



# Virginia Department of Corrections

## Facility Services and Work

### Food Service Manual Chapter 3

#### *Menu Planning*

#### **Authority:**

Directive 501, *Food Services*

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**Signatory:**

Mark E. Engelke  
Director of Food Services

*Signature Copy on File*

3/23/2023

Signature

Date

## REVIEW

The Director of Food Services will ensure that each Chapter of the Food Service Manual is reviewed annually and revised as necessary.

*The content owner reviewed this operating procedure in March 2024 and determined that no changes are needed.  
The content owner reviewed this operating procedure in March 2025 and determined that no changes are needed.*

## COMPLIANCE

The Food Service Manual is issued with the intent to pull together information from a variety of sources such as directives, operating procedures, regulations, and other mandatory requirements and applies to all Food Service activities in facilities operated by the Department of Corrections (DOC). Contract Food Service vendors must follow all provisions of the Food Service Manual within the specifications of their contract. This manual will not change requirements contained in any approved directive or operating procedure, but does contain specific operational details not included in other documents. Practices and procedures must comply with applicable State and Federal laws and regulations, American Correctional Association (ACA) standards, and DOC directives and operating procedures.

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## DEFINITIONS

**Food Production Worksheet** – A document with each day's menu that provides direction in preparing each meal and provides space to record the number of meals served, time, and temperature of each food served.

**Health Authority** – The Health Administrator or agency responsible for the provision of health care services at a facility or system of institutions, the responsible Physician may be the Health Authority.

**Health Record** – A file that contains information relative to the inmate's or CCAP probationer's/parolee's medical, dental, and mental health condition, and treatment. The health record is maintained at the inmate's or CCAP probationer's/parolee's facility of assignment and follows the inmate or CCAP probationer/parolee throughout the term of incarceration or period of supervision.

**Medical Practitioner** – A Physician, Nurse Practitioner, or Physician's Assistant.

**Registered Dietitian (RD)** – A food and nutrition expert who has completed a minimum of a bachelor's degree at a US regionally accredited university or college; completed an Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics-accredited supervised practice program; passed a national examination administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR); and maintains current registration with the CDR.

## PURPOSE

This Chapter of the Food Service Manual provides for menus that ensure that inmates and Community Corrections Alternative Program (CCAP) probationers/parolees in Department of Corrections (DOC) facilities are served meals that are nutritionally adequate, food costs are maintained within established budgets, and food supply requirements can be anticipated. Provision is made for the availability and management of nutritionally adequate therapeutic diets for inmates whose medical condition necessitates alteration from a regular facility diet.

## PROCEDURE

### I. Menus and Substitutions

- A. Meals will be served in accordance with the master menus and the *Therapeutic Diet Handbook – Food Service*, Attachment 1. (5-ACI-5C-04)
  1. A Registered Dietitian (RD) will ensure that the menus meet the nationally recommended allowances for basic nutrition and will review the master menus annually. (4-ACRS-4A-01; 2-CO-4C-01)
  2. The master menu and facility modified menu will be posted in a designated area at each facility.
    - a. The master menu as written and signed by the Director of Nutrition Services and the facility modified menu will be posted at all facilities.
    - b. The facility modified menu will illustrate any changes made to the master menu and will be signed by the facility Food Service Director/Manager prior to posting.
    - c. Inmates may be provided copies of the posted master menu upon request and upon payment of applicable photocopying charges.
  3. Facility Food Service Directors/Managers will conduct *Menu Evaluation* FSM\_F15, at least quarterly to verify adherence to the established basic daily servings as outlined in the master menu.
- B. All facilities will follow the appropriate master menu and adhere to the portions indicated on the menu. The planning and preparation of all meals will take into consideration food flavor, texture, temperature, appearance, and palatability. (5-ACI-5C-05; 2-CO-4C-01)
- C. To maintain the nutritional integrity of the menu, substitutions must be nutritionally equal to or superior to the item which is being substituted. Substitutions of menu items are allowed only when certain foods are unavailable, there is equipment failure, there is a lockdown, or to take advantage of the availability of seasonal farm products, special purchases, and/or donated commodities. These substitutions will be made on the *Food Production Worksheet* and approved by the Food Operations Director/Manager. The *Food Production Worksheets* with drop-down boxes will be utilized to assist with proper substitution of menu items. Substitutions not listed in the drop-down boxes may also be used and written in under “other”. RDs may request Food Production Worksheets for review if ongoing issues with substitutions are identified during dietitian reviews.
  1. During lockdowns, if water is available in the cell, it may be substituted for the menu beverage at lunch and dinner meals.
  2. All facilities will serve coffee on lockdown as indicated on all official DOC menus.
- D. Lunch and dinner menus of the same day may be rotated if necessary. Menus will not be rotated from one day to another. However, temporary adjustments on the menus may be made to accommodate special meals on holidays, picnics, cookouts, etc.
- E. The number of meals prepared will be based on the history of inmate meal consumption. Meal consumption history is to be tracked on the Attachment 2, *History Sheet - Sample*, for all meals.
- F. Portion control will be used in meal planning, preparation, and service to prevent excessive plate waste and leftovers. Portions must be served in the quantities indicated on the master menus and will be enforced for both staff and inmates.

