Sample Job Description

State Unit on Aging Registered Dietitian Nutritionist

# Introduction

Section 339 of the Older Americans Act (OAA) requires state units on aging (SUAs) to employ the expertise of a dietitian in planning nutrition services or, if a dietitian is not available, an individual with education and training that is comparable to a dietitian. In addition, the OAA requires that local nutrition service providers solicit the advice of a dietitian or individual of comparable expertise. If the area agency on aging (AAA) is also the direct nutrition service provider, the AAA would need to meet this requirement. Dietitians can assist in developing practice and science-informed policies, procedures, guidance, and technical assistance.

This form is designed to assist SUAs who hire a dietitian or person of comparable expertise for the administration and planning of OAA Title III-C Senior Nutrition Program (SNP) services. Use of this form is voluntary. Areas highlighted in [yellow] require entry of state-specific information. Review and customize this sample job description to your organizational needs.

# Job Title: SUA Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN)

## Reports to: [Specify Individual]

## Position Summary

The position of RDN supports the OAA Title III-C SNP as administered by the [state and department name]. The intent of the OAA SNP is to:

* Reduce hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition.
* Promote socialization of older individuals.
* Promote the health and well-being of older people.

This position oversees programmatic aspects of the statewide nutrition program and is the foundation of the SUA’s efforts towards the OAA SNP intents. The RDN provides technical assistance to AAAs, as well as monitoring of the statewide nutrition program. In addition, the RDN acts as a liaison to other state and federal agencies, programs, and departments, as well as professional and community-based organizations on issues impacting the nutritional status of older adults.

## Requirements:

### Minimum requirements

* Current registration as an RDN with the Commission on Dietetic Registration.
  + A bachelor's degree in nutrition, dietetics, public health nutrition, or a related field.
* Licensed dietitian (as required by [state] law).
* Current food safety manager certification or ability to obtain within 90 days.
* Five years’ experience providing professional dietetic or nutrition services including:
  + Three years’ experience in a public health or community setting.
  + One year of administrative, consultative, or supervisory level experience.
* Strong technical writing and organizational skills.
* Must be knowledgeable in planning, monitoring, and evaluating programs.
* A working knowledge of state and federal nutrition assistance programs.

### Preferred requirements

* A master’s degree in nutrition, older adult nutrition, public health nutrition, or related field.
* Experience administering the OAA SNP at the provider, AAA, or state level.

## Responsibilities

### Administration

* Lead the development of statewide nutrition program policies that are compliant with the OAA and ensure program policies are current.
* Develop goals and performance measures for the statewide nutrition program.
* Develop nutrition standards for menus and accepted methodologies for programs to demonstrate compliance with the OAA SNP requirements for the Dietary Reference Intakes and the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
* Develop standards and requirements for nutrition education programs.
* Identify sources or develop nutrition education materials and disseminate to the AAAs.
* Analyze AAA annual area plans and reporting for compliance with federal and SUA nutrition policies and recommend solutions where needed.
* Participate in federal reporting reviews and coordinate with other state agency departments to ensure accuracy, develop variance rationales, and provide other federally required information.
* Draft technical reports and correspondence describing the SUA’s position on statewide nutrition program policies and issues related to older adult nutrition.
* Provide input on the development and updates to nutrition related sections of the SUA required service intake tool to ensure it meets federal requirements and prioritizes services to those in greatest social and economic need as identified in the state plan.
* Provide periodic training to AAAs and local service providers. Topics include but are not limited to:
  + Food safety and sanitation.
  + Nutrition counseling.
  + Cultural diversity and reaching diverse audiences.
  + Leveraging programs and partnerships to expand and enhance service options, service providers, coordination with home and community-based nutrition services, or referral networks to ensure all aspects of the OAA SNP intents can be addressed by statewide nutrition programs.

### Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation

* + Analyze state level information on older adult chronic disease prevalence, statewide nutrition program service trends, nutrition and healthy aging research, and state and federal health-related policies. Recommend solutions to help achieve the mission of the SUA to advance plans for future community-based nutrition and healthy aging supports.
  + Develop monitoring tools for all aspects of statewide nutrition program operations.
  + Conduct routine monitoring of AAAs, including desk reviews and on-site monitoring at nutrition program sites to verify integrity of reporting, ensure regulatory compliance, and quality assurance.
  + Conduct unannounced on-site monitoring of meal production sites periodically.
  + Evaluate program monitoring results to evaluate service quality and determine needed training and technical assistance topics.
  + Monitor monthly program reports and data to ensure accuracy of state and federally required reporting and recommend solutions where needed.

### Coordination and Outreach

* + Establish partnerships that increase food service and meal vendor options to enhance quality and cost effectiveness of the statewide nutrition program.
  + Build relationships and supportive networks that increase nutrition program providers’ ability to deliver high-quality nutrition, socialization, health, and well-being programming for the older adult population in their respective jurisdictions.
  + Develop memorandums of agreement with organizations to provide nutrition education, malnutrition screening, nutrition counseling, evidence-based health promotion programs, and supportive nutrition services which are appropriate for community-based older adults and responsive to their needs.
  + Serve as the SUA liaison with other state and federal programs, such as Medicaid waiver programs, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program, state and federally-funded home and community-based services, evidence-based health promotion programs, and other nutrition and wellness initiatives for older adults.
  + Represent the SUA in collaborating with federal, state, local, academic, public, and private organizations in the development of statewide efforts to meet the future nutrition service needs of older individuals.
  + Explore grant opportunities to expand the reach of the statewide nutrition program’s ability to promote and support good nutrition, socialization, and the health and well-being of independent living older adults. Grant opportunities may require collaborations with directors of county agencies, nonprofit organizations, and senior staff within other state agencies.
  + Represent the SUA at conferences and professional gatherings of the aging network.
  + Coordinate and supervise dietetic interns, college students, and other professionals to assist in expanding the knowledge of the nutritional health and well-being needs of older adults residing in the community.