

# CACFP BOOT CAMP SPECIAL DIETS

June 17, 2026



**\$149\***

Join us for this full-day boot camp as we dive deep into the world of special diets in the CACFP. Learn how to confidently accommodate diverse dietary needs — from disability inclusion and religious food practices to gluten cross-contact and menu modifications. Gain the knowledge and tools you need to navigate documentation requirements, stay compliant and ensure every participant is served a safe, nutritious meal.

*Available on demand for attendees through July 1, 2026.  
Earn 6.5 hours of CEUs; Certificate(s) Provided*

## Live Sessions Include:

- » Inclusion Starts Here: Disabilities & CACFP
- » Menu Modifications Made Simple
- » Beyond Turkey Bacon: Understanding Halal
- » The Gluten You Don't See: Why Cross-Contact Matters
- » From Parent Notes to Medical Statements
- » You Ask, We Answer: Special Diets in the CACFP

Register today at [cacfp.org/special-diets](https://cacfp.org/special-diets)

\* Register by June 2 for standard registration (\$149 for members and \$199 for non-members)  
Visit our website to see more rates.

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## All times listed are Eastern

11:00 am - 11:30 am

### Inclusion Starts Here: Disabilities & CACFP

Learn how inclusion practices strengthen meal access and promote dignity for participants with disabilities across CACFP environments. Explore foundational civil rights principles, recognize common accommodation needs, and gain practical approaches that help operators remove barriers so every child or adult can fully benefit from nutritious meals and supportive services.

- Describe civil rights responsibilities related to disability inclusion within the CACFP.
- Identify reasonable modifications that enhance accessibility and equitable participation for individuals with disabilities.

*Isabel Ramos-Lebron, MS, RDN, LD, National CACFP Association*

11:45 am - 12:45 pm

### Menu Modifications Made Simple

Explore strategies to adapt menus while maintaining CACFP compliance and meeting participant needs. Learn how to make adjustments to meet participants' dietary restrictions and keep meal service running smoothly. Gain confidence in choosing modifications that support compliance while keeping daily operations manageable.

- Identify common types of menu modifications that support special diet needs while aligning with CACFP requirements.
- Apply practical techniques to adjust menu items in ways that maintain nutritional balance and program compliance.
- Evaluate participant needs and determine appropriate menu substitutions that balance inclusivity with operational feasibility.

*Melinda Nguyen, MS, RDN, LD, National CACFP Association*

1:15 pm - 2:15 pm

### Beyond Turkey Bacon: Understanding Halal

Food providers are a daily constant in a child's world. What you say about cultures and heritage through food service makes a huge statement to children. Gain a better understanding of Halal foods, its cultural significance and how to be culturally responsive without breaking your budget.

- Understand how culture plays a part in food service.
- Learn why religion matters when menu planning.
- Discover how to make kids feel welcomed and included in your food service.

*Jodi Walker, Kids At Their Best*

*Mariam Mohamed, Kids At Their Best*

## Meet Our Speakers



### Isabel Ramos-Lebron, MS, RDN, LDN

Senior Nutrition Education Specialist  
National CACFP Association

Isabel is committed to serving the CACFP and SFSP communities through nutrition education, program operations support and promoting access to nutritious foods. She has a strong background in working with low-income communities of various cultures through graduate research projects and was previously employed at a nonprofit food bank for eight years. Isabel has a Master of Science in Nutritional Sciences from Rutgers University and completed her dietetic internship through Aramark.



### Melinda Nguyen, MS, RDN, LD

Nutrition Education Specialist  
National CACFP Association

Melinda is dedicated to showing her passion for nutrition education by developing creative ways to reinforce knowledge. She began her career in Massachusetts by obtaining her Master of Science in Food and Nutrition from Framingham State University. She worked at Head Start, planning meals for toddlers before moving to Texas to work for Whole Foods Market as a Recipe Data Specialist then taking on a role with a State agency. Melinda joined NCA's education team in 2025.



### Jodi Walker

Executive Director  
Kids At Their Best

Jodi is an expert in creating impactful programs with limited resources, particularly summer meal initiatives. She is the founder of Kids At Their Best, a nonprofit that provides services like food distribution and youth employment in rural communities. Known for her leadership in rural development and her dedication to diversity, Jodi's approaches have empowered underserved populations. Her passion for building community-focused programs reflects her commitment to making a lasting difference.

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**2:30 pm - 3:30 pm**

## **The Gluten You Don't See: Why Cross-Contact Matters**

If your facility serves few clients with celiac disease (CeD) or non-celiac gluten sensitivity (NCGS), does it matter if you use the same cutting board for gluten-free (GF) and regular food? Managing gluten exposure can feel burdensome, but has significant health impacts. Explore the effects of continuous low-level gluten exposure, how to improve kitchen practices and cross-contact preventative strategies.

- Define key medical terminology related to gluten-related disorders and identify strategies to prevent gluten cross-contact.
- Describe the short- and long-term health effects of gluten exposure in individuals with Celiac Disease (CeD) and Non-Celiac Gluten Sensitivity (NCGS).
- Apply practical kitchen workflow strategies to reduce the risk of gluten cross-contact during food preparation.

*Erix Zimmerman, MS, RDN, Heart Spirit Nutrition*

**3:45 pm - 4:15 pm**

## **From Parent Notes to Medical Statements**

Gain clarity and confidence when handling special diet requests within the CACFP. Explore the distinctions between parent notes and medical statements, understand when each is required, and learn how proper documentation supports compliance and helps meet participants' dietary needs safely and accurately.

