



Nutrition, Food and Beverage, Dietary Requirements Policy 2023

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Department	Children's Services
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Responsible Officer	Family & Early Childhood Services Coordinator
Authorising Officer	Director Community & Infrastructure
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National Quality Standard

2.1	Each child's health is promoted.
2.1.1	Each child's health needs are supported
2.1.3	Healthy eating is promoted, and food and drinks provided by the service are nutritious and appropriate for each child.

National Regulations

Section/Regulation	Description
Regulation 77	Health, hygiene, and safe food practices

Regulation 78	Food and beverages
Regulation 79	Service providing food and beverages
Regulation 80	Weekly menu
Regulation 90	Medical conditions
Regulation 91	Medical conditions to be provided to parents
Regulation 160	Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educators
Regulation 162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
Regulation 168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Regulation 169	Additional policies and procedures – family day care services

Statement and Purpose

As a part of our commitment to promote the highest quality care and respect childrens/families' cultural backgrounds, we support healthy food and beverage choices according to each child's needs and dietary requirements.

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to ensure their service have polices in place in relation to nutrition, food and beverages and dietary requirements. It is important to provide access to and establish good healthy eating practices from a young age.

Policy

The Nominated Supervisor, educators, catering officer, staff, volunteers, and students will:

- Ensure children have access to, and are encouraged to access, safe drinking water at all times.
- Ensure children are offered food and beverages appropriate to their nutritional and specific dietary requirements based on documented advice from families that are typically set out in the child's enrolment form. A [Dietary Requirement Form](#) or [Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan](#) is to be completed.
- Routines are flexible surrounding mealtimes, so that children who are hungry will be provided with foods.
- Ensure food is consistent with the services menu that are based on Australian Dietary Guidelines and Healthy Eating Advisory Service. – <https://heas.health.vic.gov.au>

- Families are encouraged to provide healthy food.
- Provide food that is hygienic by following the relevant policies set out in the Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy.
- Families provided with daily information about their child's food and beverage intake and related experiences.
- The weekly menu is on display in an accessible and prominent area for families to view.
- The weekly menu must accurately describe the food and beverage provided each day of the week.

In relation to promoting healthy living and good nutrition:

- Ensure mealtimes are relaxed, pleasant and timed to meet the needs of the children.
- Discuss food and nutrition with the child.
- Never use food as a form of punishment, reward or as a bribe.
- Educators will role model healthy eating habits to children during mealtimes.
- Staff receive training in nutrition, food safety and other cultures' food customs if professional development in these areas is required.

In relation to Breastfeeding, Breast Milk and Bottle Warming:

- A quiet, relaxing place with a comfortable chair will be provided for women to breastfeed or express milk. Educators will consider mother's preferences for privacy.
- Children will not be given a bottle in a cot/bed to reduce the risk of tooth decay and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS.)

In relations to educators who breastfeed at the service:

- All reasonable efforts will also be made to support educators who continue breastfeeding their child when they (return to) work at the service. For example, an educator returning from maternity leave may have a meeting with the Nominated Supervisor to discuss more flexible work arrangements and the provision of lactation breaks for the educator to express milk or breastfeed her child. Educator to child ratios will not be compromised during these breaks.

Roles and Responsibilities

Manager Community Services is responsible for ensuring the overarching policy framework of Children’s Service is robust and fit for purpose.

Family and Early Childhood Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the compliance with all Children’s Services staff with this policy and for ensuring the policy can be implemented and maintained across the Centre.

Breaches

Breaches of this policy will be managed in accordance with the Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure in the first instance (if applicable) and escalated to the Manager Community Services if no remedial option is available through the Code of Conduct.

The Manager Community Services may liaise with Council’s People and Culture team for professional assistance in the administration of any remedial actions at their discretion.

Human Rights

This policy has considered and complies with the Human Rights and Responsibilities contained in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

Gender Impact Assessment

This policy has considered and applied Council’s Gender Impact Assessment Template and satisfies the provisions established in the *Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)*.

Definitions

Term	Definition	Source
Dietary Requirements	Food and beverages provided by a service ust have regard to individual children’s dietary requirements, meaning: - Each child’s growth and development needs.	National Regulations (Regulation 79)

	- Any specific cultural, religious or health requirements.	
Food Safety	Safe practices for handling, preparing, and storing food to minimize risks to children.	National Regulations (Regulation 77)
Risk Minimization Plan	Medical conditions policy must include a risk minimization plan to be developed in consultations with families of children with a specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition	National Regulations (regulations 90)

Reference and Related Policies

Legislation

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (NSW)

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (NSW)

Policies

Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure 2023

Dealing with medical conditions in children 2023

Version Number	Date of change	Reasons for change
1.0	September 2023	Establishment of policy