



2022

**TITLE III-C CONGREGATE AND HOME DELIVERED MEALS
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
AND
PROPOSAL HANDBOOK**

RESPONSE DEADLINE: The completed proposal must be submitted by **4:30 p.m., on Wednesday, September 22, 2021**, at which time the ability to submit via MNRAAA's grant platform will be closed. Late responses are not accepted.

DIRECT QUESTIONS TO:

Rhonda Hiller Fjeldberg, LSW, Grant and Contract Manager
rfjeldberg@mnraaa.org

Responses to questions will be posted on the applicant portal in MNRAAA's grant platform.

Mission Statement

The Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging provides advocacy, information, resources and assistance so that older adults can maintain the lifestyle of their choice..

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	General Information.....	3-5
	A. Request for Proposals.....	3-4
	B. Conditions.....	5
II.	Scope of Work.....	6-9
	A. Service Description.....	6
	B. Service Activities.....	6-8
	C. Participant Registration & Meal Counts.....	8-9
II.	Required Proposal Content.....	9
IV.	Rules for Submittal.....	10
V.	Procurement Schedule.....	11
VI.	Proposal Review Evaluation and Selection Process.....	11-13

APPENDICIES

Appendix A: General Contracting Requirements

Appendix B: Title III-C Minimum Nutrition Standards/Definitions

IMPORTANT NOTES:

(1) All MNRAAA documents and forms related to the 2022 Title III Funding Cycle can be accessed in MNRAAA's grant platform.

(2) All references to other documents, i.e. Older Americans Act, Office of Budget and Management circulars, Minnesota Board on Aging's Area Agency on Aging Operations Manual, are contingent upon their compliance with the most recent amendments to the Older Americans Act of 1965 and any federal or state laws or circulars that supersede those referenced.

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Request for Proposals

The Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging® (MNRAAA) is seeking a provider(s) of senior nutrition services in the following geographic regions of its service area:

- 1) Northwest - including Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine Counties; and
- 2) Northeast, Southwest & Southeast – including Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Le Sueur, Lincoln, Lyon, Martin, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Sibley, Waseca, and Watonwan Counties.

The senior nutrition program provides meals to frail, older adults at the greatest risk of losing their independence. This program provides nutritionally balanced meals, both congregate and home delivered preparation and delivery.

The federal Older Americans Act [OLDER AMERICANS ACT OF 1965 \[Public Law 89-73\] \[As Amended Through P.L. 116-131, Enacted March 25, 2020\]](#), Sec. 306 (a)(4)(A), requires Title III nutrition services to be targeted to older individuals with greatest economic need, older individuals with greatest social need, and older individuals at risk for institutional placement. Priority is to be given to low-income individuals who are members of diverse populations, have limited English proficiency, reside in rural areas, and older individuals who are at risk for institutional placement. The Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA), the state unit on aging in Minnesota, implements the Older Americans Act through funding allocations to the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and the development of statewide policy for senior nutrition services provided through the AAAs.

In 2008, MBA and its Senior Nutrition Task Force developed a vision for the Senior Nutrition Program: **Older Minnesotans will maintain their independence through access to healthful foods.**

The Task Force identified the following as priority activity areas to achieve this vision.

- 1) Maximize resources in a time of change,
- 2) Build relationships between all stakeholder groups, and
- 3) Foster a sustainable program that will be viable in the long-term and meet the needs of older Minnesotans.

In order to implement these priority activities and reach the vision for older Minnesotans, the MBA has identified the following criteria for targeting senior nutrition services.

Congregate Meals: individuals age 60+ who are at moderate to high nutrition risk¹.

Priority will be given to individuals with incomes at or below poverty level² and who meet at least one of the following criteria: (a) member of diverse population³, (b) limited English proficiency, (c) lives in rural⁴ area, (d) at risk for institutional placement.

Home Delivered Meals: individuals age 60+ who are at high nutrition risk and have 2 or more limitations in Activities of Daily Living (ADLs)⁵.

Priority will be given to individuals with incomes at or below poverty level² and who meet at least one of the following criteria: (a) member of diverse population³, (b) limited English proficiency, (c) lives in rural⁴ area, (d) at risk for institutional placement.

MNRAAA is seeking proposals to provide meals to these target populations in a manner that is flexible and responsive to consumer needs and preferences, and also cost-effective. MNRAAA is interested in proposals that include innovations in meal types, service delivery models and consumer input. MNRAAA is not seeking proposals to serve a high volume of meals to the general population of 60+ older adults.

Completed proposals must be submitted by **4:30 p.m. CT on Wednesday, September 22, 2021** at which time the ability to submit via MNRAAA's grant platform will be closed. Late responses are not accepted.

The contract period is January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022. MNRAAA has the option to renew annually for up to four additional years. Renewal is contingent upon acceptable performance, the continuing availability of Older Americans Act Title III-C, state nutrition and federal Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP) funds, and mutual agreement on contract terms between MNRAAA and the proposer. After a maximum of five years, the procurement process must be completed again.

Provisions from the Request for Proposal (RFP) will be incorporated into all contracts for nutrition services that result from this competitive procurement process. Each contract will contain service delivery, administrative, and financial terms and conditions, and provisions which, when taken together, define the services that the Contractor will provide. Each accepted proposal will become a binding part of the resulting contract. MNRAAA will monitor Contractors to ensure compliance with the proposal.

-
1. Moderate nutrition risk: an individual who scores 3-5 on the DETERMINE Your Nutritional Risk checklist published by the Nutrition Screening Initiative. High nutrition risk: an individual who scores 6 or higher.
 2. <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>
 3. Diverse populations include: African American or Black, Alaskan Native, American Indian, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic/Latino elders (NAPIS State Program Report, AoA).
 4. Rural: any area that is not defined as urban. Urban areas comprise (1) urbanized areas (a central place and its adjacent densely settled territories with a combined minimum population of 50,000) and (2) an incorporated place or a census designated place with 20,000 or more inhabitants (NAPIS Reporting Requirements, OMB Approval Number 0985-0008).
 5. Activities of Daily Living (ADL) include: eating, drinking, dressing, personal hygiene, taking medication, walking, and transferring.

