

Family Day Care

Nutrition and Food Policy



Merri-bek
City Council

Section: 2 Children's Health and Safety

Policy ID Number: 2.9

Link to National Quality Standard: 2.1

Link to Education and Care Services National Legislation: As 167; r77; r78; r79; r80; r168

1 Policy Statement

All food and beverages provided by Family Day Care will be appropriate to the needs of each child and provided on a regular basis throughout the day.

The food and beverages provided will be safe, nutritious and adequate in quantity.

2 Rationale

The FDC Service is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation where protecting children and preventing and responding to child abuse is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of all staff, Educators, Educator household members, work experience/work placement students and volunteers irrespective of their involvement in child related duties.

A nutritious diet is critical to each child's healthy development and growth. During the early childhood years both physical and intellectual development is closely linked to adequate nutritional intake.

To ensure children receive food and drinks which are culturally appropriate, varied, nutritious and prepared in a safe and hygienic environment.

To work with and support families to make healthy food choices for their children.

3 Procedures

3.1 General

- The Educator will undertake Food Safety Training approved by the Coordination Unit. Evidence of this will be provided prior to registration and every three years.
- On enrolment the Educator and family will discuss who will provide snacks and meals. When the Educator provides snacks and meals this will be charged as per the Fee Schedule.
- When the Educator provides snacks and meals for children, they will ensure the menu is nutritionally balanced and children are regularly provided with a variety of fruits, vegetables, dairy produce (or alternatives) and protein. This is designed to promote healthy eating and lifestyles for children and families.
 - The menu will be displayed in a place accessible to parents and will accurately describe the food and beverages provided.
 - The Educator will, where possible, involve children in planning the menu and food preparation.
 - The Educator will accommodate specific needs for any child who has food allergies, food sensitivities or requires a specific diet, including culturally diverse meals.
 - When a child has a food allergy the Educator will manage the environment to ensure the child is not exposed to the allergen/s.
- The Educator will provide children access to meals and snacks regularly. Where families provide the meals, children will be encouraged to access this themselves and make choices about the foods they are eating.

- When families provide the meals, Educators will discuss appropriate foods to provide and assist families with information about nutrition and healthy eating habits. Fruits and vegetables will be encouraged every day.
 - Families will ensure their child's food and drink is stored in containers that are named and easily identifiable by the Educator and child.
- The Educator will make drinking water accessible to children at all times.
- The Educator will ensure there is appropriate extra food, such as fruit or vegetable snacks, available for children if they are hungry. Educators can charge for additional food provided.
- The Educator will inform the families daily of how much food and drink children have consumed while in care.
- The provision of foods that contain saturated fat, added salt and added sugar will be limited while children are attending Family Day Care. This includes limiting fruit juices and party foods, such as chips and lollies. These will be limited to special social occasions such as a birthday celebration.
- The Educator will ensure children have access to appropriate utensils for eating and drinking and will support children to develop their independence skills in relation to this. If using plastic utensils, they will be free of scratches or cuts. If using crockery dishes, they will be free of cracks or chips.
- The Educator must have safe, hygienic facilities for the preparation, storage, heating and cooking of food for children including sink, refrigerator, suitable waste disposal and hot water. There must be no evidence of vermin such as rats, mice or insects.
- The Educator will ensure that cooking appliances such as a stove or microwave are out of reach or inaccessible to children and are in good working order.

3.2 Storage of Food

- When shopping for and transporting food, the Educator will:
 - ensure high risk foods are transported in an insulated cooler and taken home and refrigerated as soon as possible; and
 - ensure food is not left in a hot car; and
 - Keep food separate from other items that could be contaminants for example household cleaning products.
- Educators will ask parents to transport high risk foods from home to the care environment in an insulated cooler.
- Upon arrival into care Educators will check children's lunch boxes and ensure any foods that need refrigeration are placed in the refrigerator immediately. The Educators will ensure they track which food belongs to each child.
- The Educator's refrigerator should be operating at a temperature of 4°C or below.
- The Educator will not store or prepare, raw and cooked food together, including cooked and uncooked meat being kept in separate refrigeration compartments.
- The Educator will defrost frozen food in the refrigerator. Once thawed foods will not be refrozen.
- Hot food will be cooled before being put in the refrigerator.

3.3 Food Preparation and Serving

- When handling food Educators must follow a high level of hygiene including:

- Wearing of disposable gloves designed for food handling; and
- Keeping all food preparation areas and kitchen utensils clean and having a regular cleaning routine for all food preparation areas; and
- Washing hands prior to commencing, in between handling any foods that could be contaminants and when finished handling food; and
- Covering any cuts, scratches or anything similar on the hands with a waterproof dressing and wearing disposable gloves over the top of the dressing; and
- It is recommended to use separate chopping boards for cooked, uncooked and Halal foods. If using one board it must be washed in hot, soapy water between foods.
- The Educator will not prepare food for children if they have an illness that can be transmitted to the food they are handling.
- When preparing food, the area should be suitable and free from contamination. Work areas and the area where children will be served food, should be cleaned prior to commencing.
- Fruits and vegetables should be washed (or peeled if required) prior to serving them to children.
- When food needs to be reheated the Educator will follow the practices outlined in their Food Safety Training.
 - If using a microwave to heat food the Educator will test heated food or drink before giving it a child to ensure it is at a safe temperature for the child to consume.
 - The temperature range between 5°C and 60°C is known as Temperature Danger Zone. Foods should be stored at either below 5°C and appropriate foods heated to above 60°C before serving.
- Each child is to wash their hands before eating or handling food.
- To prevent choking, and to encourage positive social skills, all children need to be seated whilst eating and drinking.
- The Educators will supervise children while they are eating and discourage direct sharing of food between children.
- The Educator will use tongs when serving food and when appropriate support children's independence, including serving their own foods. Food will be served with minimal handling.
 - Any food utensils dropped on the floor or handled by another child must be washed before continuing use.
- When preparing or serving food the Educators will consider risk of choking and will avoid foods that can break off into hard pieces or food that is hard and spherical.
- Educators will ensure pets are always kept away from food and food preparation areas.

