



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO  
PRESCHOOL SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
POLICY

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PAGE 1 of 2  
EFFECTIVE: 07-01-10  
Updated

SUBJECT:  
Meal Count

APPROVED: 10-19-10

BY: Ron Griffin, Director

**PURPOSE**

USDA Child and Adult Food program is the primary source of reimbursement for Head Start meals. Meal counts are the documentation required by the State of California in order to receive monetary reimbursement. Compliance with these procedures is mandatory.

**POLICY**

CACFP requires that meal counts are recorded during mealtime on the approved Preschool Services Department meal count form. Meal count form must contain month, date, teacher and class number.

**REFERENCE**

Head Start Performance Standards Standards 1304.23(b)(1)(i) Child Care Center Administrative Manual 321 and 323

**PROCEDURE**

Meal counts are completed by teaching staff in the classroom during meal time and are required for Finance and Food Services for reporting purposes.

**Forms** applicable to this policy are: Meal Count Sheet and Non Participation Meal Time

1. All food components must be placed on the table at the start of mealtime.
2. Teaching staff should actively encourage each child to join in eating during mealtime. Encourage but do not require or force.
3. Meal counts must be recorded during mealtimes, not before or after but while children are seated at the table.
4. For reconciliation purposes any child eating a meal in a different class than they are enrolled in must still be counted on their enrolled class meal count, not visiting class.
5. Meal counts should not exceed the number of children in attendance or on the sign-in sheet.
6. If a meal count is less than attendance because a child **did not** sit at the table during meal time, teaching staff must list the child or children on the non meal time participation form.
7. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to eat with the children. Document adult participation accurately.
8. Teaching staff present during meal time is responsible for accurately recording meal counts.
9. Re-written meal counts are not acceptable. Counts should be accurate, legible and recorded in pen or pencil.
10. Teachers will give meal counts daily to the center clerk along with sign in out sheet. Counts are to be picked up the following day from the clerk before class starts and placed back in the classroom. If clerk is absent, hold meal count until clerk returns.

11. Clerks will verify meal count and attendance together. Any discrepancies will be noted by the clerk and corrected by the Teacher.
12. Original meal counts are due in the Main Office by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month.