# Congregate Nutrition

The congregate nutrition services program helps meet the complex nutritional needs of older persons who do not have adequate nutrition by providing sound and satisfying meals and other services such as nutrition outreach and education, in a group setting. Federal Standards require each meal served to contain at least one-third of the current Recommended Dietary Allowances as established by the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Academy of Sciences - National Research Council.

#### Ask the Expert

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## Table of Contents

[Congregate Nutrition 1](#_Toc193812280)

[Table of Contents 1](#_Toc193812281)

[Procedures 2](#_Toc193812282)

[Target Population 2](#_Toc193812283)

[Eligibility 3](#_Toc193812284)

[Nutrition Providers 3](#_Toc193812285)

[Congregate nutrition sites located in communities where there are significant numbers of minorities should make special efforts to serve these minorities. 3](#_Toc193812286)

[Service Provision 3](#_Toc193812287)

[Resources 4](#_Toc193812288)

[Related WACs and RCWs 4](#_Toc193812289)

[Revision History 4](#_Toc193812290)

## Procedures

### Target Population

A. The target population for the congregate nutrition services program is persons age 60 and over who:

1. Are unable to prepare meals for themselves because of:

a. Limited physical mobility; or

b. psychological or mental impairment; or

c. Lack of knowledge or skills to select and prepare nourishing and well balanced meals; or

d. Lack of incentive to prepare and eat a meal alone.

2. All persons served should be members of the target population.

B. To the degree feasible, persons served should meet the following vulnerability criteria:

1. Is unable to perform one or more of the activities of daily listed below without assistance due to physical, cognitive, emotional, psychological or social impairment.

a. Ambulation

b. Bathing

c. Cooking

d. Dressing or undressing

e. Eating

f. Housework

g. Laundry

h. Manage medical treatments (prescribed exercises, change of dressings, injections, etc.)

i. Manage medications (what to take, when to take, how to store properly, etc.)

j. Manage money (budgeting, check writing, etc.)

k. Personal hygiene and grooming

l. Shopping

m. Telephoning

n. Toileting

o. Transfer (getting in and out of bed/wheelchair)

p. Transportation

OR

2. Has behavioral or mental health problems that could result in premature institutionalization, or is unable to perform the activities of daily living listed in #1, or is unable to provide for his/her own health and safety primarily due to cognitive, behavioral, psychological/emotional conditions which inhibit decision-making and threaten the ability to remain independent.

AND

3. Lacks an informal support system: Has no family, friends, neighbors or others who are both willing and able to perform the service(s) needed or the informal support system needs to be temporarily or permanently supplemented.

### Eligibility

A. SCSA Eligibility requirements: Age 60 or over.

B. OAA Eligibility requirements: Age 60 or over OR spouse of person age 60 or over.

C. Individuals providing volunteer services during meal hours.

## Nutrition Providers

## Congregate nutrition sites located in communities where there are significant numbers of minorities should make special efforts to serve these minorities.

In no way may a program operated by specific groups, such as churches, social organizations, senior centers or senior housing developments, restrict participation in the program to their own membership or otherwise show discriminating preference for such membership.

## Service Provision

A. Referral to Information and Assistance/Case Management (I&A/CM). Subject to participant consent, all participants who appear to meet the vulnerability criteria listed above should be referred to the I&A component of the I&A/CM program for screening to determine the need for case management services.

B. The service provider should document or have immediate access to the following information about each participant no later than his/her fifth meal at the congregate nutrition site:

1. Name, home address, and phone number of participant.

2. Name and phone number of participant's physician and/or person to contact in case of an emergency.

3. Special diet requirements, restrictions, or nutritional problems and concerns expressed by the participant.

C. Each congregate nutrition program service provider must provide each older person with the opportunity to make a voluntary and confidential donation to the cost of the meal.

D. Each congregate nutrition site must seek to be authorized to accept food coupons (food stamps) in lieu of cash from participants who are eligible to purchase food coupons and who wish to use the coupons for congregate meals. Food coupons can be accepted by the congregate nutrition site for meals served at congregate nutrition sites in accordance with the Food Stamp Act.

E. The service provider must provide special menus, where feasible and appropriate, to meet the particular dietary needs arising from the health requirements, religious requirements, or ethnic backgrounds of eligible persons.

F. Each day's menu must meet one-third of the current Recommended Dietary Allowances.

## Resources

### Related WACs and RCWs

WAC 388-17-100(F) Nutrition Services are not Means Tested

OAA Title III C Sec. 331 Hot Meals to be Provided in Congregate Settings, Nutrition Education and Other Nutritional Services May be Included

## Revision History

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| **Date** | **Made By** | **Change(s)** | **MB #** |
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