3.4 Cleaning Up

- After food preparation and meal times the Educator will ensure:
 - all dishes and utensils are washed in hot soapy water and dried well or cleaned using a dishwasher; and
 - tables are wiped down; and any food / water spills are cleaned; and
 - Kitchen preparation surfaces should be cleaned with appropriate cleaning products.
- The Educator will ensure cleaning products such as dish cloths and tea towels are washed regularly and stored appropriately.

- The Educator will ensure cleaning agents are stored away from foods and out of the reach of children

3.5 Infant Nutrition

- Families who want to continue breast feeding while their child is in care will be supported to do so. Where possible, Educators will provide a private space where families can breast feed their infant. Consideration will need to be given to other children in care and the Educator's family members. This will be discussed on initial interview so that both the Educator and family are comfortable with the arrangements.
 - It is encouraged that breast milk or infant formula is the main drink until the infant is 12 months old.
- Cooled, boiled water can be provided if extra fluids are needed.
- When providing breast milk for their infant, families must:
 - Label the time and date that Expressed Breast Milk (EBM) is bottled
 - Ensure that the EBM is not more than 72 hours old.
- When providing infant formula for their infant, families must:
 - Ensure that any infant formula is not beyond the expiry date.
 - To work with and support parents to make healthy food choices for their children.
 - To ensure the inclusion of cultural, religious or health requirements.
 - Follow the manufacturer's instructions when making up the formula milk.
- Regardless of the type of milk provided the family must provide enough bottles of milk to last the day. Educators will not reheat and give leftover milk to the baby after the initial heating of the milk. It is recommended that
 - Milk is provided in smaller volumes to minimise wastage (e.g. 120ml bottles).
 - the family provide an additional bottle in case of emergency.
- Families must ensure they clearly label all bottles with the child's name and hand them to the Educator on arrival. The Educator will store the bottles at the back of the refrigerator where it is coldest until they are needed.
 - The chart below will be used to guide storage of breast milk
- Frozen breast milk will be thawed in the refrigerator or if required sooner than in either cool or warm water
- On arrival the family must inform the Educator when the last bottle was given and when the next bottle is due.
- The Educator will wash hands before preparing and feeding an infant their bottle.
- The Educator will heat bottles by standing them for a few minutes in warm water. **A microwave will never be used to warm breast milk.**
 - The Educator will test the temperature prior to feeding the baby
 - Bottles of milk will only be heated once. The Educator will never reheat or re-refrigerate bottles that have already been warmed and will throw out all leftovers if a child has not finished the bottle within 20 to 30 minutes.
- To support the development of relationships the Educator will hold an infant while feeding them the bottle. Infants will not be left lying down to drink a bottle.

- After feeding an infant the Educator will rinse bottles and teats thoroughly and send them home for the family to sterilise before using again.
- When introducing solids to infants the educator will work in partnership with parents to determine the foods, when and how much is offered and the consistency of food provided to babies. This is generally around the age of 6 months and by 12 months an infant is generally eating a wide variety of nutritious foods.

3.6 Guide to Storing Breast Milk

Breastmilk	Room Temperature	Refrigerator	Freezer
Freshly expressed into a closed container.	6–8 hrs (26°C or lower). If refrigeration is available store milk there.	No more than 72 hours. Store in back, where it is coldest.	2 weeks in freezer compartment inside refrigerator (-15°C). 3 months in freezer section of refrigerator with separate door (-18°C). 6–12 months in deep freeze (-20°C**).
Previously frozen— thawed in refrigerator but not warmed.	4 hours or less. (ie the next feeding)	Store in refrigerator 24 hours.	Do not refreeze.
Thawed outside refrigerator in warm water.	For completion of feeding.	Hold for 4 hours or until next feeding.	Do not refreeze.
Infant has begun feeding.	Only for completion of feeding, then discard.	Discard.	Discard.

***Chest or upright manual defrost deep freezer that is opened infrequently and maintains ideal temperature*

4 References

- [Education and Care Services National Law Act](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- [National Quality Standards](#)
- [Childcare Provider Handbook](#)
- [ACECQA](#)
- [Australian Breast-Feeding Association](#)
- [Eat for Health](#)
- [Do Food Safely](#)
- National Health and Medical Research Council
- Educator Agreement

Revision History

Date	Revision No.	Revision Section	Revision Description
December 2016	1.0	All	Initial Policy Release (creation date)
June 2021	2.0	All	Updated from old Policy to new format and current information.
June 2027	Next Review Date		