- G. Leftovers must be noted by portion on the *Food Production Worksheet* and used appropriately.
- H. Substitutions made for food allergies will be documented on the allergy page of the *Food Production Worksheet*.
  - 1. Food service staff will document the planned menu item and the substitution for that item.
  - 2. Food service staff may use the non-standard diet page of the *Diet Order Tracking\_F37* to document a food allergy substitution. If using this form, it must be attached to the *Food Production Worksheet* in place of the allergy page.
- I. All food and food supplies, except for Agribusiness, will be ordered through eVA and will require the Director of Food Services or designee approval.

## II. Master Menus

- A. The purpose of master menus is to ensure that nutritionally adequate menus are made available as approved by the Director of Nutrition Services.
- B. The master menus will control food for all inmates; no unauthorized meals will be prepared.
- C. Adjustments in serving times are allowed to accommodate special circumstances such as holidays.
- D. Any deviation from the master menus will only be in accordance with authorized substitutions. The Food Operations Director/Manager or designee must list and initial the approved substitutions on the *Food Production Worksheet* prior to meal preparation.
- E. The Facility Unit Head's designee will attest that each meal served coincides with the *Food Production Worksheet*. Such designee will not be a staff member of food service and must note any deviations and report them to the Facility Unit Head.
- F. An entrée and alternative entrée will be provided daily as indicated on master menus. For inmates with a documented food allergy to the alternative, a second alternative will be provided as outlined in Appendix 5 of Attachment 1, *Therapeutic Diet Handbook - Food Service*.
- G. On initial placement in a Restorative Housing Unit, the inmate (if not on Common Fare or the Sealed Religious Diet) will designate if they want to receive regular or alternate entrée food trays.
  - 1. The Restorative Housing Unit Supervisor must allow the inmate the opportunity to change their choice of tray type every 90 days that they remain in a Restorative Housing Unit.
  - 2. Any inmate approved for a religious diet will be provided Common Fare or Sealed Religious Diet meals, as appropriate, while in a Restorative Housing Unit, if such meals are available at that facility.

## III. Religious Diets

- A. Inmates following specific religious diets may require reassignment to a facility, which provides such diets.
- B. A new religious diet cannot be initiated at a facility without permission of the Deputy Director for Institutions.
- C. Food Service Manual Chapter 4, *Religious Diets and Special Menus*, provides information on the religious diets available in institutions to accommodate inmates whose religious beliefs require adherence to religious dietary laws and on special religious observance meals for inmates and CCAP probationers/parolees.

## IV. Therapeutic Diets (5-ACI-5C-06; 4-ACRS-4A-02; 2-CO-4C-01)

- A. The Director of Nutrition Services will develop guidelines under which all facility therapeutic diets must be prepared and served. These guidelines will be the *Therapeutic Diet Handbook – Food Service*, Attachment 1 and the *Therapeutic Diet Handbook – Health Services*, Attachment 2, which will be

available in all facility medical departments and food service areas.

#### B. Diet Orders

1. Therapeutic diets will only be prescribed by a Medical Practitioner or Dentist as appropriate. Orders for therapeutic diets must include the inmate's name and DOC number, name of the Medical Practitioner or Dentist as appropriate, issuance date, type of diet, the duration of the prescription, and any special instructions. No therapeutic diet order will exceed one year.
2. The Health Authority or designee must transcribe the therapeutic diet order from the inmate's health record onto a *Diet Order* FSM\_F10 and the *Diet Order* must be signed by the ordering Medical Practitioner or Dentist as appropriate.
3. The *Diet Order* FSM\_F10 lists the standard therapeutic diets routinely available from the food service department. Once signed, the standard therapeutic diet order will be sent to the facility's food service department.
4. The following standard therapeutic diets may be ordered:
  - a. Clear Liquid
  - b. Full Liquid
  - c. IDDSI Level 4 (Pureed)
  - d. IDDSI Level 7 (Easy to Chew)
  - e. Dialysis Diet – at facilities with dialysis services only
  - f. Diabetic Diet (Consistent Carbohydrate)
  - g. Celiac Diet
  - h. Safety Diet
5. Non-standard therapeutic diets may be written in under "Other" on the *Diet Order*. Non-standard therapeutic diet orders will be sent to the facility's food service department and the DOC RD distribution email, [DOC-Dietitians@vadoc.virginia.gov](mailto:DOC-Dietitians@vadoc.virginia.gov). All therapeutic diet orders must be reviewed and renewed at least annually.
6. Therapeutic diet orders are processed and maintained on an electronic system. If an electronic system is not available, food service staff must print a copy of the therapeutic diet order form and maintain in a binder.
7. Diet order renewal
  - a. Food service staff will utilize the *Diet Order Tracking*\_F37 to manage therapeutic diet order renewals.
  - b. By the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month, food service staff will send a list of therapeutic diet renewals needed for the next month to the facility Health Authority.
  - c. The Medical Practitioner will reorder the therapeutic diet if indicated. If indicated, the Health Authority will send the new *Diet Order* to food service staff.
  - d. If not indicated, the Health Authority will notify food service staff that the therapeutic diet has been discontinued and will not be renewed.

