

Section 7.10: Food Package 4 for Children 1 through 4 Years Old

8/2026

References: 7 CFR 246.10; [Final Rule: Revisions in the WIC Food Package](#)

Policy

- Food packages must be prescribed by CPAs, in consultation with the participant or parent/caregiver.
- The food package must be appropriate to the category of eligibility and must be specifically tailored to address the nutritional needs, circumstances, and preferences of the participant.

Purpose: To provide a food package that will best meet the participant's needs and will be used by the participant.

Procedures

Issuance requirements

Food Package 4 is for Children 1 through 4 years of age who do not have a qualifying medical condition to receive Food Package 3.

- Issue the food package as indicated in the table below.
- Do not provide a food if the child cannot consume or refuses the food. Examples include:
 - Food allergy
 - Medical condition for which the food is inappropriate
 - Vegan family who will not use the food

Milk options

Participants may choose from a variety of allowed milk options when using their benefits. At the store, the participant chooses which WIC allowed milk option(s) to purchase.

Issuance

- Assess which type(s) of milk the participant plans to purchase.
- Educate on:

- How to prepare and safely store that milk if appropriate (e.g., evaporated and powdered milk)
- How to identify the preferred milk option(s) when using benefits at the store.
- How purchase of the participant's preferred milk item will affect their benefit balance. For example:
 - .5 will be deducted for each half gallon
 - .75 will be deducted for a 96 oz container of Lactaid milk
 - .25 will be deducted for each quart of goat milk or soy beverage
 - .18 will be deducted for each can of evaporated milk
 - Powdered milk - deductions:
 - .75 for 9.6 oz package (makes 3 quarts)
 - 2.0 for 25.6 oz package (makes 8 quarts)
 - 5.0 for 64 oz package (makes 20 quarts)

Substitutions

There are three milk substitution items: yogurt, cheese, and tofu.

- Milk substitutions of yogurt and cheese are included in the default food package since they are commonly requested.
 - Participants receiving these have less milk in their food package:
 - 1 quart yogurt replaces 1 quart milk
 - 1 pound cheese replaces 3 quarts milk
 - Assess whether the participant uses yogurt and cheese; would they prefer more milk rather than those milk substitutes? Adjust the food package accordingly.
- Tofu may be substituted up to the full milk allowance.
 - 1 pound tofu = 1 quart milk
 - Assess whether participants who primarily use tofu in place of milk have a consistent source of vitamin D. A daily children's multivitamin with 400 IU is recommended for all children who do not drink 1 liter (1 quart) milk per day.

Children 12-23 months

- Whole milk options are the standard issuance to 1-year-old children (12 through 23 months).
- Fat-reduced milks (2%, 1%, and nonfat) may be issued to 1-year-old children for whom overweight or obesity is a concern. The need for fat-reduced milks for 1-year-old children

must be based on an individual nutritional assessment by the CPA. Document the reason in the participant record.

Tip: Due to Information System functionality, soy beverage and goat milk are only included in the **Fat Free/Skim Milk or 1% (WIC-allowed)** category.

Use that food item for all participants who wish to purchase soy beverage or goat milk, including for 1 year old participants. Explain this to the participant.

Children 24 months and older

- Low-fat (1%) or nonfat milks and lowfat yogurt are the standard for issuance to children ≥ 24 months of age.
- Whole and reduced fat (2%) milks are authorized only for participants with health conditions that also require a medical formula. See [Section 7.9: Food Package for Infants, Women, and Children with Qualifying Medical Conditions \(Food Package 3\)](#).

Homeless package

To better meet the needs of homeless participants, discuss options that may be helpful for their situation. See [Section 7.14: Homeless Food Package](#).

Guidance

- Check the participant's Transaction History in the WIC Information System to understand what foods are not purchased.
 - Assess for challenges in identifying or purchasing WIC foods.
 - Discuss foods not purchased to provide ideas for ways they could use the foods.
- If a participant shares that they exclude a food item due to a health concern such as a possible allergy or food sensitivity, encourage them to discuss this with their health care provider if not already aware.

