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<Name of Agency>

Nutrition Services  
Meal Delivery and Transport  
Policies and Procedures

< Additional agency information>

<Date created/last updated>  
  
<Agency disclaimer, if applicable>

IMPORTANT: Verify temperatures in this document are compliant with your state and local food safety requirements

# Packaging

* 1. All bulk foods and home-delivered meals (HDM) shall be packed in such a manner as to ensure the maximum nutrient content, safety, and quality of the food.
     1. The driver will ensure that food meets the temperature listing (below in Section B) before accepting the meals. This is done by taking the food temperatures to verify the temperature log provided by the caterer.
  2. Congregate meals
     1. Bulk foods and supplies for delivery to senior dining sites shall be packed as follows:
        1. Hot, bulk foods transported in stainless steel pans shall be covered with parchment paper or plastic wrap (to prevent discoloration resulting from the interaction of steam and aluminum foil) and covered tightly with aluminum foil. These pans shall be placed in insulated food carriers with insulated covers that latch in place prior to transport.
        2. Cold bulk foods shall be covered with aluminum foil or plastic wrap and placed in insulated food carriers/coolers with insulated covers that latch in place.
        3. Milk, juice, and individually wrapped or prepared cold foods shall be placed in insulated food carriers/coolers.
  3. Home-delivered meals are to be individually pre-packaged by the contractor in microwave-safe, divided trays sealed with plastic. Cold items — such as milk or juice — are to be individually pre-packed by the contractor in a plastic bag for each client and contained in a cooler with cold packs.
  4. Under no circumstances should food be accepted or received from the caterer that is not packed correctly.
  5. Congregate meal sites shall receive bulk foods and serve participants on reusable tableware unless preapproved by the manager.

# Maintaining Temperature in Transit

Nutrition drivers shall promptly deliver safe, nutritious meals to congregate and home-delivered meal sites.

* 1. The temperature log will be presented to the driver at the catering vendor pick-up location. Drivers should ensure the log shows the time and temperature of food at packaging.
  2. Before accepting the food at the vendor site, the driver will ensure that the temperatures recorded for each food item are complete and meet requirements (see below). Foods that aren’t at the correct temperature will be refused and the driver will contact the <appropriate staff> for instructions.
     1. Hot HDM and hot bulk congregate site meals shall be packed at a temperature of at least 160°F.
     2. Cold foods shall be packed at a temperature of 41°F or below.
     3. Frozen foods shall be packed to allow them to remain solid and not defrost.
     4. Products that are not potentially hazardous and do not need to be held above 135°F or below 41°F are exempt.
  3. Foods consistently out of the appropriate temperature range will result in a violation of the catering vendor contract.
  4. Drivers shall ensure all bulk food and HDM pre-packaged meals are transported only using agency-approved carriers to maintain the food at the appropriate temperature.
  5. Drivers shall maintain cold food temperatures in transit by keeping meals and bags in coolers with ice and ice packs. Hot food temperatures shall be maintained in transit by handling hot holding containers appropriately (plug in where available, avoid repeated opening, avoid spills).
  6. There shall be no more than 2.5 hours between when the meal is received and when it is delivered.
  7. A delivery time log or schedule of all meal deliveries to sites and to HDM clients shall be documented daily, kept on file, and available for review.

# Congregate Dining Site Meal Delivery and Receiving

The following procedures shall be used in the delivery and receipt of bulk foods to congregate sites:

* 1. The nutrition driver shall be responsible for verifying temperature logs, inspecting bulk foods, and taking temperatures prior to accepting them from the catering vendor.
  2. There shall be no more than 2.5 hours between the time food leaves the catering vendor’s production site and reaching the congregate site.
  3. The delivery schedule shall allow site personnel sufficient time for inspection and set up after food is delivered so meal temperatures are properly maintained, and meals can be served on time.
  4. The <designated person> in charge of accepting delivery shall be given the documentation of time and temperature of the food when it left the production site. The <appropriate staff> shall be responsible for verifying receipt of all foods (including milk), the time of delivery, and the temperature of food both at receipt and just prior to serving.
  5. Both driver and <appropriate staff> temperature logs shall be kept on file for three years.
  6. Upon arrival at sites, food shall be placed immediately in hot or cold holding equipment to maintain required temperatures until serving time.
  7. If temperatures are in the “danger zone” (41°F -135°F), and it is documented that 4 hours or less have passed, the food may be heated to 165°F or above, following established food safety policy standards, and served. This corrective action must be documented, and staff should contact the <appropriate staff> when the error is discovered for further instruction.
  8. If food is in the “danger zone” (41°F -135°F) for greater than 4 hours or time is unknown, then food is disposed of, and alternative meal plans are put in place by consulting with the <appropriate staff>.
  9. <Designated site person> will notify the <appropriate staff> immediately via email of the following meal discrepancies: temperature out of range, shortage in count, expired product, or inedible (undercooked, overcooked, spoiled). The email should include a description of the meal discrepancy and photos of the meal item.
  10. Upon receiving the email, the <appropriate staff> will complete the caterer’s comment form in order to receive credit.

