

# Handle the Provider's Own Children

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Because the Food Program only reimburses the provider's own children for those providers who are Tier 1 Income Eligible, performing capacity checks can become complicated. State regulations dictate whether sponsors can ignore the provider's own children who are not participating in the Food Program, or whether these children must be counted when determining allowed capacity.

If you do operate in a state that requires providers' own children be counted when determining allowed capacity, these children must be taken into consideration when a sponsor examines meal capacity at each meal serving.

In all cases, providers' own children who are eligible for reimbursement must be actively enrolled in Minute Menu HX and recorded in KidKare or on scannable forms. However, there are several different approaches for those own children who are not participating in the Food Program. In each case, Minute Menu HX handles all aspects of capacity-related checking when a claim is processed, unless you enter claims manually (you must handle capacity checks for these).

There are four (4) distinct approaches to managing these capacity checks. Each is discussed in the headings below.

**Note:** Unless Approach 1 is mandated by your state agency, we recommend that you use Approach 3. Contact Minute Menu HX Support for help configuring Minute Menu HX to handle the approach you decide to take.

## Approach 1: Adjust Allowed Capacity

For some states/licenses, the state explicitly provides a lowered capacity limit for providers, based on the number of the provider's own children present in the home. For example, suppose the state/license maximum

capacity for a provider is six (6) children. However, provider Josie has two (2) of her own children in care. Josie's maximum capacity is lowered to four (4) as a result.

In the above example, Minute Menu HX is configured so that the provider's own child is not counted in the capacity. This means that the State always assumes that the provider's own children are present, and you do not have to worry about non-participating children at all.

This approach forces the state (and possibly you) to keep track of the number of providers' own children in each licensed home and update licensing information accordingly. This can be especially difficult if the State adjusts capacity based on the non-school-aged own children. If this is the case, you or the State must update records as the provider's own children start school.

This approach is mandated by licensing and precludes any of the other three approaches.

## Approach 2: Providers Always Record Own Children

You can require providers actively mark each of their own child in attendance at every meal. If this is the case, the provider must enroll each of their own children in Minute Menu HX (via KidKare, scannable forms, or entry at your agency). They must also mark each own child in attendance at a meal when recording meals.

When these claims are processed, the capacity information is computed accurately. The provider's own children can be enrolled as participating or non-participating. This affects what the claims processor does when these children are claimed:

- **Participating:** The error reports generated during processing indicate that the provider's own children were not reimbursed, because the provider was not Tier 1 Income Eligible.
- **Non-Participating:** The error reports generated during processing either ignore the non-participating children or warn you that the children were counted for capacity, but were not reimbursed.

Capacity is accurately analyzed, and the provider is accurately reimbursed in either situation (participating own children vs non-participating own children). However, if you use this approach, providers can simply not mark their own children in attendance at any meal (since their own children are not reimbursed anyway), and the processor will not detect an over capacity problem.

### Approach 3: Assume Own Children Attend Meals Based on Enrollment

You can configure Minute Menu HX to assume that the provider's own children are present at every meal when performing capacity checks. When this is done, school-aged own children are assumed to **not** be in the home if it is a school day and an AM Snack or Lunch is being served.

When processing a claim, the system examines all of the children on file in the Minute Menu HX database for the provider being processed and assumes that all of the provider's own children are present when computing capacity at each meal serving.

**Note:** If a provider is Tier 1 Income Eligible, they must still actively claim their own children for reimbursement. This assumption applies to capacity checks only.

If you take this approach, you must have your providers enroll each of their own children (via KidKare or scannable enrollment forms). You can note that a specific own child is not present in the home if the provider notifies you that a child will not be present. This ensures you have 100% accuracy when determining capacity.

This approach forces your providers to complete enrollment forms for their own children, which may increase costs (for scannable forms) and/or take up available child numbers. You may consider enrolling providers' own children in the second or third child group for those providers who care for a large number of children.

### Approach 4: Assume Own Children Attend Meals Based on Provider

## File

With this approach, Minute Menu HX assumes that the provider's own children are present at every meal served when performing capacity checks. Rather than examining the children currently enrolled in Minute Menu HX, the system instead examines counts of non-participating own children that are recorded in the provider's file in the Provider Information Licensing tab.

The system assumes that the number of the provider's own children recorded in the provider's file are present at every meal served and computes the capacity accordingly. When recording providers' own child counts, you must break the counts down by child age grouping (infants/school-aged children) so the processor knows how to allocate the extra capacity. The provider's own school-aged children are not included in capacity checks on school days for AM Snack and Lunch.

This approach does not allow you to note a provider's own child as **not** present in the home. You must maintain the counts of providers' own children in each provider's file, as well as update the age groupings for those counts as children become school-aged.

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