B. Conditions

1. This RFP is a solicitation for offers and is not to be construed as an offer, a guarantee or promise that the services or goods referred to herein will be purchased by MNRAAA. MNRAAA retains full discretion to abandon the RFP at any time, for any reason, without liability to proposers for any damages including, but not limited to, proposal preparation costs.
2. MNRAAA reserves the right to make a determination of capability without further discussion of the proposal submitted. Therefore, the proposal must reflect what the proposer is capable of providing. Modification of the proposal will be accepted only if requested by MNRAAA.
3. Proposers must supply all required information, or the proposal may be rejected.
4. The proposal shall indicate any limitations to the proposer's ability to provide services as specified in the RFP.
5. MNRAAA reserves the right to reject or negotiate the proposed costs (where applicable) if MNRAAA determines the proposal does not represent a reasonable price.
6. MNRAAA reserves the right to introduce additional terms or conditions at the time a final contract is negotiated. Any additional terms or conditions would be limited to having the effect of clarifying the RFP language and/or correcting defects (such as omissions of statements or requirements) that may not have been incorporated into the RFP and that are discovered subsequent to its issue.
7. The contract award will be made to the proposer whose proposal will be the most advantageous to MNRAAA, the twenty-seven-county service area and the persons proposed to be served. MNRAAA reserves the right, at any time and at its sole discretion and without penalty, to reject any and all proposals and to issue no contract(s) as a result of this RFP.
8. Responses to this RFP should be the proposer's best offer and should be based upon the assumption that the resulting contract will not include MNRAAA furnished operating supplies, personnel, equipment, facilities, or delivery costs. Proposers should assume that the cost of providing all these items is to be included in the budgets in the Cost and Revenue Proposal.
9. Any misrepresentation within a proposal is grounds for disqualification of the entire proposal and is grounds for termination of any contract resulting from a proposal containing misrepresentation.
10. **Misrepresentation includes failure to differentiate between current capacity and capacity to be developed. Be specific when describing current program and capacity versus program readiness and capacity yet to be developed. Be specific when identifying current policies and procedures versus policies and procedures to be developed. Indicate reasonable timelines for program readiness, capacity, policies, and procedures.**
11. Program standards will be met as required unless a request is submitted for a waiver to a specific requirement. The request must be included in the Letter of Submittal, must outline the rationale for seeking the waiver, must be approved by MNRAAA and/or MBA.

II. SCOPE OF WORK

A. Service Description

A program that provides high-quality, nutritious meals to persons aged 60 and older in a congregate or home setting.

The program must meet all federal, state, and local requirements for meals and nutrition services as further detailed in the Appendices.

This service must reflect the needs of older persons to be served, be client centered, sensitive to cultural differences, targeted to individuals and populations with the greatest nutritional needs, and responsive to the multiple changing needs of communities.

Service delivery systems need to be designed in a manner which is effective in responding to the needs of older persons, efficient in its use of limited financial resources, and equitable in the manner in which services are organized and delivered, assuring fair and non-discriminatory practices.

B. Service Activities

MNRAAA is seeking a Contractor(s) to perform the following service activities for the period of January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022.

Proposals must encompass either the Northwest geographic region including Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine Counties or the combined Northeast, Southwest and Southeast geographic regions including Blue Earth, Brown, Cottonwood, Faribault, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Le Sueur, Lincoln, Lyon, Martin, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Sibley, Waseca, and Watonwan Counties. Any proposal for a partial geographic region will be rejected. Proposers may apply for one or both geographic regions but must submit two separate proposals if applying for both.

Proposals must include provision of both congregate and home delivered meal services in the geographic region.

1. Congregate Meals

Serve high-quality nutritious congregate meals **five days** per week to eligible persons.

Refer to ***Meal Service Data by Site and Targeting Information*** spreadsheet for more information.

All meals must meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) (<https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov>), the Dietary Reference Intakes (DRI) (<https://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/dietary-reference-intakes>) and be served to eligible persons in a congregate, or group setting, as further defined in the Appendices.

Congregate meals should be targeted to individuals who are at moderate to high nutrition risk. Individuals documented to be at high risk are eligible to receive meals seven days a week and/or second meals, based on approval by MNRAAA.

At a minimum, diabetic and no added salt diets (or modified meals) must be available. Providers will make special efforts to meet particular needs arising from health requirements, religious requirements, or ethnic backgrounds of eligible individuals. All menus must be reviewed and approved by a licensed dietitian/nutritionist.

In communities with an identified need, the provision of congregate meal service specifically designed to meet the needs of elders from diverse cultures is encouraged.

The number of days per week which a hot meal is served should be determined on a site-by-site basis and informed by a cost-benefit analysis of options. For example, it may be necessary to have a particular congregate site open only two or three days a week to provide a hot meal and participants may also receive one or more frozen meals on days the site is not open. However, for a meal to be considered congregate, it must be consumed in a congregate setting. Congregate meals do not include take-out meals, curbside pick-up, et al. (Meals served to eligible persons that are not consumed in a congregate setting are considered home delivered meals.) Such arrangements require the approval of MNRAAA. In addition, service may be extended to people not eligible for Title III-reimbursed meals as a means to increase volume and reduce overall cost. Ineligible participants must pay the full cost of the meal and service.

MNRAAA allows the provision of cold entrees during the summer months; frozen meals for second meals (based on documented high nutrition risk status), weekend and holiday meals (based on participant needs by site); and shelf stable meals for weather related or other emergencies. As stated above, congregate meals must be consumed in a congregate setting; meals that are not consumed in a congregate setting are considered home delivered.

Meals shall be served a minimum of 260 days per year with the exception of holidays as specified by the proposer. Holidays may include but are not limited to: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day.

2. Home Delivered Meals

Provide high-quality nutritious home delivered meals **five days** per week to eligible persons with special attention given to those who are frail, homebound by reason of illness or incapacitating disability, or otherwise isolated.

Refer to ***Meal Service Data by Site and Targeting Information*** spreadsheet for more information.

The frequency of delivering meals (daily, weekly, or other frequency) should be based on the preferences of participants and a cost-benefit analysis of the different delivery options. Relatedly, the type of meal (hot or frozen) should be based on the preferences of participants and a cost-benefit analysis of the type of meal options. While meals delivered

to an eligible person's home is the traditional method of providing home delivered meals, other non-traditional methods allowed, i.e., take-out, curbside pick-up, bundled meals, are allowable.

All meals must meet the DGAs and DRIs.

Home delivered meals should be targeted to individuals who are at high nutrition risk and have 2 or more limitations in Activities of Daily Living (ADLs: eating, drinking, dressing, personal hygiene, taking medication, walking, and transferring). Individuals documented to be at high risk are eligible to receive meals seven days a week and/or second meals, based on approval by MNRAAA.

At a minimum, diabetic and no added salt diets (or modified meals) must be available. Providers will make special efforts to meet particular needs arising from health requirements, religious requirements, or ethnic backgrounds of eligible individuals. All menus must be reviewed and approved by a licensed dietitian/nutritionist.

In communities with an identified need, the provision of home delivered meal service specifically designed to meet the needs of elders from diverse cultures is encouraged.

MNRAAA allows the provision of cold entrees during the summer months; frozen meals for second meals (based on documented high nutrition risk status), weekend and holiday meals (based on participant needs by site); shelf stable meals for weather related or other emergencies; and delivery of meals with groceries and/or other needed goods, based on approval from MNRAAA. In addition, service may be extended to people not eligible for Title III-reimbursed meals as a means to increase volume and reduce overall cost. Ineligible participants must pay the full cost of the meal and service.

Meals shall be served a minimum of 260 days per year with the exception of holidays as specified by the proposer. Holidays may include but are not limited to: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day.

C. Participant Registration and Meal Counts

Successful proposers must agree to work with congregate and home delivered meal program participants to complete National Aging Program Information System (NAPIS) Participant Registration Forms and ensure that current, accurate and comprehensive participant data is entered into the MBA approved NAPIS data system. The MBA approved system for collecting NAPIS information is PeerPlace®. PeerPlace is a client and service tracking software application. The NAPIS data is used for meeting the requirements of the U.S. Administration on Aging, participant targeting and service planning, and verification of participant eligibility.

