



# Issue Brief - 2008

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

## Food Program Reviews

### Overview

In 2007, the Department of Corrections (DOC) requested two external reviews of its Food Services Program in order to ensure quality of services and fiscal controls. One review looked at food services within DOC's institutions and the second review looked at fiscal processes relating to food services.

### Review of Institution Food Services

The review of institution food services was completed by a panel comprised of representatives from the Federal Bureau of Prisons, United States Agriculture, Oregon Public Health, OSU Nutrition Program, and the Oregon Department of Agriculture. Below are the panel's recommendations along with DOC's status on implementing the recommendations.

**Recommendation:** Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) personnel should do regular inspections of the food services area to ensure safety regulations are followed, such as lock out/tag out, confined space entry, etc.

- DOC is working with OSHA to have kitchen operations reviewed for safety. In the meantime, Institution Safety Managers are inspecting kitchens to ensure safety processes are in order. Institution Safety Managers have also been asked to participate in periodic food audits.

**Recommendation:** Employ a food-borne illness prevention program at all locations. In addition, regular health and hygiene inspections of staff and inmates employed in food services should be conducted.

- Currently, the majority of institutions are teaching a food handler's class to inmates. Upon completion, inmates receive a certificate but not an actual food handler's card. DOC has recommended to the Governor's Re-Entry Council to discuss ways to provide inmates with a food handler's card upon release.

**Recommendation:** Increase the clarity of dietary symbols on menus and make nutritional information available to inmates in the dining room.

- Institution Food Service Managers continue to work on issues of clarity of dietary symbols and making nutritional information available to inmates. Some institutions have added a reader board in dining rooms to post nutritional information. All institutions post menus in inmate newsletters and/or in housing units so inmates can make healthy choices. In addition, periodic food audits will review each institution's practice for displaying nutritional symbols.

**Recommendation:** A realistic program for heart-healthy eating should be available.

- DOC has acquired a nutritional software program and has entered all recipes into the program so that it can be used to plan future menus.
- Whenever it is cost-effective, DOC purchases more whole grains, low-fat items, low-sugar items, turkey, and chicken items for the menu.
- Food Services Managers offer substitutes, such as beans, for high-fat entrée items to give inmates additional low-fat choices for meals.

**Recommendation:** To increase consistency across the system, develop a menu based on the Food Guide Pyramid; develop standardized recipes and product specifications to be used in all recipes; consider a computerized food service management system; maintain regular bid process to ensure specified products required for the menu are on hand; and when using spot buys, shop for items that conform to your specifications so a nutritionally balanced menu drives the purchases.

- DOC is now utilizing military recipes that already include nutritional breakdowns so it is easier to develop menus based on the Food Guide. The software described in the previous recommendation will assist in the process.
- Specifications for food purchases are being written with nutrition in mind. DOC's Registered

Dietician is involved in writing the bid specifications. Over 50 percent of the food items DOC purchases have nutritional specifications written for them.

### **Fiscal Review of Food Service Processes**

The fiscal review of food service processes was completed by a panel comprised of representatives from the Secretary of State Audits Division, Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and Department of Justice (DOJ). Below are the panel's recommendations along with DOC's status on implementing the recommendations.

**Recommendation:** Eliminate self-imposed purchasing ceiling of \$100,000.

- DOC has updated purchasing rules to include specific rules around food purchases. DOC is working with DOJ to design a purchase template so that the DOJ review is less time-consuming for individual purchases.

**Recommendation:** Increase open competitive bidding (including renegotiation, bid periods, and notice of winning bids).

- Since the beginning of the 2008 calendar year, DOC has transitioned all food purchasing to the Oregon Procurement Information Network (ORPIN), which is the state purchasing system. Many of the issues that the review highlighted have been mitigated because ORPIN provides a mechanism to meet those requirements.

**Recommendation:** Increase documentation (including bid process and policy/procedure).

- ORPIN has enhanced the bid process because of automatic documentation with its use.
- Current food purchasing policies and procedures are being rewritten to match the rules.

**Recommendation:** Encourage staff to report concerns or suspected wrongdoing.

- The General Services Division has delivered a message to all division employees that reinforces DOC's policies on reporting instances that may need to be reviewed by the appropriate and/or independent parties. In implementing the overall recommendations from the fiscal review of food service processes, workgroups have been formed to address areas of the report. This has provided opportunities for staff to bring up issues of concern and opportunities for staff to give input on process changes.

**Recommendation:** Ensure staff are properly trained in procurement policy and procedures.

- The Food Services Administrator and Inventory Manager have successfully completed Procurement Training (BA 161) to gain a better understanding of the rules and policies that must be followed. Regular meetings with those involved in the food purchasing process have yielded a better understanding of the DOC and State of Oregon processes and procedures.

**Recommendation:** Establish adequate internal controls – accountability to DOC Designated Procurement Officer (DPO) and proper separation of duties.

- Since implementing ORPIN, DOC also changed its purchasing process. The Food Service Administrator and/or Inventory Manager are responsible for identifying the food need or opportunity, and the staff reporting directly to the DPO handles the actual purchase.

**Recommendation:** Establish inventory management, performance measures, and cost data.

- DOC is working to develop inventory management reports. A vendor concentration report has been developed and is viewed each month so that trends can be identified.

**Recommendation:** Conduct periodic independent reviews.

- DOC is targeting the end of the 2009 calendar year for a review by the DOC Internal Auditor and then another independent review in 2010. ■

**The mission of the  
Oregon Department of Corrections  
is to promote public safety by holding  
offenders accountable for their actions  
and reducing the risk of future  
criminal behavior.**



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