#### C. Preparation

1. Therapeutic diet preparation and service is the responsibility of the facility's food service department.
2. All therapeutic diets will be prepared in accordance with Attachment 1, *Therapeutic Diet Handbook – Food Service*, based on recognized standards.

#### D. Education and Training

1. The Regional RD and Regional Food Service Director will train facility Food Service Directors, Managers, and other food service staff regarding the importance of proper preparation and service of therapeutic diets.



2. When initiating a new therapeutic diet, the prescriber will have the responsibility of ensuring the inmate is educated on the clinical indication for the diet, duration, any special instructions, and recommended food restrictions, including commissary items for self-management. Education may include written material with emphasis on foods to avoid, foods that are of benefit, and weight management, when appropriate.
    - a. The inmate will sign a *Diet Education Acknowledgement* FSM\_F12 as documentation of receiving diet education.
    - b. The prescription and the education will be documented in the inmate's health record.
  3. A RD consult will be generated if a Medical Provider needs assistance with determining a non-standard therapeutic diet or to provide medical nutrition therapy/nutrition education to inmates on any therapeutic diet.
    - a. RD consultation will be requested using the *Nutrition Consultation Request* FSM\_F36 and sent to the DOC RD distribution email, [DOC-Dietitians@vadoc.virginia.gov](mailto:DOC-Dietitians@vadoc.virginia.gov).
    - b. RD consults will be conducted virtually or in person. Virtual consults may be conducted by phone, video conference, or telehealth.
  4. All inmates ordered a non-standard therapeutic diet will be assessed by the Regional RD and recommendations sent to the ordering Medical Practitioner or Dentist as appropriate. A non-standard therapeutic diet is one that is not listed on the *Diet Order* FSM\_F10, referenced in the *Therapeutic Diet Handbooks* (Attachments 1&2), is a food allergy diet, or a combination of therapeutic diets.
  5. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Nutrition Care Manual (NCM) evidence-based nutrition education materials will be used by health services staff for consistency across all correctional facilities.
  6. Disease specific nutrition education posters will be displayed in the dining hall, medical, and inmate living areas.
- E. When inmates on therapeutic diets are transferred, the inmate's health record, which contains the diet prescription, must be sent to the new facility.

#### V. Restricted Feeding Diet Loaf

- A. The Facility Unit Head or Administrative Duty Officer, only, may authorize use of the restricted feeding diet loaf; see Operating Procedure 420.2, *Use of Restraints and Management of Inmate Behavior*.
- B. The restricted feeding diet loaf must be prepared under staff supervision only and exactly in accordance with the diet loaf recipe.
- C. Inmate placed on restricted feeding procedures will be provided a bag meal twice each twenty-four hours.
  1. Each bag meal must contain only one diet loaf prepared without any deviation from the recipe.
  2. Diabetic inmates must be provided a bag meal consisting of one-half diet loaf three times per day.

#### VI. Hunger Strike Tray

- A. Replace milk with one serving of dairy
- B. Replace juice with one serving of fruit
- C. Water will be offered with meals
- D. See Operating Procedure 730.5, *MHWS: Behavior Management* for guidance

#### VII. Transportation Bag Meals

- A. Must contain:
  1. Two peanut butter/jelly sandwiches



2. Six carrot or celery sticks or half a cup of chopped vegetables
3. One piece of fruit
4. Water

The Regional RD will visit each facility three times a year with observations documented on a *Dietitian's Report on Food Service*, Attachment 5. The Regional RD will visit the infirmaries on a monthly basis.

## REFERENCES

Food Service Manual Chapter 4, *Religious Diets and Special Menus*

Operating Procedure 420.2, *Use of Restraints and Management of Inmate Behavior*

Operating Procedure 730.5, *MHWS: Behavior Management*

## ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1, *Therapeutic Diet Handbook - Food Service*

Attachment 2, *Therapeutic Diet Handbook - Health Services*

Attachment 3, *History Sheet – Sample*

Attachment 4A, *Diet Education Handout #1 NCM Plate Method for Diabetes*

Attachment 4B, *Diet Education Handout #2 NCM Healthful Eating*

Attachment 4C, *Diet Education Handout #3 NCM Chronic Kidney Disease*

Attachment 5, *Dietitian's Report on Food Service*

## FORM CITATIONS

*Diet Order* FSM\_F10

*Diet Education Acknowledgement* FSM\_F12

*Menu Evaluation* FSM\_F15

*Nutrition Consultation Request* FSM\_F36

*Diet Order Tracking* FSM\_F37