

Restaurant Contracts and Vouchers – Guidelines for Oregon OAA programs

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AAA nutrition providers may choose to use vouchers for meals to be eaten at a restaurant, café, or other food service establishment; or may contract with a restaurant to provide meals on-site or delivered to an existing meal site.

Restaurants or other food establishments may support menu choice (e.g. culturally specific meals), access for older adults (e.g. in rural communities), or flexibility (e.g. offering meals on weekends or at different times of day). AAAs should also be aware of potential challenges including: ensuring that restaurants operating on a business model will meet nutrition requirements, ensuring meal programs can still provide social support and connection to aging services, and considering fundraising and additional programs or staff support that is often provided by traditional meal sites that may not be available in working with other food establishments.

AAA nutrition programs that use Older Americans Act funding to contract with a restaurant, café, or other food service establishment must still comply with OAA requirements and the Oregon Nutrition Standards. The following guidelines are provided to help AAAs and nutrition programs in their work with contracted restaurants or other food service establishments.

A. Planning

- ☐ The restaurant, café, or other food service establishment must agree to provide one or more meals that meet OAA and Oregon Nutrition Standards for meals and that has been reviewed and approved by an RD.
- ☐ The restaurant or other food service establishment must be licensed and be inspected regularly by the local health jurisdiction. The restaurant, café, or other food establishment must be barrier-free and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant.
- ☐ Before entering into an agreement with a prospective food service establishment, the nutrition coordinator should conduct an on-site visit of

the restaurant and its kitchen facilities to determine that nutrition program requirements can be met, and appropriate food safety and sanitation practices are in place.

- For restaurant dining centers and voucher programs, nutrition providers should consider how the planned agreement can best encourage and support the OAA goal of reducing social isolation and increasing social interaction (e.g. having designated mealtimes, encouraging participants to attend with others, providing training for restaurant staff in how they interact with participants, etc.).

B. Written agreements

A written contract or agreement between the nutrition program and the restaurant or other food establishment should address how the following issues will be addressed:

- How meals and/or food choices will be reviewed and approved by an RD prior to being offered to participants, ensuring meals meet OAA and Oregon Nutrition standards for meals, and addressing procedures for communicating and approving menu changes and substitutions.
- Cost per meal, and how invoicing and payment will occur.

For restaurant dining centers and voucher programs:

- The number of restaurant meals per day, week or month that will be provided; and how, and how often, the restaurant or food service establishment will track, and report meals provided to the nutrition program.
- For voucher programs, how and where vouchers will be made available, how older adults qualify to receive vouchers, and any efforts to prioritize distribution to priority populations.
- How NAPIS data will be collected initially and annually; how nutrition education will be provided to participants; and how participants will have access to other aging services offered by the AAA.

- Insurance coverage, such as workers' compensation and comprehensive and general liability, for the food service establishment and the nutrition program.
- Rights of the nutrition program staff to monitor on-site, including monitoring of the food preparation and storage areas of the food service establishment.
- Policy regarding gratuities. Any tips for service staff must be included in the per meal price that the nutrition program reimburses to the food service establishment for redeemed vouchers.
- System for obtaining regular participant feedback/satisfaction, and complaint/grievance policy.
- Policy for addressing misuse of vouchers by either participants or restaurant/food service establishment.

Other expectations or training that nutrition programs may want to address in agreements:

- Roles and responsibilities regarding outreach, promotion, or registration of participants.
- How menus and/or food choices will be communicated to participants.
- Ensuring that the restaurant and program participants understand that meals may not be ordered to go, but that voucher holders may take leftovers home, and that they may purchase additional beverages and food with their own money.
- Responsibilities for on-site donations, if this is planned.
- Training/guidance for food establishment staff on basic understanding Older Americans Act and ways to communicate effectively with older adults, and/or nutrition issues such as portion control.
- Policies regarding confidentiality, mandatory report, and systems to refer participants to other aging and community services.
- System for ensuring timely communication between the AAA nutrition program and restaurant or other food establishment of concerns or challenges.