

Policy and Manual Management System (PAMMS)

304 Nutrition Service Program Guidelines and Requirements

	GEORGIA DIVISION OF AGING SERVICES HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES MANUAL		
	Chapter:	300	Effective Date:
	Section Title:	Nutrition Service Program Guidelines and Requirements	Reviewed or Updated in: MT 2019-03
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304.1 Summary Statement

This section establishes requirements for Area Agencies on Aging and their subcontractors in the administration and provision of a comprehensive program of nutrition services to older adults.

304.2 Scope

These requirements apply to all congregate and home delivered nutrition services contracted and provided through or by the Area Agency on Aging, supported by any and all non-Medicaid sources of funding.

304.3 Definitions

Nutrition Assessment

An evaluation of nutritional status at a given point in time, which may include estimation of nutritional requirements and care plan with measurable goals.

Nutrition Counseling

The provision of individualized guidance by a qualified professional on appropriate food and nutrient intakes for those with special nutrition needs, taking into consideration health, cultural, socioeconomic, functional and psychological factors. Nutrition counseling may include: advice to increase, decrease, or eliminate nutrients in the diet, to change the timing, size or composition of meals, to modify food textures, and/or to change the route of administration-from oral to feeding tube to intravenous.

Nutrition Education

The provision of information about foods and nutrients, diets, lifestyle factors, community nutrition resources and services to people to improve their nutritional status.

Nutrition Screening

The process of using characteristics known to be associated with nutrition problems to identify individuals who are nutritionally at risk.

Therapeutic Diet

A diet ordered by a physician as part of treatment for a disease or clinical condition, or to eliminate, decrease, or increase specific nutrients in the diet.

304.4 Laws and Codes

Each nutrition service program site shall be operated in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and codes that govern facility operations, specifically related to fire safety, sanitation, insurance coverage, and wage requirements.

304.5 Nutrition Programs

The congregate nutrition program promotes better physical and mental health for older adults through the provision of nutritious meals and opportunities for social contact.

The home delivered meal program promotes better health for older adults and eligible members of their households through the provision of nutritious meals; nutrition screening, education and counseling; and opportunities for social contact.

Both types of nutrition services shall be part of a system of services that promotes independent living for older adults.

304.6 Service Outcomes

At a minimum:

- To identify persons at nutritional risk and/or with food insecurity and delay the decline in health/nutrition status through nutrition screening, assessment, and referrals;
- To reduce identified nutritional risk and food insecurity among program participants through the provision of nutritious meals, education and counseling;
- To reduce isolation of program participants through socialization.

304.7 Eligibility and Priority for Services

Eligible persons are:

- Aged 60 and over, or a spouse (regardless of age) of a person aged 60 or over;
- Persons with disabilities who are residents of housing facilities occupied primarily by older adults at which congregate nutrition services are provided; or
- Volunteers, staff and guests age 60 and above (Approved conditionally upon AAA policies).

AAAs shall give priority to those:

- In greatest social and economic need,
- Show moderate to high nutrition risk status, as indicated by the NSI
- High functional impairment levels and unmet need, as documented on the DON-R instrument (Home Delivered Meals ONLY)
- And as indicated by the Food Security Survey.

Providers may offer a meal to the spouse/caregiver(s) of a homebound eligible person if the provision of the meal supports maintaining the person at home. Providers may also offer meals to the non-elderly or persons with disabilities who reside in the household of an older adult (60 years or older) and are dependent on them for care.

304.8 Requirements for Meals

Each meal shall comply with provisions in the Older Americans Act, Title III, Subpart 3, Section 339, concerning compliance with Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Meals will focus not only on the nutrition content, but also color, texture and flavor.

Variety in the meal pattern is important to meal satisfaction. Therefore, there are no requirements that any specific food be served (example: milk), or any requirements that a meal pattern be followed (example: 3oz meat, 2 ½-cup vegetables, dessert, roll).

Standardized recipes will be used to analyze and prepare meals. The food that is served will be the same as analyzed, to the fullest extent possible.

A caffeine free and sugar free beverage must be offered as part of a complete meal.

Providers will develop a plan to offer choice in meals.

