

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION:
CONGREGATE MEAL SITES FOR OLDER ADULTS
&
TARGETING UNDERSERVED MINORITY POPULATIONS

Issued by:
Philadelphia Corporation for Aging

I. Executive Summary

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to give local community-based organizations, social service providers, and other stakeholders in Philadelphia the opportunity to provide feedback regarding:

1. Older populations currently underserved by existing meal programs or whom experience barriers to accessing these programs and,
2. Capacity of local organizations to establish and operate new congregate meal sites to serve these populations.

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) funds congregate meal programs at senior community centers and satellite meal centers throughout the city, and provides home delivered meals for many homebound older adults. Although PCA is already the second largest distributor of meals in the city (the first is the school district of Philadelphia), we are always looking for new ways to ensure that every older adult at risk for food insecurity or malnutrition is able to access the programs they need to stay healthy.

To that end, PCA is exploring potential partnerships with organizations that have the capacity to operate congregate meal sites in the neighborhoods where these at-risk older adults reside. At risk groups may include specific ethnic or racial minority groups, those living in extreme poverty, and/or older residents residing in areas identified by PCA as underserved (zip codes 19135, 19136, 19153, or 19142).

Congregate Meal Sites

Existing Congregate Meal Sites:

Active adults aged 60 or older, or who are married to someone aged 60 or older, may enjoy a meal at any senior community center or satellite meal center funded by PCA. Meals are designed to meet recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans as well as one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowance for older adults and are either prepared and served at the meal site or prepared and delivered by a PCA-contracted meal vendor. Many congregate meal sites also provide additional supports for older residents, such as health and wellness information, referrals for supportive services, and opportunities for socialization and education among their peers.

Full requirements to operate a congregate meal program funded by PCA can be found in Addendum A of this RFI.

Expanding PCA's Congregate Meal Site Network:

PCA is exploring options for the support of new congregate meal sites that can provide meals to at-risk older adults living in underserved communities. Community partners chosen to establish new meal sites may receive funds and/or in-kind support to offset costs related to staff, facilities, meal preparation, food services licensing, and meeting the required nutritional guidelines for serving older residents in Philadelphia. The primary goals of this RFI are to 1) identify older populations currently in need of food or nutritional services, and 2) assess the interest and capacity of local organizations to operate additional satellite meal centers to serve these populations with the objective of serving approximately 50 participants per day, 2-5 days per week. Special consideration may be given for the provision of culturally competent meals.

About PCA

PCA's mission is "To improve the quality of life for older Philadelphians and those with disabilities and to assist them in achieving the greatest possible levels of health, independence and productivity." As the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for the city/county of Philadelphia, PCA coordinates a broad range of supportive services and gives special consideration given to those with the greatest social, economic, and health needs. In order to achieve its mission, PCA employs more than 400 people and maintains subcontracts with roughly 200 local organizations and service providers.

II. [RFI Response Questionnaire](#)

1. **Describe any population(s) of older adults that you can identify as underserved by nutritional/meal services.** What are the unmet needs in this community? Please include any information you may have regarding food insecurity, social isolation, risk of malnutrition, and lack of access to Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) and other key resources for the group(s) you identified.
2. **Provide the name and a brief description of your organization.** Do you currently provide meals or other supportive services for older residents and/or other local populations? If so, please describe.
3. **Do you think your organization would be interested in responding to an RFP to sub-contract a satellite meal center through PCA?** Yes/No [If no, please skip to question 4]
 - a. **If so, do you think you would you plan to work collaboratively with another community partner?** Please include a brief description of any potential partner(s) and how you would collaborate to run a meal site.
 - b. **Do you have access to facilities that can be used for serving congregate meals?** If so, please describe. Items listed in this section may include, but are not limited to, location of the site relative to that of the population served, accessibility of overall meal site premises, description/capacity of dining area, restroom facilities available, etc.
 - c. **Do you have access to operational kitchen facilities?** If so, please provide a short description.
 - d. **How would you staff a potential congregate meal site (e.g. food preparation, custodial staff, etc.)?** Would you use current staff, or would you need to hire additional staff? Does your organization use, or would it consider using volunteers?
4. **Are there any potential challenges you can identify that might prohibit local organizations from operating a meal site?** If so, please describe. If relevant, you may also suggest strategies that might be used by interested organizations to overcome the specified barriers of operating a meal program without sacrificing quality of care.
5. **Additional questions or comments.** Please list any relevant information not included in previous responses. In addition to the questions above, PCA is interested in stakeholder feedback regarding PCA's overall strategy to expand the number of congregate meal sites.