For congregate meal participants, particular attention must be given to: 1) collecting complete and accurate information for basic eligibility determination and client demographics (date of birth, income level, race/ethnicity, number in household); and 2) determining nutrition risk level. Each person requesting congregate meals must be

assessed using the NAPIS Participant Registration Form prior to or within 10 working days after the beginning of meal service. Reassessment shall occur as needed, but at least annually.

For home delivered meal participants, particular attention must be given to: 1) collecting complete and accurate information for basic eligibility determination and client demographics (date of birth, income level, race/ethnicity, number in household); 2) determining nutrition risk level; and 3) limitations in ADLs and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs). Each person requesting home delivered meals must be assessed using the NAPIS Participant Registration Form prior to or within 10 working days after the beginning of meal delivery. Reassessment shall occur as needed, but at least annually.

III. REQUIRED PROPOSAL CONTENT

- A. Each proposer must submit a complete response to this RFP via MNRAAA's grant platform. A complete response contains the following sections:
 1. Letter of Submittal (upload) – including, at a minimum:
 - a. geographic region(s) for which the proposer intends to bid;
 - b. proposers' ability and intention to comply with federal, state, and MNRAAA program and administrative requirements;
 - c. proposers' request(s) for a waiver to a specific requirement, if applicable; and
 - d. electronic signature by a person authorized to bind your organization to a contract.
 2. Title III-C Cost and Revenue Proposal (form provided/upload).
 3. Responses to all Narrative Questions.
 4. Proposed Service Changes Form (form provided/upload).
 5. Persons to be Served Form (form provided/upload).
 6. Title III-C Organizational Information and Fiscal Capacity (form provided/upload) including the following uploads:
 - a. Board of Directors with Terms (if applicable);
 - b. Insurance Certification;
 - c. Most Recent Audit, or IRS Form 990, or Year end Financial Statement; and
 - d. Businesses Licenses.
 7. Proposers' Menu (upload) – five-week minimum that specifies the menu items to be served each day.
 8. Ethnic Menu(s) (upload) – if available.
 9. Food Purchasing Specifications (upload).

10. Evidence of Last Competitive Bid Process (upload) – if available.
11. Sample Subcontract (upload) – if available.
12. Transition Plan – (upload) – if applicable.
13. Title III-C Assurances of Compliance and Certifications Required by Federal Law (form provided/upload).

IV. RULES FOR SUBMITTAL

- A. The completed proposal must be submitted via MNRAAA's grant platform by **4:30 p.m. CT, 09/22/2021**, at which time the ability to submit will be closed. Late responses are not accepted.
- B. Costs of Proposal Preparation. MNRAAA will not pay any proposer costs associated with preparing, presenting, or submitting any proposal in response to this RFP.
- C. Responses to the RFP must be submitted on MNRAAA's grant platform. No other methods of submission will be accepted.
- D. Proposals that are **incomplete** or that do not supply the requested information or attachments may be evaluated as non-responsive and eliminated from competition; however, MNRAAA reserves the right to waive minor or immaterial irregularities.
- E. Submitted proposals become the property of MNRAAA.
- F. **Clearly mark any responses and/or uploads of the proposal that constitutes a trade secret or is confidential. The proposer must meet the burden of establishing that the information constitutes a trade secret or is confidential and should reference the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and other relevant laws and regulations prior to marking any portion(s) of the proposal. Portions marked as a trade secret or confidential must include a written reference to the applicable Act, law and/or regulation.**

MNRAAA reserves the right to reject a claim if it determines the proposer has not met the burden of establishing that the information constitutes a trade secret or is confidential. MNRAAA will not consider prices or costs submitted by the proposer to be a trade secret or confidential. Any decision by MNRAAA to disclose information designated by the proposer as a trade secret or confidential will be made consistent with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and other relevant laws and regulations. If certain information is found to constitute a trade secret or confidential, the remainder of the proposal will become public; only the trade secret/confidential information will be removed and remain nonpublic.

V. PROCUREMENT SCHEDULE*

Early August	Request for Proposal available to proposers on MNRAAA's grant platform located at www.mnraaa.org
09.22.2021	Completed proposals submitted via MNRAAA's grant platform by 4:30 p.m. (submission of responses to MNRAAA questions will be due by a specified date)
10.27.2021 & 10.28.2021	MNRAAA Planning Committee review, interviews, and award recommendations
11.10.2021	MNRAAA Board of Directors awards funding (an earlier, alternate date may be established; proposers will be notified)
10 days after MNRAAA Board's decision	Final day for un-successful proposers to submit written notice of appeal to MNRAAA Executive Director
Begin immediately after notification of MNRAAA Board's decision	Contract negotiations
Upon completion of negotiations	MNRAAA Board/Executive Committee action on negotiated contracts
01.01.2022	Awards available
01.03.2022	Service delivery begins

*Schedule is subject to changes and/or additions as needed or as requested by the MNRAAA Board. Any changes to the schedule will be posted on the MNRAAA grant portal – www.mnraaa.org.

VI. PROPOSAL REVIEW, EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

MNRAAA will undertake a systematic review of the form and content of the proposal. The proposal will be reviewed for mathematical accuracy, programmatic content, and conformity to funding criteria and the Request for Proposals.

After such review, MNRAAA will make comments to the proposer, if applicable. Revisions and/or response to comments will be required to be completed by a specified date.

Each proposal will be reviewed and evaluated based on the Evaluation Criteria outlined below. The Evaluation Criteria correspond to the components of the RFP.

A Planning Committee (appointed by the MNRAAA board chair and approved by the board) will make recommendations to the MNRAAA board for Title III-C proposal selection. The Committee has the authority and autonomy to recommend awards based on a variety of factors, i.e., funds available, scoring of evaluation criteria,

proposal content, proposer interview, past performance (if applicable).

Scores received through the evaluation process are not the sole basis for decisions. The MNRAAA Board will select the proposals that are in the best overall interest of MNRAAA, the twenty-seven county Planning and Service Area (PSA) and the persons proposed to be served.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. Proposed steps will ensure the accuracy and completeness of participant data for nutrition program participants. (Narrative Responses, et al.)

- 0-1 points – The proposed steps will not ensure the accuracy and completeness of participant data for nutrition program participants.
- 2-3 points – The proposed steps meet expectations for demonstrating the likelihood that they will ensure accuracy and completeness of participant data.
- 4-5 points – The proposed steps exceed expectations for demonstrating the likelihood that they will ensure accuracy and completeness of participant data.

Comments, questions, concerns, etc.:

2. Proposed service design and program management will target services to persons who meet one or more of the targeting criteria. (Narrative Responses, Proposed Service Changes Form, Persons to be Served Form, et al.)

- 0-1 points – The service design and program management will not result in a larger number of targeted persons served.
- 2-3 points – The service design and program management meets expectations for reaching a larger number of targeted persons.
- 4-5 points – The service design and program management exceeds expectations for reaching a larger number of targeted persons.

Comments, questions, concerns, etc.:

3. The project demonstrates the capacity to provide the proposed services. (Narrative Responses, Title III-C Organizational Information and Fiscal Capacity, et al.)