Providers will be capable of serving a therapeutic diet based on a doctor's recommendation. See 304.3k for further explanation.

304.9 Menu Cycles

Providers shall follow at a minimum a twenty day (four week) menu cycle, which can be repeated during the quarter.

304.10 Nutrient Content

Nutrient content of meals is determined by the application of the Dietary Reference Intakes (DRI) guidelines and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

To allow for regional preferences, the nutrient content of meals must:

- Use the targets outlined in Appendix 304-B Georgia Nutrition Program Nutrient Targets for Meals.
- The nutrition analysis will show these targets are met over an average of one menu cycle (minimum of twenty days), within +/-10%.

304.11 Nutrient Analysis

The provider shall obtain and maintain documentation of nutrient analysis for each meal per menu cycle. If the AAA allows the use of alternative protein sources, the procurement documents must clearly state how frequently alternative protein may be used on a monthly basis and to what degree.

304.12 Meal Type

Hot, frozen, dehydrated, chilled, and shelf-stable meals shall be prepared and served in accordance with Division of Aging Services requirements. The AAA or provider will be responsible for assessing the ability of the home delivered meal recipient to store and prepare meals. Appendix 304-A contains instructions to determine appropriate meal type.

A hot meal is not required for congregate or home delivered programs. However, each individual should be assessed and given the type of meal that is determined to be the most appropriate, or that the individual requests.

304.13 Therapeutic Diets

Therapeutic diets shall be provided as required by the participant's special needs and medical condition, providing:

- The nutrition service provider obtains a physician prescription for each participant needing a therapeutic meal and maintains documentation of specific guidance on meal modification;
- The therapeutic diet is planned in accordance with the Georgia Dietetic Association Manual, is approved by a Registered Dietitian, and is submitted on a quarterly basis along with the regular menu.

304.14 Menu Approval

A qualified dietitian shall certify menus in each cycle as meeting the dietary guidelines and providing recommended dietary allowances. The AAA shall submit copies of certified menus and nutrition analyses to the Division of Aging Services' Chief Nutritionist on a quarterly basis, at least two weeks before implementation.

The AAA shall assure that the services of a registered dietitian are available for menu review and certification. This dietitian shall not be employed by the commercial food vendor that provides meals for the planning and service area, if the provider subcontracts meal preparation.

The certified menus are subject to the audit process and are to be retained for a minimum of six years, according to state record retention requirements.

304.15 Registered Dietitians

The AAA is responsible for assuring compliance with the Older Americans Act, which states that the nutrition program be administered with the advice of dietitians or individuals with comparable expertise. The AAA may employ directly the dietitian(s) or contract for consultation services.

Nutrition service providers may also employ or contract the services of a dietitian in fulfillment of this requirement.

304.16 Duties of the Dietitian

Duties of the dietitian include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Menu Planning** The development of (or oversight of the development of) regular four week cycle menus (20 day minimum) which will change quarterly with consideration of input from program participants and staff. The dietitian shall convene quarterly menu planning meetings with senior center managers, individual representatives and on-site kitchen staff or commercial food vendor staff. The dietitian shall assure that the menus conform to DAS' nutrient content requirements.
- 2. Development of Standardized Recipes and Nutritional Analysis** The dietitian shall develop, select, and/or approve standardized recipes and provide full nutritional analysis for all proposed menus.
- 3. Nutrition Screening and Intervention** The dietitian shall assist the AAA staff in implementation of the NSI-D, including assisting with developing protocols and mechanisms to provide access to Level I Screening (or higher) and assessments, or referrals to appropriate health care providers for individuals identified as being at high nutritional risk. Upon reassessment, if there is no change to the NSI score, the dietitian will have the option, based on the individual's needs, to provide additional education and/or counseling.
- 4. Nutrition Education** The dietitian shall develop and/or disseminate approved nutrition education materials to food service personnel (for use with kitchen staff) and to senior center managers (for use with congregate

and home delivered meals program participants).

