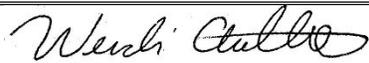


NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
Division of Long Term Supports and Services
Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services (BEAS)

105 Pleasant St.
Concord, NH 03301

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE BEAS GENERAL MEMORANDUM (GM)	
DATE:	March 16, 2020
TO:	Deborah Scheetz, Director, Division of Long Term Supports and Services; All BEAS Staff; Jayne Jackson, Donna Walker, Shawn Martin, All BEAS Social Service Providers; State Commission on Aging members;
FROM:	Wendi Aultman, Bureau Chief, Elderly and Adult Services
SIGNATURE:	
SUBJECT:	BEAS COVID-19 Emergency Guidance for Title III and Title XX Nutrition Services
GM NUMBER:	20-03 GM
EFFECTIVE DATE:	March 16, 2020
REGULATORY GUIDANCE:	This memo is a communication tool circulated for informational purposes only. The goal is to provide information and guidance to the individuals to whom it is addressed. The contents of this memo and the information conveyed are subject to change. This communication is not intended to take the place of or alter written law, regulations or rule.

MEMORANDUM SUMMARY
Provide statewide guidance to Older Americans Act Title III and Social Service Block Grant Nutrition Providers relative to COVID-19 Emergency preparation, response, and continuity of service delivery for home delivered meals and congregate meal services.

Following is guidance from BEAS regarding the provision of nutrition services during the COVID-19 Emergency. BEAS recommends particular attention to this guidance and attachments since it contains information from our federal partners. Please continue to stay informed with the frequent updates about this evolving outbreak at the NH.GOV webpage: <https://www.nh.gov/index.htm>. You may get current situation updates and technical guidance on the CDC's website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> and <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>.

The Bureau extends its sincere gratitude to those who are working thoughtfully and with collaborative leadership during this unprecedented emergency to ensure the health and safety of the people we mutually support while also supporting their own loved ones. It is important that all staff and volunteers continue to use preventative measures when delivering meals such as cleaning their hands, including before entering and when the home.

Contracted Service Providers for Title III and Title XX nutrition programs will make the determination to temporarily close a congregate meal site in their planning and service area due to COVID-19. Congregate meal providers planning to close will have a contingency plan for how essential nutrition services will be provided; how referrals to other community resources will be established; how outreach efforts to isolated participants will be conducted and how the meal providers will communicate information about the closure and service options to participants.

During the COVID-19 emergency, the Department is offering flexibility as to how meals providers can meet nutritional needs of its members. The options include:

- Offering meals as a take-out meal that participants can pick up.
- Packaging and delivering meals to participants' homes.
- Offering shelf-stable, frozen and grab-and-go meals.
- Enrolling participant in the OPTIONS Program for in-home meal service.

Participants are to be offered an alternative means to receive a meal and be provided information about contacting the local Meals Provider if they need additional assistance or services

The attached **AOA-Nutrition FAQs-Final 3.12.20** document attached provides significant direction. The information contained within this memo addresses remaining questions noted by providers below and is based upon information that is currently available. Further updates will be made as new information/details are determined and/or made available.

For responses 1, 4, and 8 please refer to the attached **AOA-Nutrition FAQs-Final 3.12.20** document, for the corresponding question and answer. Responses 1, 4 and 8, address the portion of the FAQs questions requiring a state response (versus ACL) as follows:

1. BEAS is granting authority to nutrition service agencies to make determinations of timing to distribute emergency meals and requests that BEAS be notified of emergency meal determinations and your agencies delivery/distribution plan.
4. BEAS will monitor the need for transferring funding between other allowable sources.
8. If need arises, BEAS will be in communication with providers.

Questions asked by NH Providers (not addressed in the ACL Nutrition FAQs):

1. **Record of provision of service:** It is an acceptable practice to designate a staff member to sign in participants receiving transportation and/or congregate meals services in an effort to decrease cross contamination from contact with a shared pen, pencil, paper, and clipboard. BEAS requires maintenance of a record of services provided including participant name, date and type of service provided. A signature from the participant is not required.
2. **Submission of estimated vs. actual units in the case of administrative/billing site closure:** BEAS will be discussing this with our finance team and will follow up with providers within the next week. In the event this happens BEAS will address a strategy for your agency.
3. **What happens to lost revenue if an agency/site is closed secondary to COVID-19?** This is answered in part in the Nutrition FAQs sheet. This question is being reviewed by BEAS.

4. **Allowance for an extension of requests for unit transfers related specifically to interruptions in service/changes in needs due to COVID19:** This question is being reviewed by BEAS.
5. **Measures to minimize spread of COVID-19:** Please refer to NH.GOV and CDC guidance above
6. **Response to potential COVID-19 exposure:** For information/protocols regarding individual site closure due to exposure please contact the Food Protection Bureau and if you are a self-inspection agency/town please contact your local inspection officer. Please notify BEAS as well so we can assist if needed.
7. **Now that the NH governor has declared a state of emergency, does anything change?** With the Friday, March 13, 2020 Emergency Declaration, **FEMA** could become involved in requests for reimbursement for expenses (this is not definite, but is a possibility). It is important that nutrition providers are aware that **FEMA REQUIRES TRACKING** of meals in order to approve reimbursement. For example: For meals designated for COVID-19, tracking of the expense and service of these designated meals is key and should be kept in mind as you strategize your emergency plans (including alternative means of tracking meal expense and service should your current billing mechanism or staff be temporarily unavailable).

Additional Resources



ACL's COVID-19 webpage: <https://acl.gov/COVID-19>

SAMHSA

ACL wanted to make you aware of SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline. It has significant telehealth capability and provides 24/7 crisis counseling and support for people experiencing emotional distress related to disasters. Counselors have been trained in assisting anxious callers and have the capability to handle social isolation and distancing concerns. This multilingual, confidential crisis support service is available to all US and territory residents at 1-800-985-5990; TEXT: "TalkWithUs" to 66746. In addition, attached you will find a tip sheet: Tips during an Infectious Disease Outbreak.