- 0-1 points – The project does not demonstrate the capacity to provide the proposed services.
- 2-3 points – The project meets expectations for demonstrating the capacity to provide the proposed services.
- 4-5 points – The project exceeds expectations for demonstrating the ability to provide the proposed services.

Comments, questions, concerns, etc.:

4. The project provides evidence of the capacity to manage the financial resources associated with the proposed services, including participant contributions. (Narrative Responses, Title III-C Organizational Information and Fiscal Capacity, et al.)

- 0-1 points – The project does not provide evidence of the capacity to manage the financial resources.
- 2-3 points – The project meets expectations for providing evidence of the capacity to manage the financial resources.

- 4-5 points – The project exceeds expectations for providing evidence of the capacity to manage the financial resources.

Comments, questions, concerns, etc.:

5. The proposed quality assurance activities are appropriately detailed and relevant to assuring high quality meals and participant satisfaction.

(Narrative Responses, et al.)

- 0-1 points – The quality assurance activities are not appropriately detailed and they lack relevance to assuring high quality meals and participant satisfaction.
- 2-3 points – The quality assurance activities meet expectations for detail and they are relevant to assuring high quality meals and participant satisfaction.
- 4-5 points – The quality assurance activities exceed expectations for detail and relevance to assuring high quality meals and participant satisfaction.

Comments, questions, concerns, etc.:

6. Reasonableness of meal cost. (Narrative Responses, Title III-C Cost and Revenue Proposal, et al.)

- 0-2 points – The total cost per meal is unreasonable. Meal costs are not allocated across program category in proportion to the number of meals proposed.
- 3-5 points – The total cost per meal is reasonable. Meal costs are allocated across program category in proportion to the number of meals proposed.

Comments, questions, concerns, etc.:

7. Realistic and achievable projections, i.e. number of persons, number of meals, project income. (Narrative Responses, Title III-C Cost and Revenue Proposal, Persons to be Served Form, et al.)

- 0-2 points – Projections are unrealistic and unachievable.
- 3-5 points – Projections are realistic and achievable.

Comments, questions, concerns, etc.:

A. Notification of Selected Proposers

Both successful and un-successful proposers will be notified following the selection of successful proposals by the MNRAAA Board.

B. Appeal Process and Procedures

Un-successful proposers have the right to appeal. A proposer must provide written notice of its intent to appeal. Notice of appeal must be received by the executive director of MNRAAA via mail or hand delivery within 10 working days of notification of MNRAAA's decision. Notice by electronic media such as facsimile (FAX) transmittal or email will not be accepted. Only appeals of procedures will be considered; issues of merit will not be considered.

C. Negotiations Phase

Contract negotiations begin after the selection of successful proposals and may run concurrently with an appeal process, should an appeal be requested. All items in a proposal are negotiable. Proposals will not be made public until contracts have been negotiated, signed, and fully executed.

GENERAL CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS

A. COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS

Contracting organizations must comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, standards, and contractual requirements applicable to providing the contracted service(s). Contracting organizations will be required to sign assurances, including, but not limited to, non-discrimination and equal opportunity.

B. COMPLIANCE WITH SERVICE STANDARDS

Contracting organizations must comply with all applicable program policies and standards included in Appendices B and C, and Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA) contracting requirements. Services must be implemented according to these standards unless a temporary or permanent waiver of compliance has been granted by the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging (MNRAAA). Requests for waivers must be identified in the proposer's Letter of Submittal to be eligible for inclusion in the contract(s).

C. SERVICE ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility for services is controlled by federal and state laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, those found in the Older Americans Act, MBA's AAA Operations Manual, MNRAAA policies and procedures, OMB Circulars etc. In general, persons 60 years of age or older are eligible for Older Americans Act services. Contracting organizations must comply with eligibility criteria, as further defined in the Title IIIC Minimum Nutrition Service Standards/Definitions, Appendix B.

A means test may not be utilized to determine eligibility for Older Americans Act Title III services.

Service may not be denied to an older individual, based on their willingness or ability to contribute towards the cost of the service.

D. TARGET POPULATIONS

Contracting organizations must serve individuals who meet target population criteria, as specified in the Title IIIC Minimum Nutrition Service Standards/Definitions, Appendix B.

E. INVOLVEMENT OF OLDER PERSONS

Contractors must involve older persons, including program participants, in decisions related to service design, delivery and an ongoing quality improvement process.

F. VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers provide an important and cost-effective means of increasing or enhancing services for older people. Contractors must be able to detail how volunteers will be utilized in the program.

G. STAFFING GUIDELINES

The Contractor must utilize an adequate number of qualified paid and volunteer staff to assure satisfactory operation of the program. Preference should be given to persons age 60 and over in the hiring for all positions when other qualifications are equal.

H. STAFF ORIENTATION/TRAINING PLAN

All staff, both paid and volunteer, must receive orientation before providing services and in-service training on a quarterly basis. Each service provider should have a written training plan describing the content of orientation and training. Current written job descriptions shall be available for all paid and volunteer staff. All staff shall have a performance evaluation at least once each year.

I. ADVISORY COUNCIL/CONSUMER INPUT

Each Contractor must make provision for periodically obtaining the advice of persons competent in the field of service, older individuals who are participants, and persons knowledgeable in the needs of older individuals relative to effective delivery of senior nutrition services.

Contractors shall establish a means of soliciting participant input on appropriate matters relating to the service program through advisory councils, surveys, suggestions boxes, and questionnaires at least once a year.

J. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

A quality improvement process will be implemented by each Contractor which includes regular and ongoing monitoring of service quality, consumer satisfaction and outcome evaluation. Methods of receiving consumer input on the quality of services need to be intact and utilized on a regular basis. Examples include site councils, project councils, consumer forums, consumer satisfaction surveys, telephone interviews, visits, etc.

K. MONITORING

Administrative and service delivery procedures of Contractors shall be monitored to ensure participants are receiving services in an appropriate manner, the program is operating with full accountability and a quality improvement plan is being implemented.

L. CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Contracting organizations will be required to sign MNRAAA's Contract form that refers to specific program standards and assurances.

M. ACCESS TO DATA

All books, records, documents, reports and other data shall be subject to, at all reasonable times, whether scheduled or unscheduled, inspection, review, or audit by the State of Minnesota or MBA personnel, or other personnel duly authorized by the MBA, the Office of the State Auditor, or other state or federal officials as authorized by law, rule, regulation or agreement.

N. ACCOUNTING SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

The Contractor must establish and maintain an accounting system that adequately identifies each revenue source and the application of funds. The accounting records must contain information pertaining to projects, grants or subgrant awards, and all authorizations, obligations, unobligated balances, assets, liabilities, outlays, expenditures and revenue. Each funding source shall bear only reasonable and allowable costs. For more detailed information refer to [45 CFR 75](#).

An adequate audit trail shall be maintained. All transactions and other significant events are to be clearly documented. The documentation is to be readily available for examination by persons authorized by the MBA.

