



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

The Maryland Department of Health Healthcare System Wellness Policy

The Wellness Policy:

The Wellness Policy is established to promote a healthy school environment that will promote and protect youth overall health and ability to learn by meeting developmental needs, supporting and promoting healthy eating, and physical activity.

This policy covers the following Maryland Department of Health Healthcare System facilities:

- 1) Spring Grove Hospital Center - Baltimore County
- 2) JLG RICA Rockville - Montgomery County
- 3) RICA Baltimore - Baltimore City

Responsibility:

The Director of MDH Healthcare System is responsible for the Wellness Policy. Each site has a designated wellness coordinator that will be responsible for implementing the policy at their site. The site wellness coordinators will meet at least two times a year to inform the agency about the implementation of the policy.

Each site will coordinate a wellness team that is representative of individuals from the facility/site and could include any of the following individuals and/or groups: administration, food service, school health (nurse/pediatrician), interested public members, teachers, teaching assistants, SNAP-Ed educators, parents, community representatives.

The site wellness teams will meet at least four times per year to discuss the policy and develop an action/implementation plan, more site-specific regulations and/or guidance as needed.

Purpose:

To maintain an evidence-based process to support the health and development of all youth being served at RICA Baltimore, RICA Rockville, and Spring Grove Hospital Center by providing for their nutritional, physical, and developmental needs.

Procedures:

Educational Program Meals:

1. Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program shall meet or exceed the standards and criteria of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) mandated by the USDA.
2. Special Dietary needs of youth will be considered when planning meals, according to the document Accommodating Children with Special Dietary Needs in the School Nutrition Programs.
3. Withholding meals as punishment is strictly prohibited.
4. Youth will be provided an opportunity for input on educational program menu items by providing opportunities for taste-testing and/or meal satisfaction surveys.
5. All sites meet the Federal requirement to provide youth with access to fresh, unflavored water throughout the school day.

Other Foods Outside School Meals:

1. No foods are sold to youth at any of the MDH Healthcare System sites.
2. Educational program parties, celebrations, meetings, and other facility-sponsored events will include the use of healthy food choices.
3. Educational Program incentives used to reinforce positive behaviors involving food will be limited.
4. Use of non-food rewards for educational program accomplishments will be promoted.

Mealtime Environment:

1. Youth are provided 15 minutes for breakfast and 30 minutes for lunch.
2. Meals will be served in a clean and pleasant setting and under appropriate supervision. Rules for safe behavior are consistently enforced.
3. Youth will have access for proper hand washing/sanitizing stations.

Physical Education and Physical Activity:

1. Each site will follow the State of Maryland's physical education standards, and any local physical education standards for all grade levels served by the site when applicable.
2. Physical activity should be encouraged throughout the day through any of the following activities:
 - a. physical activity breaks in the classroom
 - b. clubs or group activities that promote physical activity such as walking, bicycling, running, gardening, or nature walks.

Nutrition Education and Nutrition Promotion:

1. Each site will follow the State of Maryland Health Education curriculum standards, and any local health education standards for all grade levels served by the site when applicable. The standards will include nutrition education to support building healthy eating behaviors and lifelong wellness protection.
2. Nutrition and health education opportunities are also provided in the form of, but not limited to, classroom, group activities, and one-on-one counseling.
3. Nutrition education will teach media literacy with an emphasis on food and beverage marketing.
4. Each site will adopt nutrition promotion practices that may include one or more of the following activities:
 - a. Nutrition focused newsletter
 - b. Nutrition bulletin board displayed in the cafeteria will feature topics focused on health and well-being
 - c. Nutrition promotion, either through print or electronic methods, will promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, low fat dairy products, healthy food preparation methods and accurate portion sizes.
5. Only foods and beverages meeting the Maryland Nutrition Standards for all foods sold in facilities which includes Smart Snacks standards are allowed to be advertised or promoted. All sites prohibit advertising of food and beverages that do not meet these standards. The Maryland Nutrition Standards can be found here:
<https://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Documents/Nutrition/MDNutritionStandardsforAllFoodsSoldJune2018policychart.pdf>:

Other Wellness Activities

1. Wellness opportunities for staff are offered through the State of Maryland Department of Human Resources. Notifications of these events are sent to all staff via email.
2. Youth, staff, and visitors will have access to free, safe, fresh, unflavored, drinking water throughout the day.
3. Dietary staff at all sites will be provided training on USDA meal plans/reimbursable meals.

Annual Updates

1. Each site will disseminate the Wellness Policy and updates on wellness activities to the educational program community annually. This could include youth, parents, administrators, community, teachers, and other groups.

Triennial Assessment

1. A three-year assessment conducted by the local wellness policy leadership group will measure the implementation of this policy and its regulations.

2. A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the wellness policy will be documented. As a result of this assessment and evaluation the policy and regulations will be revised as needed.
3. The three-year assessment and evaluation report will be made available to the public by posting on the facility websites.

Approved Signature: 

Annie C. Olle, MPP
Director, MDH Healthcare System

Reviewed Date: 3/13/23

Revised Date; 11/20/23

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal Civil Rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Civil Rights regulations and policies, these facilities are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior Civil Rights activity.

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To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

- 1. mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary
for Civil Rights 1400
Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
- 2. fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
- 3. email:**
program.intake@usda.gov

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MSDE Nondiscrimination statement

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