5. **Nutrition Counseling** The dietitian shall provide, oversee and/or develop resources for the provision of individualized nutrition counseling for persons identified as being at high nutrition risk, including developing protocols for targeting individual groups and priorities for using available resources. The counseling may include referral to other services and assistance and follow-up. The dietitian shall coordinate service referrals with case managers, if present.
6. **Training** The dietitian shall develop and/or disseminate quarterly (or more frequently as needed) in-service training to on-site kitchen staff and senior center staff on such topics as: food sanitation and safety, portion control, special nutrition needs of older adults, and health related topics.
7. **Program Monitoring, Planning, and Evaluation** The dietitian shall oversee or assist as needed with the program monitoring and evaluation; the analysis of programmatic data; oversee or assist in the development of bid specifications; and oversee or assist in developing the Area Plan with regard to meal service and nutrition program initiatives. The dietitian will coordinate with Wellness Program staff, Care Coordinators, and other staff in the implementation and promotion of Wellness Program activities.
8. **Technical Assistance** The dietitian shall provide technical assistance in the areas of food service management and nutrition program management to AAA staff, nutrition program personnel and food service personnel. The dietitian will provide technical assistance to food vendors to offer flexibility and choices for program participants.
9. **Quality Assurance** It is the responsibility of the dietitian to assure that:
 - Meals served in the OAA program meet the dietary standards.
 - The vendor/provider has used standardized recipes.
 - The menu items used for nutrient analysis and the food products provided to participants are the same.
 - Program participants have an opportunity to provide input in the development of menus.

304.17 Meal Packing

1. Providers shall use supplies and carriers that allow for packaging and transporting hot foods separately from cold foods.
2. Providers shall use meal carriers of appropriate design, construction, and materials to transport trays or containers of potentially hazardous food, and other hot or cold foods. Carriers shall be enclosed to protect food from contamination, crushing or spillage, and be equipped with insulation and/or supplemental sources of heat and/or cooling as is necessary to maintain safe temperatures.
3. Providers shall clean and sanitize meal carriers daily or use carriers with inner liners that can be sanitized.
4. Meals packaging, condiments, and utensils must meet the following criteria:
 - Be sealed to prevent moisture loss or spillage to the outside of the container while also meeting the current standards for oxygen transfer rates;

- Be designed with compartments to separate food items for maximum visual appeal and minimize leakage between compartments; and
 - Be easy for the participant to open or use.
5. Providers must make every effort to provide assistive devices or modified utensils to persons who need them.
6. Package labeling must be legible and show:
- the packaging date,
 - list of food items,
 - storage instructions, and
 - instructions for preparation of safe thawing and reheating, or reconstituting.

304.18 Meal Service Requirements

Nutrition service providers shall use procedures that provide for the safety, sanitation, accessibility and convenience of participants, and efficiency of service, and shall include the following:

1. Using correct portion sizes (and utensils) as specified on approved menus;
2. Adherence of staff and volunteers to food sanitation requirements, as prescribed by applicable Federal, State and local rules and regulations. County health departments have the right of amendment to add requirements to State rules and regulations. The higher of the two sets of standards shall apply;
3. Taking and recording food temperatures daily to document that safe temperatures are maintained;
4. To prevent cross-contamination, kitchenware and food-contact surfaces of equipment shall be washed, rinsed and sanitized after each use and following any interruptions of operations during which contamination may have occurred;
5. Food shall be available to participants for at least 30 minutes after serving begins;
6. Providers shall make available to people with disabilities food containers and utensils appropriate for their needs;
7. After offering additional servings to participants if appropriate, program providers may donate unconsumed food products to other charitable community social service or public service organizations. Providers that make such donations shall obtain a "hold harmless" agreement from the receiving organization, that protects the provider from any liability (see [Appendix 304-C Hold Harmless Guidance](#));
8. Providers shall not arrange for or provide covered dish meals at nutrition sites or other locations, using any funds which are administered through the contract with the AAA to support the cost of such activities.

304.19 Alternative Meals

Picnic, special occasion, holiday and weekend meals must meet the nutrient targets outlined in Appendix 304-B Georgia Nutrition Program Nutrient Targets for Meals; meet temperature requirements for hot and cold foods; and must be prepared in a commercial food service or on-site kitchen.

Shelf-stable, dehydrated, chilled, and frozen meals must meet the nutrient targets outlined in Appendix 304-B Georgia Nutrition Program Nutrient Targets for Meals; and applicable temperature standards.