The Contractor will utilize an accounting system that determines as accurately as possible the actual costs to provide the service(s) by funding source. This accounting system provides the means to gather fiscal data necessary to:

- *Determine the value of a unit of service;
- *Meet competition;
- *Determine the bid price;
- *Determine if funds were generated in excess of allowable costs or if a loss occurred.

The Contractor must establish and maintain adequate internal control systems and standards that apply to the entire operation of the organization. Specific requirements include:

- Maintenance of current charts of accounts,
- Maintenance of current accounting policies and procedures manual that includes a complete description of the organization's financial management functions.
- Separate fund accounts identified with the accounting system to account for grant funds and voluntary contributions from meal program participants.
- Methods for adequate identification of receipts and expenditures for each grant, contract or subcontract for each fund.
- Adequate documentation supporting all accounting entries.
- Monthly reconciliation of bank accounts, with records kept on file.
- Monthly trial balance prepared to ensure accounting records are posted correctly and the book (general ledger) is balanced.
- Written inventory control procedure kept on file.
- Employee duties and responsibilities separated so no one employee has sole control over cash receipts, disbursements, and reconciliation of bank accounts.

O. AUDIT REQUIREMENTS

This program is funded with federal financial assistance funds and state funds. The Contractor of this program is considered a sub-recipient of Title III federal financial assistance, subject to audit requirements under 45 CFR 75: Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for HHS Awards. (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_default) All records related to the federal financial assistance funds will be retained for at least a period of three years after the audit is resolved by MNRAAA. All records related to state financial assistance funds will be retained for six years after completion of the funding period.

The expense of an A-133 audit is an allowable Title III expense. All other audit costs may not use Title III, but the expense may be used as match.

P. MATCH REQUIREMENTS

The Title III-C Nutrition Service Programs are federally funded programs and require a minimum of 15% in non-federal cash and/or in-kind matching funds for each program.

The federal share of these contracts may not exceed 85% of the total net cost of the program. Local match may be met with cash and/or in-kind resources utilized in the performance of the contracted services.

Q. PARTICIPANT CONTRIBUTIONS

The Contractor shall develop and publish a schedule of suggested contributions and shall advise participants of the opportunity to contribute towards the cost of the service. In no case shall the Contractor deny the provision of service to a consumer who is unable or unwilling to make a contribution. Contractors may not charge a fee for Title III services.

R. PROGRAM INCOME

Program Income, as defined in 45 CFR 75 (see §75.307 Program Income) ([Electronic Code of Federal Regulations \(eCFR\)](#)), includes, but is not limited to, participant donations and other income received by or due to the contracting organization, as a result of activities wholly or partially supported by funds from the contract. Contracting organizations must report all program income to MNRAAA per the signed contract agreement.

S. Reporting

The Contractor shall make such reports as the Area Agency on Aging requires in the manner, form, and per the schedule indicated below.

- 1. Federal/State Monthly Meal Counts and Revisions:** Due no later than the 15th day of the month for services provided the previous month. Required information includes: number of service units, number of unduplicated persons served, documentation of the eligibility of each person served, and Contractor income and expenditures.
 - Contracting organizations must serve eligible individuals and document their eligibility using the NAPIS (National Aging Program Information System) Participant Registration Forms, as specified in the Title IIIC Minimum Nutrition Service Standards/Definitions, Appendix C.
 - Contractors must use the NAPIS data system to report service units, unduplicated persons served, and the eligibility of persons served. Data reported for the previous month must be accurate, complete and current by the 15th day of the month.
 - A separate financial (income and expenditures) report must be sent to MNRAAA.
- 2. Quarterly Discussion: Progress Report on Targeting.** Due at the end of each quarter. The Contractor will meet with the MNRAAA to discuss progress on: 1) improving the accuracy and comprehensiveness of participant data as it appears in the NAPIS database and 2) targeting nutrition services based on the criteria outlined in the Title III-C Minimum Nutrition

Standards/Definitions.

Quarterly discussions will be based on reports produced using the NAPIS data system. MNRAAA will specify the reports to be run based on the relevant eligibility and targeting criteria for the service/s included in the contract. Documentation of the issues discussed, challenges/barriers identified, and agreed upon action steps shall be developed by MNRAAA, reviewed by the Contractor and kept on file.

- 3. Copies of Menus and Nutrient Analysis:** Quarterly. Menu cycles must be at least five weeks long and submitted to MNRAAA on a quarterly basis along with the nutrient analysis of the menu/s.
- 4. Equipment Inventory:** (For equipment purchased with federal funds only) Submitted annually as of December 31, not later than January 10.
- 5. Final Financial Report:** Required for congregate and home delivered nutrition services.

T. Payment

The contract entered in to is an agreement for a set rate per service unit provided to eligible participants. The eligibility of participants is established through the NAPIS Participant Registration Form. In addition to documentation of participant eligibility as defined in Appendix C Section 3 – Program Eligibility, accurate monthly service unit counts are required to justify the payment of funds. Payment will be made on a unit cost rate basis for the services provided and when required reporting is completed.

Contracting organizations must bill MNRAAA or its assigns on approved forms no later than the 15th day of the month for services provided the previous month.

Rates may be revised during the contract period by amendment at the discretion of the AAA if there are extenuating circumstances.

U. INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. The Contractor shall not commence work under the contract until they have obtained all the insurance described below. All policies and certificates shall provide that the policies shall remain in force and effect throughout the term of the grant contract.
2. The Contractor is required to maintain and furnish satisfactory evidence of the following insurance policies:
 - a. Workers' Compensation Insurance:** Except as provided below, Contractor must provide Workers' Compensation insurance for all its employees and, in case any work is subcontracted, Contractor will require the subcontractor to provide Workers' Compensation insurance in accordance with the statutory requirements of the State of Minnesota, including Coverage B, Employer's Liability. Insurance **minimum** amounts are as follows:

\$100,000 – Bodily Injury by Disease per employee

\$500,000 – Bodily Injury by Disease aggregate

\$100,000 – Bodily Injury by Accident

- b. Commercial General Liability:** Contractor is required to maintain insurance protecting it from claims for damages for bodily injury, including sickness or disease, death, and for care and loss of services as well as from claims for property damage, including loss of use which may arise from operations under the grant contract whether the operations are by the Contractor or by a subcontractor or by anyone directly or indirectly employed by the Contractor under the contract. Insurance **minimum** amounts are as follows:

\$2,000,000 – per occurrence

\$2,000,000 – annual aggregate

\$2,000,000 – annual aggregate – Products/Completed Operations

The following coverage's shall be included:

Premises and Operations Bodily Injury and Property Damage

Personal and Advertising Injury

Blanket Contractual Liability

Products and Completed Operations Liability

Other; if applicable. please list_____.

