutrition and Food Service Policy Overview

Legal Reference:

R 400.11131 Nutrition and food service.

(1) A camp shall establish and follow a written policy for its nutrition and food service program. The policy shall relate to the population served, the activities conducted, and environmental conditions and shall cover all the following subjects:

- (a) Meal patterns.
- (b) Meal hours.
- (c) Type of food service.
- (d) Handling of special diets.

Technical Assistance:

A camp must have a written policy for its nutrition and food service. Every camp has unique characteristics on how it offers its meal service, if provided. All camps must outline a nutrition and food service policy even if no food is served to campers.

- A camp that contracts with a food catering company to provide the food service program is still responsible for the establishment of a written policy for its nutrition and food service program.
- If a day camp program requires campers to bring their own food from home as sack lunches, the camp must provide a written policy for its nutrition and food service stating that no food service is being conducted and campers are responsible for their own meals. The policy must include other important information about meal hours, type of food service, and handling of special diets.
- If off-camp traveling is offered a camp must develop specific policies for the tripping food service program. This includes fieldtrips, trip and troop camps and traveling groups.

A written policy for nutrition and food service program includes the following:

- a) Meal Patterns: The meal pattern means the balanced meal as defined by [US Department of Agriculture National Dietary Guidelines](#).
- a) Meal Hours: The meal hours mean the times the regular meals and/or snacks are served. Residential camps must provide three meals during a camp day. Adequate time should be allocated so campers have time get food and eat.

- b) Type of food service: The type of food service offered means the method for campers to get food. There are two common types of food service operations within camp settings: Buffet and Family Style. Buffet means food is presented on a buffet table/counter and campers either are served as they walk along or serve themselves. Family Style food service is where food is brought to the campers who are seated, and food is passed around for each camper to serve themselves. Consideration for communal serving/beverage areas (i.e. breakfast bar, salad bar, beverage bar, dessert bar, etc.) should be included in your camps nutrition and food service policy. Camps should determine what type of food service meets their needs and document through the policy the procedures for food serving.

- c) Handling of special diets: Camps need to have procedures in place for obtaining special diet information of their campers. Staff must know ahead of time what procedures to follow and if there are children in care that have any food restrictions. The food service policy must have explicit, written procedures for dietary modifications or substitutions. The policy must include details about how the special diet requests are made, how is the food prepared, and how is the camper getting the food.

A residential camp SITE must have an Environmental Health Inspection (EHI) annually. A day camp SITE must have an EHI annually if private water or sewer systems are in use or meals prepared onsite. A camp must submit the *Environmental Health Inspection Request* yearly to their local health department to arrange inspection.

To find the health department you will send the *Environmental Health Inspection Request* to, go to www.michigan.gov/mdhhs > **Inside MDHHS** > **County Offices** > **Local Health Departments** and click on the county in which your campsite is located.

The local health department will charge a fee for the EHI. Contact the local health department to determine their fee. Supply the health department with payment attached to the *Environmental Health Inspection Request*.

Consultation:

Qualified individuals should be involved in leading the nutrition and food service program at a camp. Feeding large groups of campers involves careful planning, preparation, skills, and safety precautions. There are many training opportunities that are available for food service staff. [ServSafe](#) provides certification for food service managers and food handlers.

Many professional food vendors provide nutrition guidelines, sample menu, food services support resources. Vendors may include: Gordons, Sycso, HPI, Taher, and Chartwells.

Samples:

Sample 1

Food Service Policy RULE 131

1. Camp will provide ____ (3) meals and ____ snacks each day.
2. Meals will be served family style with occasional salad bar and buffet. Snacks will be served informally.
3. Staff members will sit at each table with children.
4. Special dietary problems will be handled by the food service supervisor under the directions from camper's parents or campers physician or _____.
5. Food service supervisor, camp health officer, camp director, or _____ is responsible for checking that diet provided meets camper needs.
6. All weekly menus will be kept on hand, at camp, for the entire season.
7. Meal Schedule:

BREAKFAST _____ AM

LUNCH _____

DINNER _____ PM

SNACK _____ AM _____ PM

JUICE BREAK _____ AM _____ PM
8. For off campus travel groups food service supervisor will meet with trip leaders to review the menu, special cooking instructions and safe food storage.