Package labeling must be legible and show:

- the packaging date,
- list of food items,
- storage instructions, and
- instructions for preparation of safe thawing and reheating, or reconstituting.

304.20 Food Storage and Safety

All rules and regulations governing food service stated by the Georgia Department of Public Health (511-6-1) shall apply for congregate and home delivered meal programs.

Refer to references section for web link.

304.21 Holding Time

Providers shall assure that holding times for hot foods do not exceed four (4) hours from the final stage of food preparation until the meal is served to the participants, including delivery to the homes of home delivered meal participants.

304.22 Meal Delivery

Providers shall develop and implement procedures for assuring safe meal delivery in accordance with applicable food service and safety rules and DAS requirements for holding times. Meals shall not be left in coolers or other containers outside the house or dwelling as proper temperatures may not be possible in this environment.

304.23 Nutrition Screening

Nutrition screening begins at the AAA with the administration of the Nutrition Screening Initiative DETERMINE (NSI-D) Checklist as part of the intake and screening process.

The AAA may allow congregate meal sites with no waiting lists to perform initial applicant intake and screening directly. Congregate meal providers shall complete the checklist thirty (30) days after services begin, and at a

minimum, annually thereafter, or at any time a change in the participant's condition or circumstances warrants.

The AAA and provider(s) jointly (or case management, if used) shall develop protocols to assure that applicants/recipients whose NSI-D score is 6 or greater receive or are referred for:

- a comprehensive nutrition assessment, when indicated;
- nutrition counseling, if indicated;
- their primary health care provider(s) for follow-up; and
- any other assistance or services needed

304.24 Nutrition Assessment

Area Agencies and nutrition service providers are to work collaboratively to identify or develop resources for the provision of nutrition assessments for persons at high nutrition risk and/or those with low food security. Registered Dietitians and other qualified professional (example: Dietetic Technician, Registered) may conduct nutrition assessments.

304.25 Nutrition Education

Each provider shall develop written nutrition education programming, including a calendar, documentation of subject matter, presenters, and materials to be used, in accordance with requirements below.

The RD may develop a single educational curriculum that may be used by multiple sites. The provider may develop curriculum, however the RD will review and approve all nutrition education content and materials. The RD is not required to approve nutrition education from reliable sources (USDA, Universities, etc.)

Providers shall assure that nutrition education content and materials are developed to be consistent with the nutritional needs, literacy levels, and vision and hearing capabilities, as well as the multi-cultural composition of participating older adults. Providers shall make available print materials that are sufficiently large (14 point or larger), use clear and common typefaces (such as Arial, Verdana, Georgia, or Times New Roman), and in language that is appropriate for the educational levels and cultural backgrounds of the participants.

Congregate

Each nutrition service provider shall maintain written documentation of programs presented to verify that the requirements are met.

Sessions shall be provided at least once monthly consisting of a session of not less than 15 minutes in length.

Home Delivered

Education materials will be included with the meal delivery at least once per month.

304.26 Nutrition Counseling

The AAA or provider (or case management, if used) shall develop protocols to determine those participants with special nutrition needs who would benefit from individual counseling and assure that such counseling is made available by qualified professionals.

Individual counseling may not be indicated, regardless of the level of nutritional risk if the person would not benefit from the counseling due to:

- cognitive impairments or otherwise could not participate in the development of a nutrition care plan, or
- the documented opinion of a social service or health care professional that the person would not comply with a nutrition care plan.

304.27 Service Activities

In addition to identifying, assessing and referring individuals to a nutrition program, the following service activities are meant to enhance the core services and allow individuals to remain independent in the community.

1. The provision of meals, wellness activities, and nutrition education in a group setting at a nutrition site, senior center, or multipurpose senior center, and ongoing outreach to the community;
2. Access by participants to nutrition screening and assessment, nutrition education, and counseling on an individual basis, when appropriate;
3. Access to the congregate site through transportation services;
4. Shopping assistance, and increasing access to healthy foods;
5. Evidence-based wellness programs, and;
6. Appropriate referrals to other services/resources.