MNRAAA named as an Additional Insured

- c. Commercial Automobile Liability:** Contractor is required to maintain insurance protecting the Contractor from claims for damages for bodily injury as well as from claims for property damage resulting from ownership, operation, maintenance or use of all owned, hired, and non-owned autos which may arise from operations under this grant contract, and in case any work is subcontracted the Contractor will require the subcontractor to provide Commercial Automobile Liability. Insurance **minimum** amounts are as follows:

\$2,000,000 – per occurrence Combined Single limit for Bodily Injury and Property Damage

In addition, the following coverage's should be included: Owned, Hired, and Non-owned Automobile

- d. Professional/Technical, Errors and Omissions, and/or Miscellaneous Liability Insurance (if applicable)**

This policy will provide coverage for all claims the Contractor may become legally obligated to pay resulting from any actual or alleged negligent act, error, or omission related to Contractor's professional services required under the contract. Contractor is required to carry the following **minimum** amounts:

\$2,000,000 – per claim or event

\$2,000,000 – annual aggregate

Any deductible will be the sole responsibility of the Contractor and may not exceed \$50,000 without the written approval of MNRAAA. If the Contractor desires authority from MNRAAA to have a deductible in a higher amount, the Contractor shall so request in writing, specifying the amount of the desired deductible and providing financial documentation by submitting the most current audited financial statements so that MNRAAA can ascertain the ability of the Contractor to cover the deductible from its own resources.

The retroactive or prior acts date of such coverage shall not be after the effective date of this contract and the Contractor shall maintain such insurance for a period of at least three (3) years, following completion of the work. If the Contractor discontinues such insurance, then extended reporting period coverage must be purchased to fulfill this requirement.

e. Blanket Employee Theft/Employee Dishonesty Insurance.

Contractor is required to obtain a blanket employee theft/employee dishonesty policy in at least the total amount of the first year's grant award as either an addendum on its property insurance policy, or if it is not feasible to include it as an addendum to a property insurance policy, as a stand-alone employee theft/employee dishonesty policy. MNRAAA will be named as both a joint payee and a certificate holder on the property insurance policy addendum or on the stand-alone employee theft/employee dishonesty policy, whichever is applicable. Only in cases in which the first year's grant award exceeds the available employee theft/employee dishonesty coverage may Contractors provide blanket employee theft/employee dishonesty insurance in an amount equal to either 25% of the yearly grant amount, or the first quarterly advance amount, whichever is greater. Upon execution of a grant contract, the Contractor must furnish MNRAAA with a certificate of employee theft/employee dishonesty insurance.

3. Additional Insurance Conditions:

- Contractor's policy(ies) shall be primary insurance to any other valid and collectible insurance available to MNRAAA with respect to any claims arising out of Contractor's performance under this contract;
- Contractors's policy(ies) and Certificates of Insurance shall contain a provision that coverage afforded under the policies shall not be cancelled or non-renewed without at least thirty (30) days advanced written notice to MNRAAA;
- Contractor is responsible for payment of contract related insurance premiums and deductibles;
- If Contractor is self-insured, a Certificate of Self-Insurance must be attached;
- Include legal defense fees in addition to its liability policy limits, with the exception of G.2.d. above; and

- Obtain insurance policies from an insurance company having an "AM BEST" rating of A- (minus); Financial Size Category (FSC) VII or better and must be authorized to do business in the State of Minnesota.

4. MNRAAA reserves the right to immediately terminate the contract if the Contractor is not in compliance with the insurance requirements and retains all rights to pursue any legal remedies against the Contractor. All insurance policies must be open to inspection by MNRAAA, and copies of policies must be submitted to MNRAAA's authorized representative upon written request.

5. The successful responder is required to submit acceptable evidence of insurance coverage requirements prior to commencing work under the contract.

V. PROHIBITED SERVICE ACTIVITIES

- a) A means test may not be utilized to determine eligibility for Older Americans Act Title III services.
- b) Service may not be denied to an older individual based on their unwillingness or inability to contribute towards the cost of the meal or service.
- c) Claiming Title III for ineligible persons or meals.

TITLE III C MINIMUM NUTRITION STANDARDS/DEFINITIONS
Congregate Nutrition Services
Home Delivered Meal Nutrition Services

I. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

[OLDER AMERICANS ACT OF 1965 \[Public Law 89-73\] \[As Amended Through P.L. 116-131, Enacted March 25, 2020\]](#)- Sections 331, 336 and 339, AAA Operations Manual – D-14 Nutrition Services; and MNRAAA policies and procedures).

1. Congregate Meals

Provision to, and received by, an eligible participant at a nutrition site, senior center or some other congregate setting, a meal which:

a) is high quality and nutritionally complete, prepared and served under safe and sanitary conditions, in a manner that is cost effective and;

b) meets the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025](#), and [Dietary Reference Intakes](#) (DRI)

c) one meal per day will be available at least five days per week, unless a lesser frequency is approved by the Minnesota Board on Aging (OAA Sec. 331). One meal per day seven days per week and/or second meals will be available to eligible persons assessed at high nutrition risk with approval by MNRAAA.

Service Unit: One congregate meal (Cluster 2 Service)

2. Home Delivered Meals

Provision to, and received by, an eligible participant at the participant's place of residence, a meal which:

a) is high quality and nutritionally complete, prepared and served under safe and sanitary conditions, in a manner that is cost effective and;

b) meets the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025](#), and [Dietary Reference Intakes](#) (DRI)

c) one meal per day will be available at least five days per week, unless a lesser frequency is approved by the Minnesota Board on Aging (OAA Sec. 336). One meal per day seven days per week and/or second meals will be available to eligible persons assessed at high nutrition risk with approval by MNRAAA.

Service Unit: One home delivered meal (Cluster 1 Service)

3. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

NAPIS (National Aging Program Information System) Participant Registration Forms, supplied by the AAA, must be administered to all Title III eligible participants.

- a) Persons who are age 60 years or older and spouse, regardless of age and other individuals, as specified in [OAA Sec. 339 \(2\)\(I\)](#) ; [45 CFR 1321.17 \(f\)\(12\)](#)
- b) Home delivered meal recipients age 60 years or older, who are frail, homebound by reason of illness or incapacitating disability, or otherwise isolated, shall be given priority ([45 CFR 1321.69](#)) - Service priority for frail, homebound or isolated elderly)
- c) Meals may be made available to individuals under the age of 60 with disabilities who reside with an eligible person age 60 or older.
- d) Meals may be made available to individuals with disabilities under age 60 who live in housing facilities occupied primarily by older adults at which congregate nutrition services are provided.
- e) At the approval of MNRAAA, meals may be offered to individuals providing volunteer services during meal hours on the same basis that meals are provided to participating older individuals.
- f) A means test may not be utilized to determine eligibility for Older Americans Act Title III nutrition services.
- g) Service may not be denied to an older individual, based on their willingness or ability to contribute towards the cost of the meal or service.

4. TARGET POPULATIONS

Congregate Meals: individuals age 60+ who are at moderate to high nutrition risk¹. Greater priority will be given to individuals with incomes at or below poverty level and who meet at least one of the following criteria:

- member of diverse population²,
- limited English proficiency,
- lives in rural area, and/or
- at risk for institutional placement

Home Delivered Meals: individuals age 60+ who are at high nutrition risk and have 2 or more limitations in Activities of Daily Living (ADLs). Greater priority will be given to individuals with incomes at or below poverty level and who meet at least one of the following criteria:

- member of diverse population,
- limited English proficiency,

1 Moderate nutrition risk: an individual who scores 3-5 on the DETERMINE Your Nutritional Risk checklist published by the Nutrition Screening Initiative. High nutrition risk: an individual who scores 6 or higher.

