

REQUIREMENTS FOR CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE

DAY CARE CENTERS

The USDA has issued instructions on nondiscrimination in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). We have always operated under the general requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. With the issuance of these civil rights instructions you have specific requirements to follow, as listed below.

Display in a prominent place the nondiscrimination poster developed by USDA.

Have the capability of providing information materials in the appropriate translation concerning the availability and nutritional benefits of the CACFP, as needed.

Make available program information to the public upon request. Upon initial visits, parents of potential beneficiaries shall be given specific program information that is pertinent to their children's receipt of benefits under the program.

Provide the nondiscrimination statement and procedure for filing a complaint in information concerning the program or program activities directed to parents of beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries.

Once a year you are required to determine the number of potential eligible children by racial/ethnic category for the geographic area served by your center(s). You need to maintain this information in your files for three years and this will be checked during a civil rights review of your program. Some suggestions on where to obtain these data would be your local school or Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Community Services, Washington State Department of Labor and Industries, the local chamber of commerce, or the city or county planning departments.

In addition, once a year you are required to collect actual data by racial/ethnic category for each child enrolled in your center(s). Visual identification may be used to determine a child's racial/ethnic category. Alternatively, the parent of a child may be asked to identify the racial/ethnic group of his/her child, provided the parent is advised that response is voluntary.

Part 6 of the enrollment/income-eligibility application includes a question as to which racial/ethnic group the enrolled child belongs. Immediately after this question on the application is a statement assuring the parents that the collection of this information is strictly for statistical reporting requirements and has no effect on their eligibility to receive the benefits of the program. When the study month is finished, summarize the racial/ethnic data from the enrollment/income-eligibility applications and place them in the file.

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, centers need to have someone available at the office level to provide reading and writing assistance to visually impaired persons coming into the office unless the person prefers assistance from a companion. Ensure that disabled persons with hearing impairment receive an equal opportunity in all USDA program activities and that staff is available to assist when the need for this degree of communication exists.

Section 15b.26(d) requires schools and institutions to serve meals to disabled children whose disability restricts their diet in such a way that they cannot fully participate in the food service program without some modification to foods or menus. **Schools and institutions shall require the disabled child, his/her parent or guardian who requests special meals to provide medical certification from a medical doctor that (1) verifies special meals are needed because of the disability and (2) prescribes the alternate foods and forms of foods needed to meet the child's special dietary needs.** For instance, if a student requests a special meal because of an allergy, the medical certification must be provided by a doctor.