# Temperature-Taking Method

* 1. Congregate meals
     1. Use the following method to take temperatures of food:
        1. Use a calibrated thermometer. Stir product before taking temperatures.
        2. Insert the thermometer stem into the center or thickest part of the food.
        3. Take the temperature in several places in the container or different pieces of food, especially in irregularly shaped items.
        4. Ensure the thermometer stem sensing area is completely submerged in the food.
        5. Individual packages: Open one package to check the temperature (such as milk cartons).
        6. For meat items, do not allow the thermometer stem to touch a bone when taking the temperature because this may give an inaccurate reading.
     2. The temperature of bulk foods shall be taken and recorded upon receipt of the food and just prior to serving to ensure proper temperatures are maintained.
     3. If any temperatures fall into the danger zone (41°F-135°F), the corrective action to address the temperature variance shall be submitted to the <appropriate staff> in the weekly menu logs.
  2. Home-delivered meals (pre-plated)
     1. The temperature of home-delivered meals shall be taken and recorded upon receipt of meals and prior to the route driver receiving and delivering meals, to ensure proper temperatures are maintained. Use the pre-ordered test meal for this purpose.
     2. If any temperatures fall into the danger zone (41°F-135°F), a corrective course of action to address the temperature concerns shall be documented and submitted to the <appropriate staff> on the weekly temperature logs.
     3. Home-delivered meal routes shall be tested on the following frequency. <insert frequency of meal route testing>
     4. Procedure for taking the temperature of test meals: Insert the thermometer through the plastic covering and measure the temperature of each food in the meal. Do not remove the cover. Discard the opened milk. Return the meal and cold pack to appropriate carrier for delivery or discard if the check is at the end of a meal route.

# Deliveries

* 1. <Appropriate staff> shall inform vendors and/or those delivering food of any compliance concerns.
  2. The following procedures shall be completed when receiving food/supply deliveries:
     1. Deliveries shall be received only by authorized site personnel.
     2. Deliveries shall be accepted only after the delivery has been inspected and checked against purchase order/invoice to determine that quality and quantity are indeed what has been ordered.
     3. Only authorized personnel shall sign delivery receipts after inspecting delivery for acceptance.
  3. Do not accept any canned goods that are dented, cracked, bulging, or past use-by date.
  4. Refrigerated, potentially hazardous food shall be at a temperature of 41°F or below when received.
  5. Frozen foods must be frozen solid. Examine for signs of refreezing.
  6. When receiving hot foods, the <appropriate staff> shall verify that time and temperatures were checked and documented prior to the driver picking up food. Prior to accepting food, drivers should ensure that foods meet temperature requirements as outlined in the <agency policy manual>.
  7. Milk shall be inspected, and any cartons that show signs of damage or past date shall be rejected, and a credit shall be requested.

# Delivery Equipment

All equipment used to transport food and supplies shall comply with all food service and health requirements established by local, state, and federal boards of health.

* 1. All equipment used to transport food and supplies shall be clean and in good repair.
  2. <Appropriate staff> will rinse containers prior to returning them to the contractor. The contractor will clean and sanitize hot and cold delivery containers and equipment between each use.

# Delivery Vehicles

* 1. All agency vehicles used in the delivery of food shall comply with all local, state, and federal food service and health requirements.
  2. Private vehicles that deliver home-delivered meals shall be clean, properly maintained, and properly insured.
  3. A record of all agency vehicle purchases, maintenance, repairs, and insurance shall be kept.
  4. Any purchase of vehicles with Title III-C funds, including program income, shall be approved by the <agency>.

# Food Transportation Personnel

All food transportation personnel, including volunteers, shall meet the following criteria:

* 1. Be properly trained in all areas detailed in this policy.
  2. Possess a current valid driver’s license and have passed a background check.
  3. Have a clean, neat, and pleasant appearance.
  4. Avoid consuming alcoholic beverages or using medicine or drugs for any purpose other than those prescribed by their physician while driving or prior to the delivery of service.

# Lifting Technique/Safety

* 1. Additional training areas include proper lifting techniques:
     1. Move in so that your feet are close to the base of the object to be lifted.
     2. Face the object squarely. Bend your knees and squat over the item to be lifted. In this position, the back gets added lifting strength and power from the legs and arms.
     3. Move up close to the item because the backbone must act as a supporting column, and it takes the least strain close in.
     4. If it will not cause spillage, tilt the item on edge, with its long axis straight up so that the center of the weight is as high as possible above the ground.
     5. Still squatting, the feet should be set with legs pointed right at the load, with the back straightened. The worker may then grasp the load with both arms and slowly stand up with it, pushing up with the leg muscles. If you can’t lift slowly, you can’t lift safely.
  2. Potential hazards of the job include loading and unloading of bulk food carriers and coolers. To limit these hazards, employees should:
     1. Assess the potential hazards before the operation begins.
     2. Organize all loads to prevent minimum top shifting of material and equipment during transport. Use a strap to prevent shifting of stacked items.
     3. Stay clear of the path of travel during transfer of any load.