2 Diverse populations include: African American or Black, Alaskan Native, American Indian, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic/Latino elders (NAPIS State Program Report, AoA).

- lives in rural area, and/or
- at risk for institutional placement

Individuals participating in the congregate or home delivered meal program who are determined to be at high nutrition risk may receive one or more meals per day seven days a week, with the approval of MNRAAA.

5. LOCATION OF SERVICES

a) Congregate Dining Services, as per [OAA 331 \(2\)](#):

- In a congregate setting, including affordable housing, adult day services and multi-generational meal sites, and sites for comprehensive supportive services;
- In close proximity to the majority of eligible older individuals' residences, as feasible.

In addition, locations in multi-purpose senior centers, schools, churches, or other appropriate community facilities are emphasized, preferably within walking distance where possible, and where appropriate, transportation to sites is furnished;

- Facilities must be free of architectural barriers, pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (<https://www.section508.gov/>) and any amendments thereto.
- Nutrition preparation sites must be licensed and serving sites must be approved by the state and local Boards of Health.
- MNRAAA will develop transition strategies with nutrition providers and communities, that reflect demographic and community resource differences, to provide support and assistance when it is determined that a meal site location is no longer financially or programmatically feasible to operate.

II. MEAL STANDARDS

([OAA Secs. 331; 336; 339](#); MBA Operations Manual D-14 Nutrition Services, and MNRAAA policies and procedures)

1. Nutritional Quality

a) The federal Older Americans Act requires that all meals served must be high quality and nutritionally complete, prepared and served under safe and sanitary conditions, in a manner that is cost effective and;

- provide a minimum of 33 and 1/3 percent of the current [Dietary Reference Intakes \(DRI\)](#) as established by the Institute of Medicine National Academy of Sciences;
- provide, if two meals are served, together, a minimum of 66 and 2/3 percent of the current Dietary Reference Intakes (DRI) as established by the Institute of Medicine National Academy of Sciences; and the second meal shall be balanced and proportional in calories and nutrients; and
- incorporate the current [Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025](#)

for Americans as established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

b) The Minnesota Board on Aging establishes state standards to operationalize the federal nutrition requirements. The MBA encourages senior nutrition service providers to refer to the Nutrition Service Providers Toolkit Guide

(www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2005/toolkit/Providers/Part1.htm) to inform their program implementation. All meals will:

(i) comply with the RDA for older adults who are 70 years of age and older and the current U.S. Dietary Guidelines.

(ii) provide a calorie range of 700 to 800 calories or more, since it is the main meal of the day for most seniors.

(iii) targeted nutrients include Vitamin A (vegetable-derived sources), Vitamin C, fiber, calcium, and protein since they are deficient in diets of older adults, or are markers for other important nutrients. Targeting specific nutrients should not be interpreted as permission to ignore others. Menus will be evaluated routinely for these nutrients and analysis will be sent to MNRAAA each quarter.

(iv) contractors will use an approved software program for analyzing menus. Exceptions may be made with the approval of MNRAAA. Examples include small rural restaurants or cafes and ethnic meal providers.

(v) contain a fat content of approximately 30% of total calories per meal and a weekly average not to exceed 35%. Up to two meals per menu cycle are exempt;

(vi) contain a sodium content per meal of less than 1200 milligrams averaged over a week. Up to two meals per menu cycle are exempt.

(vii) incorporate a fiber content per meal of 7 to 10 grams, as feasible, according to AoA recommendations based on the current Dietary Guidelines;

(viii) provide, at minimum, appropriate foods for a diabetic diet and no added salt diet (800 – 1000 mg sodium per meal) for persons with special dietary needs.

(ix) will be planned using cycle menus for a minimum period of five weeks. Cycle menus and special menus must be planned and/or approved by a Licensed Dietitian or Nutritionist as per [MN Statutes Chapter 148.621](#) and [MN Rules Chapter 3250](#)

(x) emphasize the importance of balancing nutritious meals with physical activity.

Contractors will incorporate the current Dietary Guidelines into menus through food procurement methods and menu modifications. Some examples include increasing nutrient-rich fruits and vegetables, whole grain products, and dry beans, peas, lentils, purchasing lower fat cuts of meat, decreasing the amount of fat in recipes and limiting the number of high fat and sodium entrees. Sites should offer the option to hold gravy, sauces or salad dressings on the serving line or serve items on the side, when the gravy, sauce or dressing is not incorporated into the recipe.

2. Special or Modified Diets

(OAA Sec. 339 (2)(A)(iii), MBA Operations Manual D-14 and MNRAAA policies and procedures)

Each project will provide special menus, to the maximum extent practicable to meet particular dietary needs of eligible individuals arising from health requirements, religious requirements, or ethnic background.

- a) At a minimum, diabetic and no added salt meals shall be available. Low-fat meals are recommended.
- b) The diabetic meals will be based on 1500 - 1800 calories daily and no added salt diet (800 – 1000mg per meal or less).
- c) The Contractor will provide appropriate instructions to food preparation sites and caterers. Substitutes for the high sugar and high sodium items on regular menus must be available. Information describing modified diets must be accessible for referring agencies.
- d) All menus must be reviewed and approved by a Licensed Dietitian or Licensed Nutritionist.
- e) A physician's diet order may be required and shall be renewed as agreed upon with the physician.

3. Food Grades & Standards

The following minimum food grades and standards must be met:

- a) Canned Fruits or Vegetables - USDA Grade A - packed in juice or light syrup
- b) Fresh Fruits or Vegetables - USDA #1 Quality or better
- c) Frozen Fruits or Vegetables - USDA Grade A or better
- d) Poultry - USDA Grade A or better
- e) Beef - USDA Choice or better
- f) Pork - USDA #1 or better; pork chops - loin or rib cut end-to-end; Ham - center cut
- g) Beef, poultry and meat byproducts - USDA choice grade; all meat USDA stamped; from federally approved inspection plant;
- h) Ground Meats (beef, pork, poultry) not to exceed 15% fat;
- i) Fish - All fish and seafood products shall be of comparable quality to USDA guidelines for beef and poultry
- j) Eggs (pasteurized eggs) Grade AA
- k) Milk, fresh pasteurized fluid, USDA Grade A - Vitamin A & D fortified
- l) Cheese - Natural, USDA Grade A; pasteurized or processed pasteurized cheese; American or Swiss; [Note: protein content of processed cheese will be lower than whole cheese]. Cheese food not allowed. Cottage cheese - USDA Grade A;
- m) Butter or margarine - USDA Grade A; margarine fortified with Vitamin A
- n) Mixed meat entrees - pre-made items, such as Lasagna and Chop Suey must meet all USDA standards and program requirements for amounts of protein and sodium. Entrees will be evaluated according to texture, percentage of extenders, preservative content and MSG (mono-sodium glutamate) is eliminated.
- o) Salt (iodized)
- p) Other:

Textured Vegetable Protein (TVP), a soy protein extender used in ground meals or meat products in an 80:20 ratio, or in accordance with U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) standards.