Milk options

Goat milk

- WIC-allowed goat milk is pasteurized and fortified with vitamin D unlike raw goat milk.
- Goat milk is generally not recommended for these situations:
 - Cow's milk allergy: cross-reactivity of proteins may increase allergic potential to goat milk. For example, research has shown that young children who are allergic to cow's milk may become allergic to goat milk as well.
 - Lactose intolerance since the lactose content is comparable to cow's milk.

Evaporated milk

- Ensure that the evaporated milk is being reconstituted correctly: 1 part water to 1 part evaporated milk.

Bean and Peanut Butter options

Discuss which option the participant intends to buy and how to identify that item at the store.

Beans

- If canned beans are preferred, use visuals to explain that 4 cans of beans equal 1 option.
- For those who are culturally accustomed to buying large bags of dry beans, explain how the small 1 pound bag provided by WIC contains the same type of beans.

Peanut Butter / Sunflower Butter

- **Allergy prevention:** current guidance supports early introduction of allergenic foods such as peanut products for healthy children. Refer to the health care provider if there are concerns.
- **Choking hazard:** peanut butter can pose a choking hazard for younger children and should be spread thinly on a firm surface such as toast or crackers. It should not be given to eat off a spoon.

See table on next page.

Children 1 – 4 years old (Food Package 4)

Food item	Default Food Package	Options
Cereal	36 oz	---
Cheese	1 lb (1 lb cheese = 3 qt milk)	OR: additional 3 qt milk if no cheese
Eggs	1 dozen	OR: 1 Peanut Butter/Beans option
Milk 12 – 23 months: Whole or 2% milk **For participants who want soy, goat or powdered milk, always use the Fat Free/Skim or 1% milk food item, including for 1 yr olds. 2 – 4 years old Fat Free or 1%	12 qt = 3 gallons 12 qt	OR: 1 lb tofu for each 1 qt milk If milk is on benefit: choose at the store: Cow's milk Lactose free milk Evaporated milk (1:2 ratio): - 16 fluid oz evap. milk / 32 oz fluid milk - 12 qt = 16 cans Soy beverage** Powdered milk** - reconstituted amount = 12 qt fluid milk Goat milk / Evaporated goat milk**
Fruits & Vegetables	\$26	Choose at the store: Fresh / Frozen / Canned
Tuna / Salmon	6 oz	Choose at the store: cans or pouches
Whole Grains	24 oz	Choose at the store: Bread Oats Gluten free bread Brown rice Pasta Wild rice Corn and Wheat Tortillas
Juice, single variety	1 (64 oz) juice	OR: additional \$3 fruits/veg if no juice If Juice is on benefit, may choose at store: 1 (11.5-12 oz) container frozen juice (makes 48 oz)
Peanut Butter/Sun Butter or Canned Beans or Dry Beans	1 Peanut Butter/Beans option	Choose option at the store: 16-18 oz jar peanut butter or 64 oz (4 cans) beans or 1 lb dry beans
Yogurt	1 qt (1 qt yogurt = 1 qt milk)	OR: additional 1 qt milk if no yogurt OR: 2 qt yogurt replacing 2 qt milk

Reference – complete listing of hyperlinks

Final Rule: Revisions in the WIC Food Package (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/fr-041824>)

Section 7.9: Food Package for Infants, Women, and Children with Qualifying Medical Conditions (Food Package 3)

(https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch7/sctn7_9.pdf)

Food Package Options for Homeless Participants

(https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch7/sctn7_14.pdf)

Minnesota Department of Health - WIC Program 625 Robert St N, PO BOX 64975, ST PAUL MN 55164-0975; 1-800-657-3942, health.wic@state.mn.us, www.health.state.mn.us. To obtain this information in a different format, call: 1-800-657-3942

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.