- Identify the key differences between parent notes and medical statements, and determine when each type of documentation is appropriate for CACFP special diet accommodations.
- Apply best practices to evaluate documentation and ensure compliance while supporting each participant's dietary needs.

*Isabel Ramos-Lebron, MS, RDN, LD, National CACFP Association*

**4:30 pm - 5:00 pm**

## **You Ask, We Answer: Special Diets in the CACFP**

Got questions about special diets in the CACFP? This is your chance to get real answers. This can't-miss session is where our experts tackle the most common and complex questions that surfaced throughout this Boot Camp. Bring your questions, learn from others and engage live with experts in this dynamic, interactive conversation designed to give you clarity and confidence moving forward.

- Clarify CACFP requirements and best practices related to special diets.
- Apply expert guidance to real-world scenarios by exploring common questions and solutions.

*Melinda Nguyen, MS, RDN, LD, National CACFP Association*

*Isabel Ramos-Lebron, MS, RDN, LD, National CACFP Association*

*Brittany Uribe, National CACFP Association*

## **Meet Our Speakers**



### **Mariam Mohamed**

Community Outreach Specialist  
Kids At Their Best

Mariam is an elementary educator, out-of-school-time program leader and cultural bridge-builder serving in a predominantly white school district. As the district's first Somali teacher, she has expanded representation while strengthening systems of cultural understanding and inclusive family engagement. Mariam brings both lived experience and professional expertise in supporting Muslim students and families within public education settings. Mariam is currently completing her bachelor's degree in education while continuing to serve as both an instructional leader and community connector.



### **Erix Zimmerman, MS, RDN**

Registered Dietitian Nutritionist  
Heart Spirit Nutrition

Erix passionately emphasizes the link between gastrointestinal health and whole-life wellness. With over a decade of professional dietetics experience and living gluten-free since 2006, Erix blends nutrition science with humor and care. Erix loves to bring audiences practical strategies for managing food procurement, cooking and avoiding gluten cross-contact for people living with celiac disease and non-celiac gluten sensitivity. Erix holds an MS in Nutrition from Bastyr University.



### **Brittany Uribe**

Senior Event Specialist  
National CACFP Association

Brittany plans and coordinates all webinars and virtual events for NCA, including those during the National Child Nutrition Conference. Brittany graduated from Florida State University with a BS in Family and Child Science. She began working for a CACFP sponsor in South Florida in 2013 and grew passionate about expanding CACFP training opportunities and educational resources.

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## ON DEMAND

### Navigating the 9 Major Allergens With Confidence

Understanding how to identify and manage the 9 major food allergens is essential for ensuring the safety and well-being of individuals with food allergies, as it involves recognizing allergen-containing ingredients, preventing cross-contact during food preparation, accurately reading food labels and implementing effective communication in both home and food service settings. Whether you're new to food allergies or looking to strengthen your knowledge, we'll give you the tools to serve meals safely and responsibly.

- Identify the 9 major food allergens and how they commonly appear on food labels.
- Apply regulations and best practices on managing food allergens to ensure safe and compliant meal service.
- Learn how to implement food safety in the kitchen when handling food allergens.

*Isabel Ramos-Lebron, MS, RDN, LD, National CACFP Association*

### Milk in the CACFP

Milk is a star player in the CACFP meal pattern. It's required at breakfast, lunch and supper and may even make a guest appearance at snack. This nutrient-rich beverage provides essential nutrients that support healthy growth and development in children.

- Learn which types of milk are allowed in CACFP, how much to serve, and when.
- Discover why milk is a key part of a balanced meal.
- Take away best practices for serving milk and creative ways to include it in your menus.

*Isabel Ramos-Lebron, MS, RDN, LD, National CACFP Association*

## Registration Rates & Deadlines

### Member Pricing:

**\$149 Standard Registration**

\$199 Late Registration Starting June 3, 2026

### Non-Member Pricing:

**\$199 Standard Registration**

\$249 Late Registration Starting June 3, 2026

**“I have been cooking for over 20 years professionally, yet only for a couple of years as part of a CACFP. I learned more about special diets over the last couple of days than I have in the rest of my career... Thanks for putting together such an incredible event.”**

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## Schedule At-a-Glance by Time Zone

Wednesday, June 17

11:00 am - 5:00 pm Eastern

Eastern	Central	Mountain	Pacific	Session
11:00 am - 11:30 am	10:00 am - 10:30 am	9:00 am - 9:30 am	8:00 am - 8:30 am	Inclusion Starts Here: Disabilities & CACFP
11:45 am - 12:45 pm	10:45 am - 11:45 am	9:45 am - 10:45 am	8:45 am - 9:45 am	Menu Modifications Made Simple
1:15 pm - 2:15 pm	12:15 pm - 1:15 pm	11:15 am - 12:15 pm	10:15 am - 11:15 am	Beyond Turkey Bacon: Understanding Halal
2:30 pm - 3:30 pm	1:30 pm - 2:30 pm	12:30 pm - 1:30 pm	11:30 am - 12:30 pm	The Gluten You Don't See: Why Cross-Contact Matters
3:45 pm - 4:15 pm	2:45 pm - 3:15 pm	1:45 pm - 2:15 pm	12:45 pm - 1:15 pm	From Parent Notes to Medical Statement
4:30 pm - 5:00 pm	3:30 pm - 4:00 pm	2:30 pm - 3:00 pm	1:30 pm - 2:00 pm	You Ask, We Answer: Special Diets in the CACFP

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