

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The SDSU Children's Center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) offered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and serves meals at no separate charge to all enrolled children. The reimbursement received from the CACFP helps with our food costs, and therefore, enables us to keep our fees for care as low as possible.

Please help us comply with the requirements of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Please complete, sign, and return to the center the Meal Benefit Form found on our website or attached to this letter. All children enrolled in our center receive their meals at no separate charge, but the determination of eligibility category affects the amount of funding received by our center. This information is necessary to receive the reimbursement for the meals we have served to children in our program. If your first language is not English, you have the right to ask us for written or oral translation of these materials free of charge in your native language. A brief overview of our nutrition program follows below:

### **Food Service**

1. Breakfast, lunch and snack will be provided by the Center at no additional charge.
2. Menus are rotated on a four-week cycle and posted on our web site.
3. The lunch will be prepared and brought to the Center by the Aztec Shops the University food service provider.

### **Food Program Standards**

1. The program has two very clear objectives.
  - a. Help provide good nutritious meals
  - b. Help children develop good eating habits that will last throughout their lives.
2. The menus and meal patterns meet guidelines for healthy nutrition for all Americans established by the US Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health and Human Services
3. The menus reflect concern for each child's growth and development and our desire to offer the best nutrition possible for each child.
4. If you have a menu change request due to religious or cultural beliefs or a medical condition, please request a copy of the food menu exemption form from the Front Desk. You will be asked to meet with the Center Food Services Supervisor to discuss how the Center can work with you to meet your child's nutritional needs before any meals are provided for your child while at school.

If your household currently receives benefits under the Food Stamp Program; the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility for Kids (CalWORKs); the Kinship Guardian Assistance Payment (Kin-GAP); or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), you only need to list your current Food Stamp, CalWORKs, Kin-GAP, or FDPIR case number on the Meal Benefit Form. You must also have an adult sign and date the Meal Benefit Form.

However, if your household does not receive benefits under Food Stamp, CalWORKs, Kin-GAP, or FDPIR, please complete the Meal Benefit Form and make sure you:

- provide the names of all household members and their income by source; and
- have an adult sign, date, and provide his or her social security number, or check the box "Check here if no Social Security Number" if the adult does not have a social security number.

**For All Households:**

The USDA defines a household as a group of related or unrelated individuals (not residents of a boarding house or an institution) who are living as one economic unit (i.e., sharing living expenses). Therefore, the income reported on the Meal Benefit Form must include the gross income of all members of your household, by source. A simpler way to calculate this amount is to ask yourself, "who buys the food in our home?" That answer will help you decide whose income to include in your monthly total.

If you do not wish to disclose your family income, you can simply return the form to us with the statement, "**income too high to qualify**" written in the space to declare income. Although the amount is smaller for children whose family income is too high to qualify for subsidy, we do receive monies to support our food program from all children served each day. You are not required to complete this form.

The **income** you report must be the total gross income received last month, listed by source for each household member. If last month's income does not accurately reflect your circumstances, you may provide a projection of your monthly income. If no significant change has occurred, you may use last year's income as a basis to make this projection. Once properly approved for free or reduced-price benefits, whether through income or proof of benefits as supported by a current Food Stamp, CalWORKs, Kin-GAP, or FDPIR case number, your child(ren) will remain eligible for those benefits for 12 months.

**Foster Children:**

For households with foster children, please refer to the Instructions on *How to Complete the Meal Benefit Form* or contact us for additional information.

**Confidentiality of Information on the Meal Benefit Form:**

We will use the information on the form to decide the level of reimbursement our center is eligible to receive. We will place the Meal Benefit Form in our food program files and keep the information confidential. Only upon your request from proper authorities, will we share the information on your form with officials of other child nutrition, health, and education programs so they can use it to determine benefits for those programs.

**Nondiscrimination Statement:**

This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this agency is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington DC 20250-9410, or call 202-720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

If you have any questions or need assistance in filling out the Meal Benefit Form, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Laurie Buffington  
Food Services Supervisor  
Phone: 619-594-3584  
E-mail: laurie.buffington@sdsu.edu