304.28 Schedule of Service

The service provider shall provide home delivered meals as proscribed by contract and in accordance with the frequency requirements in the Older Americans Act Section 336 (42 U.S.C. §3030f). Individual meal service and frequency shall be based on the determined needs of each individual.

304.29 Temporary Home Delivered Meals for Registered Congregate Meal Participants

Temporary home delivered meal service may be provided to registered congregate meal site participants who are ill, incapacitated, or temporarily homebound, at the discretion of the AAA. An additional provider assessment for

home delivered eligibility is not required for this service. Funding for these temporary home delivered meals should be charged to the congregate meal program. When providing this service, only the meal cost and cost of delivery are to be included. An eligible homebound congregate meal participant may receive up to twenty (20) consecutive home delivered meals.

Receipt of more than 20 consecutive home delivered meals shall require:

- an assessment of the individual's need for continued home delivered meal service and
- their corresponding placement on the waiting list (if needed) and/or
- referral to gateway for additional resources (if appropriate).

304.30 Weather-Related Emergencies, Fires, and other Disasters

The provider agency shall make facilities, equipment, and services available to the fullest extent possible in emergencies and disasters, according to the AAA regional emergency/disaster plan.

The provider agency shall develop and implement written procedures to provide for the availability of food to participants in anticipation of and during emergencies and disasters, including contingency planning for delivery vehicle breakdowns, inclement weather, shortages in deliveries, food contamination, spoilage, etc.

Minimum implementation guidelines include:

1. Creating a functional matrix that plots out key emergency functions and responsible parties.
2. Spelling out actions in the matrix that apply to events and hazards most likely to occur in the service area (natural and human-made events like weather emergencies, chemical spills, major power outages, disease outbreaks, etc).
3. Specifying conditions for adapting the plan as needed to meet unforeseen circumstances.
4. Planning for federal disaster takeover.

The guidelines and sample plan from Meals On Wheels Association of America can be used. www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/docs/default-source/conference/2019-session-materials-handouts/tuesday/200/meals-on-wheels-america-ep-standards.pdf?sfvrsn=f82ab93b_2

304.31 Facility Access and Safety

All nutrition sites shall comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, and with any other relevant DAS standards or program requirements relating to access and safety. Facility requirements for senior centers which house congregate meal programs are found in DAS Manual 5300 Section 200, Chapter 206.

304.32 Menu Monitoring

Each nutrition service provider shall retain on file each menu with meals as served, for monitoring purposes. If providing services at multiple sites, each site must have a copy of the menus with meals as served.

304.33 Nutrition Outreach

Providers shall conduct outreach activities with emphasis on identifying potential program participants who are among those in greatest social and economic need. Providers shall refer potential participants to the Area Agency for intake and screening, when appropriate, according to the procedures developed by the AAA. Outreach strategies and contacts will be documented.

304.34 Conditions for Referral to other Services

When appropriate, service providers shall work with the AAA (or case management, if available) to refer participants to other service resources that may be able to assist with remaining independent and safe in the home, and/or to assist caregivers with maintaining their own health and well-being.

304.35 Administrative Responsibilities of Nutrition Service Providers

All providers shall comply with all provisions for nutrition services contained in the Older Americans Act, as amended.

304.36 Compliance with other Laws and Regulations

Each provider agency shall use procedures that comply with all applicable state and local fire, health, sanitation, and safety laws and regulations. All food preparation, handling and serving activities shall comply with applicable requirements as found at 290-5-14 of the Administrative Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia (website in References).

304.37 Foodborne Illness Complaints

The provider shall report to local health authorities within 24 hours of receiving complaints involving two or more persons with symptoms of foodborne illness within a similar time frame after consuming food supplied through the nutrition service program. Providers shall report any complaints regarding foodborne illness to the contracting AAA within two business days of receipt.

304.38 Management and Oversight of the Nutrition Program

The provider shall identify an individual who is responsible for the overall management of nutrition services and compliance with performance standards, requirements, and procedures. This person, and any other employee(s) responsible to food service management, shall be ServSafe certified, as required by the state.

www.servsafe.com

304.39 Staff Orientation and Training

The service provider shall assure that orientation and ongoing training for administrative and direct service staff and volunteers shall be adequate to provide safe, appropriate, and efficient services to older adults, and compliance with all applicable requirements and procedures. Providers shall document and maintain records of all content and dates of orientation and training for monitoring purposes. Providers may offer additional topics.