Submit responses here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/797P8JR>

III. Timeline

Comment Period June 1- July 16, 2021

Community Q&A Zoom session on June 4, 2021 10:30am [Register Here](#)

Comment Deadline: July 16, 2021

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging
Request for Information: Nutrition Services Expansion
Addendum A: Meal Site Requirements

Organizations interested in potentially becoming a provider of meals as part of PCA's Congregate Meal Program should consider the following legal requirements for engaging as a food service provider prior to the start of operations. These requirements include, but are not limited to, the following documentation and records:

- City of Philadelphia Occupancy Permit
- Current Food Safety Inspection Report from the City of Philadelphia Office of Food Protection
- Active Food Preparation and Serving License from the City of Philadelphia
- At least 1 person on site at all operating hours with the City of Philadelphia Food Safety Personnel Certificate
 - This certificate requires the successful completion of a ServSafe Manager Food Safety course
- Ability to maintain required records for food safety, sanitation and reconciliation

All sites will need to have the following for the administration of the meal program:

- Accessible dining facilities for at least 50 people
- Bathroom facilities
- Staffing
 - Manager or supervisor to ensure program quality and compliance
 - Designated staff member with City of Philadelphia Food Safety Personnel Certificate onsite at all hours of operation as required by the City of Philadelphia
 - Staff or volunteer trained on First Aid, CPR, Heimlich Maneuver, and emergency procedures
 - Staff and volunteers should include the following components with formal job descriptions:
 - Kitchen aid
 - Janitorial services
 - Ability to accommodate meal service style (sit down service vs kitchen service) and type of meals served (see options below)

The PCA Congregate Meal Program can be operated under two main models, which include different requirements and may meet different needs.

Option 1: Meal site uses PCA Meal Provider

In this model, the meal site would receive meals from PCA's contracted meal provider. PCA's congregate meal program provides three different types of meals, depending on meal site's capacity:

- Individual frozen meal or alternate cold entrée (sandwich or salad) with complements
- Hot bulk meal or alternate cold entrée (sandwich or salad) with complements

- Kosher hot bulk meal or alternate cold entrée (sandwich or salad) with complements
Complements consist of items such as milk, fruit, soup, bread, condiments, etc., to provide a complete meal. The meal provider delivers meals to sites up to five days per week, depending on the type of meal being served. The meal provider's Registered Dietitian develops the menu according to PDA nutritional requirements and submits it to PCA for approval. Meal sites can provide feedback and have input on the menu in conjunction with the other contracted meal sites, but the menu cannot be customized for each meal site. The meal provider will also offer the following: food service supplies (e.g, paper products, serving utensils, etc.), quarterly nutrition education with a Registered Dietitian at the meal site, individually boxed lunches for approved off-site trips, 9 holiday meals, and 7 additional special occasion meals which can be customized for each site.

Meal Site Facility Needs:

- Kitchen facilities required to meet City food safety standards such as handwashing sink, 3-compartment sink, sufficient freezer and refrigeration capacity for meals and associated components, sufficient dry storage space for shelf stable foods and paper supplies.
 - For sites serving hot bulk meals: proper holding equipment such as a steam table
 - For sites serving individually frozen meals: oven or other mechanism for heating meals

Option 2: Meal Site prepares food onsite or contracts with own meal vendor

In this model, the meal site elects to become what is referred to as an 'onsite' program by either sourcing, preparing and serving meals at the meal site, or contracting with a meal vendor to deliver meals to be served onsite. Meal options can be served in various ways to meet the meal site's needs, such as hot meals in a buffet style, a cold meal, or culturally-sensitive meals. In addition to the staffing needs outlined earlier, these meal sites will also need trained staff or volunteers for food preparation and service.

Menu Development and Submission Needs:

- Contracting and or partnering with a Registered Dietitian to develop a menu and complete nutrition analysis to meet PCA and Pennsylvania Department of Aging's nutrition requirements. The menu must be a 4-week cycle menu for periods of 6 months (January to June and July to December). PCA's Nutrition Manager has final approval of all submitted menus.
- Ensuring that the approved menu is served each day of meal service. Menu substitutions must be submitted to PCA's Nutrition Manager.
- If a different vendor is being used, PCA must be provided with all documentation to ensure it is meeting the City of Philadelphia's food safety requirements.

Meal Site Facility Needs:

- The kitchen facility must contain the necessary equipment to meet City of Philadelphia's food safety standards such as handwashing sink, 3-compartment sink, sufficient freezer

and refrigeration capacity for meals and associated components, sufficient dry storage space for shelf stable foods and paper supplies.

- The kitchen facility must also contain the needed equipment for the safe storage, preparation, and service of meals.

Nutrition Education Needs:

- Nutrition education must be offered at the meal site on a quarterly basis and overseen by a Registered Dietitian.
- This nutrition education should be group-based and appropriate for attendees.