- Restructured meat patties: No more than 4 times per menu cycle. Restructured meat patties are meat or poultry that is removed from the bone, ground, sometimes tenderized and reshaped formed into the shape of the meat (ie. pork chops, beef or pork ribs, veal or beef patties, also No Name Steak, as opposed to the real thing). If these items are used, they may not be called patties or riblets or other so they are not mistaken for roasts or chops.

4. Standardized Recipes

- a) Tested quantity recipes, adjusted to yield the number of servings needed, must be used to achieve consistent and desirable quality and quantity. The Contractor will provide MNRAAA with a copy of these recipes when requested and maintain a recipe file for the current quarter at each production site.
- b) MNRAAA reserves the right to modify the above requirements should items meeting the specifications not be acceptable to participants of the program.
- c) MNRAAA reserves the right to inspect such foods to determine compliance with the specifications and to reject any food not meeting such specifications.
- d) Preparation methods designed to conserve the nutritive value of food should be followed at all times. Specific attention should be given to short cooking periods and minimum use of water in preparation of vegetables.
- e) When delivered, the food should be appetizing, attractive in color and texture, not greasy, and lightly seasoned. Whenever possible the use of herbs and spices should be used to enhance flavor of foods.

5. Safety and Sanitation Requirements

Meals must meet all federal, state and local health and sanitation requirements (OAA Sec. 339 (2)(C)(F), MBA Operations Manual D-14, [Minnesota Food Code Chapter 4626](#), MNRAAA policies and procedures).

- a) Nutrition contractors must meet all federal, state and local laws and regulations regarding the safe and sanitary handling of food, equipment and supplies used in the storage, preparation service and delivery of meals to older persons.
- b) All service providers must adhere to state or local Board of Health Requirements for Food and Beverage Establishments and be subject to review by the Health Department Sanitarians. Exceptions to these regulations must be approved by the State Board of Health in writing.
- c) All nutrition services preparation sites must be licensed and serving sites must be approved by the state and local Boards of Health (MBA D-14). Staff must be licensed in accordance with current state and local health department codes.
- d) Food temperatures at the time of service and at the time of delivery must be at 150 degrees F or above for hot foods and 40 degrees F or below for perishable cold foods. 140 degrees F is acceptable for home delivered meal routes of 45 minutes or less.

- e) Nutrition contractors must utilize temperature probes for checking and documenting food temperatures. In addition, refrigerators and freezers located at food preparation and service sites must have thermometers.
- f) Equipment must meet all state and local health codes, or be approved by the local health department. Equipment should meet NSF (National Sanitation Foundation) standards or be approved by the state or local health departments.
- g) Insulated containers or other appropriate materials that are easily cleaned and sanitized each day must be used to maintain acceptable temperatures during the transport of bulk foods to serving sites, and for home delivered meals on delivery routes.
- h) The kitchen design and layout plans for new sites and any food service preparation facilities (e.g. region-wide central kitchens) must receive prior approval by all of the local health departments where service will be provided.
- i) Facilities must meet all fire and safety codes, with regular inspections.

6. Food and Equipment Procurement

All food and equipment procurement will be transacted in accordance with federal and state requirements for goods and services (MBA D-14).

- a) All goods privately contributed to the project must meet those standards of quality, sanitation, and safety that apply to foods that are purchased commercially by the Project.
- b) Foods prepared or canned in the home may not be used in meals provided by the Project. Foods that are uncooked and donated by participants may be used and may also be prepared for freezing at the sites for future use.
- c) Annual equipment inventories are to be conducted.

III. STAFFING STANDARDS

The Contractor must utilize an adequate number of qualified paid and volunteer staff to assure satisfactory operation of the program

Preference should be given to persons age 60 or over in the hiring for all positions when other qualifications are equal.

1. Staffing Pattern

a) The staffing pattern will include:

- i) Nutrition Program Director

The program director is empowered with the necessary authority to conduct the day-to-day management and administrative functions of the program.

The Program Director must be employed by and be responsible to the recipient agency of

this contract. The program director must account separately for time spent administering each Title III program.

The Program Director must have management and supervisory experience. A background in foods, nutrition or food service management is desirable, but if the Project Director does not have such a background, a person so qualified shall assist in the planning and in making decisions which affect the scope and quality of food service.

ii) Program Coordinator/Assistant Director

The Program Coordinator(s) or Assistant Director(s) monitor program implementation, supervises site operations, recruits, trains and supervises site staff, maintains site records and performs quality improvement and compliance activities as directed by the Program Director. This position develops and maintains local consumer advisory groups, networks and collaborates with area senior service providers.

The Program Coordinator/Assistance Director staff has management and supervisory experience. A background in foods, nutrition or food service management is desirable, but if the Project Coordinator does not have such a background, a person so qualified shall assist in the planning and in making decisions that affect the scope and quality of food service.

iii) Licensed Dietitian:

A Licensed Dietitian must be on staff or retained under contract to provide nutrition, dietary, or food service consultation to the Contractor. If the program director is a Licensed Dietitian, the requirement for a Licensed Dietitian may be waived.

Contractors are required to consult with a licensed dietitian or licensed nutritionist, at minimum in these areas:

1. Approve standard/master menus to include current recipes.
2. Modify and/or review, and approve substitutions to include recipes.
3. Modify menus to meet special diet requirements.
4. Periodically observe food preparation, serving and handling.
5. Provide technical assistance & training to nutrition program personnel.
6. Counsel participants on special dietary requirements (per request).

iv) Other Personnel:

The method used to provide meals will determine the number and type of permanent, consultant or volunteer personnel required to manage each nutrition site and provide fiscal, administrative and clerical support.

2. Staff Orientation/Training Plan

a) All staff, both paid and volunteer, receives orientation before providing senior nutrition services. The service provider should provide in-service training on a quarterly basis. Possible topics include follow-up to nutrition risk assessments, aging and health concerns of older persons, customer service, food sanitation/safety/storage, CPR and disaster preparation, cultural

sensitivity, contribution procedures, nutrient value of foods, etc.

In-service training should be designed to enhance each staff member's performance of his/her specific job responsibilities, and will take into account requests for training from staff, and be designed to resolve problems identified during MNRAAA quality assurance checks and assessment(s) of the Contractor.

b) Each service provider should have a written training plan describing the content of orientation and the subject matter expected to be covered during in-service training. The dates and content of training actually provided should also be documented.

c) Current written job descriptions shall be available for all paid and volunteer staff.

d) All staff shall have a performance evaluation at least once each year.

IV. ADVISORY COUNCILS/CONSUMER INPUT

(OAA Sec. 339(G); MBA D-14 AAA Policy and Procedures Manual)

a) Each nutrition project will establish and administer the nutrition project with the advice of licensed dietitians/nutritionists, persons competent in the field of service in which the nutrition project is being provided, older persons who participate in the program, and of persons who are knowledgeable with regard to the needs of older persons.

b) Each Contractor must make provision for periodically obtaining the advice of persons competent in the field of nutrition, older individuals who are participants, and person knowledgeable in the needs of the elderly relative to effective delivery of service.

c) Contractors shall establish a means of soliciting participant input on appropriate matters relating to the senior nutrition program through advisory councils, surveys, suggestion boxes, questionnaires.