304.40 Health Inspections

It is the responsibility of the nutrition service provider to obtain required health inspections and certificates from the appropriate local health authorities, and post the annual certificates in each facility. Any facility that handles food in any capacity (cooking, warming, plating, etc.) must have a current health inspection.

304.41 Record Keeping and Reporting

Providers shall comply with all record keeping and reporting and retention requirements as prescribed by DAS in MAN5600, Section 3012. Documentation requirements specific to food service include, but are not limited to:

- Daily records documenting persons who receive meals;
- Perpetual and physical inventory records for all foods, if meals are prepared on site;
- Food cost records, including raw food costs for eligible NSIP meals;
- Documentation of daily temperature checks for congregate meals and bi-weekly checks for home delivered meals;
- Documentation of daily meal reports;
- Documentation of participant feedback, and the method used to obtain feedback on a routine basis.

304.42 Contributions

Providers shall allow participants the opportunity to make voluntary contributions in support of the program, in a manner that protects their confidentiality.

Refer to Manual 5600, Sections 2025, 2026, 2027, and 2028 for full guidance.

304.43 Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP)

The purpose of NSIP in part, is to reduce hunger and food insecurity, promote socialization, promote health and well-being, and delay adverse health conditions for older individuals.

NSIP funding is to be used exclusively to purchase domestically produced food.

AAAs shall use the raw food cost from the uniform cost methodology for reimbursement.

Meals eligible for NSIP funding are those that:

1. Meet the nutrition targets outlined in Appendix B (unless the meal has been modified for medical reasons, as prescribed by a physician);
2. Are served to eligible individuals; and
3. Are served by a nutrition service provider that is under the jurisdiction, control, management, and audit authority of the State Unit on Aging or the AAA.

304.44 Provider Quality Assurance and Program Evaluation

Each nutrition program provider shall develop and implement an annual plan to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of operations and services to ensure continuous improvement in service delivery.

The evaluation process shall include:

- A review of the existing program;
- Satisfaction survey results from participants, staff, and volunteers;
- Program modifications made that responded to changing needs or interests of participants, staff or volunteers; and
- Proposed program and administrative improvements

Each provider shall prepare and submit to the AAA annually (no later than September 30th) a written report that summarizes the evaluation findings, improvement goals, and implementation plan for each site.

Providers that also operate senior centers shall incorporate the evaluation of the nutrition program into the annual senior center program evaluation.

304.45 Monitoring by Service Provider

Each provider will monitor and document daily that temperatures of hot or cold food received from vendors are within acceptable ranges upon delivery to the site. Providers will monitor no less than twice per month and docu-

ment the temperature of the last meal delivered on a given delivery route to assure that holding times, safe temperatures, and quality of meals are maintained.

Providers shall select routes randomly for monitoring. Providers will maintain this documentation in accordance with DAS policy, MAN 5600, 3015 Area Agency on Aging Monitoring and Evaluation of Service Providers.

304.46 Individual's Rights and Responsibilities and Complaint Resolution

Nutrition service providers, including AAAs, if applicable, shall assure that participants, or their caregivers/representatives, receive written notice of their rights and responsibilities upon admission to the program, according to Manual 5300, 202 Program Guidelines and Requirements. For ongoing participants, the information may be provided at the next re-assessment.

304.47 AAA Responsibilities for the Nutrition Services Program

The AAA shall develop and implement any necessary additional policies and procedures for the following:

- Compliance with the Older Americans Act, with regard to the older adult nutrition program
- Program evaluation activities, including conducting periodic evaluations of assessment, reassessment and nutrition risk information for congregate and home delivered meals participants to assure that those persons in greatest need are being served and that desired outcomes are achieved
- Verification that all providers comply with NSIP funding rules; only eligible meals are funded through NSIP; and that cash will be used to purchase only food grown or commodities produced in the United States.
- The election to allow providers to provide meals to volunteers, guests, and staff

304.48 Compliance Requirements

AAAs are responsible for:

1. Assuring that all meals served meet requirements (see Requirements for Meals earlier in the document);
2. Establishing procedures for consistent AAA management of waiting lists and communications with nutrition providers regarding referrals to and openings in the program;
3. Assuring that service provider staff has made appropriate arrangements for providing meals in emergency situations or disasters, with emphasis on plans for providing services during periods of inclement weather, particularly to people residing in geographically remote areas.

304.49 Staffing for Nutrition Program Contract Management Duties

The AAA shall designate one or more staff to manage the nutrition service contracts or obtain the services of consultants to coordinate with staff for the management of nutrition service contracts. The minimum qualifications for staff or consultants shall be:

- Satisfactory completion of a DAS-approved course in food safety, food protection, or equivalent (ServSafe); or
- Licensure through the state of Georgia as a registered dietitian.

Refer to Manual 5600, 3014 Area Agency on Aging Contract Management Requirements.

304.50 Compliance Monitoring

The AAA shall monitor each nutrition service provider and individual provider site at least once annually within the first six months of the contract year, placing additional emphasis on monitoring more often those sites that continue to demonstrate substantial non-compliance for the previous year, or new provider(s)/site(s).

Monitoring forms provided from DAS are the preferred tool. If an AAA uses its own forms, all information on the DAS forms must be included.

Refer to Manual 5600, 3015 Area Agency on Aging Monitoring and Evaluation of Service Providers.

304.51 Negotiation of Contracts

Using the Uniform Cost Methodology and principles of performance-based contracting to procure congregate and home delivered meal services, AAAs shall assure that potential subcontractors establish a base meal cost. AAAs shall base reimbursement rates on actual cash costs, excluding estimates of volunteer time, and the value of contributed goods and services. The base meal cost shall be the basis for negotiation between the AAA and any respondents to requests for proposals.

Area Agencies may waive the use of the Uniform Cost Methodology by food vendors if the vendor provides a meal unit cost with similar food cost categories.

Costs of services other than the base meal rate must be accounted for in other service categories.

The AAA has the authority to renegotiate reimbursement rates during the contract period, based on documentation from the provider that identifies additional costs and the rationale for including any additional costs as necessary and reasonable to the provision of meals.

Refer to Manual 5600, 3014 Area Agency on Aging Contract Management Requirements.

304.52 Program Planning and Evaluation

On an annual basis, the AAA shall analyze individual and cost data, in addition to compliance monitoring results, to identify necessary program improvements. The AAA shall involve the provider(s) in the evaluation process and provide written feedback regarding required corrective actions or program improvement initiatives.

304.53 AAA Quality Assurance and Program Evaluation

Area Agencies shall assure that each nutrition program provider develops and implements an annual plan to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of operations and services to ensure continuous improvement in service delivery.

The evaluation process shall include:

- A review of the existing program (including retention rates);
- Satisfaction survey results from participants, staff, and volunteers;
- Program modifications made that responded to changing needs or interests of participants, staff or volunteers; and
- Proposed program and administrative improvements.

Each provider shall prepare and submit to the AAA annually (no later than September 30th) a written report that summarizes the evaluation findings, improvement goals, and implementation plan for each site.

Providers that also operate senior centers shall incorporate the evaluation of the nutrition program into the annual senior center program evaluation.

304.54 Fiscal Management

Contractors providing nutrition services shall practice sound and effective fiscal management and planning, financial and administrative record keeping and reporting. Contractors will use the Uniform Cost Methodology to analyze, evaluate and manage the costs of the program on an annual basis.

Refer to MAN 5600, Appendix G

References

www.nal.usda.gov/human-nutrition-and-food-safety, maintained by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service for information and resources on food safety.

Websites which may assist in the development of nutrition education materials include extension.uga.edu/food/

Georgia Department of Public Health Rules and Regulations Governing Food Service
dph.georgia.gov/environmental-health/food-service

ServSafe www.servsafe.com

MOWAA Disaster Planning Sample and Guide www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/docs/default-source/conference/2019-session-materials-handouts/tuesday/200/meals-on-wheels-america-ep-standards.pdf?sfvrsn=f82ab93b_2

Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020 odphp.health.gov/our-work/nutrition-physical-activity/dietary-guidelines/previous-dietary-guidelines/2015

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