

Congregate Meal Policy

1. General

This Policy addresses the Durham Center for Senior Life's (DCSL) commitment to integrity, ethical behavior and compliance with all applicable reporting regulations. The Policy establishes a procedure to ensure standardization of procedures at all congregate meal sites. The intent of the Nutrition Program is to provide a hot, nutritious meal and opportunities for activity and socialization to seniors over the age of 60 who live in Durham County.

2. Eligibility

Any resident of Durham over the age of 60 is qualified to participate in the meal program if they are registered at the congregate meal site where they will be receiving the meal. The participant may register at more than one site, but may only receive one meal daily. Special Eligibility; A client is determined to be special eligibility client if s/he meets the following:

- An adult under 60 may receive a congregate meal if their spouse is 60 or older and receives a meal as well.
- An adult under 60 may receive a meal if they are disabled and living in the same household of a 60 and older who receives the same service and shows proof of disability.
- A person with disabilities under 60 may receive a meal if residing in a congregate meal housing facility and shows proof of disability.
- A volunteer under 60 providing service during meal may receive a meal.

3. Registration

Registration forms are needed for all clients participating in the congregate meal program. The registration process is handled by the senior center manager at the congregate meal site. The completed registration forms are kept in a locked file on-site, and copies are sent to the Congregate Meal Coordinator. The Congregate Meal Coordinator enters the client information into the State's ARMS system. The Coordinator also maintains a copy in a locked file.

4. Reservations

The Council must cover the costs of meals whether or not they are served. To avoid over ordering meals and to guarantee that participants receive meals, participants must notify the Senior Center Manager by 1 PM on the preceding day to ensure that a meal has been ordered for them. If a participant arrives at the Center who has not notified the Senior Center Manager that s/he will be having lunch that day, then the participant must wait until the others are served, and s/he will only be served if there is food remaining. If a participant chronically makes a reservation and does not show, then s/he will be notified that they can no longer reserve a meal, and s/he will be treated as someone who has not made a reservation.

5. Contributions

There is no charge for the meal; however, a notice will be posted at every congregate meal site advising participants that they may make a voluntary contribution.

6. Take Home Food Policy

The purpose of the Congregate Meal Program is two fold: 1) it provides a hot, nutritious meal for seniors age 60 or older, and 2) it offers the meal in a congregate setting to increase socialization and to reduce isolation. All participants must come into the site and eat their meal at the senior center. If participants have leftover food on their plates and wish to take the remaining food home, they may do so; however, Council staff and/or volunteers cannot provide take home plates. If there is food left over after everyone has been served, second helpings will be offered until the food is gone, or until everyone has had his/her fill. Staff and volunteers may then be served. Leftover food poses a risk for food borne disease, and therefore, any remaining food must be properly discarded.

7. Volunteer Meals

Volunteers over the age of 60 must be properly registered and make a reservation to ensure that they receive a lunch. Volunteers under 60 may guarantee that they receive a meal by making a reservation and paying the full price of the meal.

8. Guest Policy

Senior Center participants are allowed to bring guests, family and friends with them to the program, with prior approval from the Senior Center Manager. If a participant would like for his/her visitor to receive a meal, the participant must notify the Center Manager

by 1:00 p.m. the day prior to eating at the site. The guest will be required to pay for the full price of a meal, which is set annually by the Council. The Senior Center Manager should check with the Congregate Meal Coordinator or Director of Finance for an up-to-date price for that meal.

9. Prayer Policy

All Congregate Meal participants have the right to engage in individual silent or verbal prayer. However, the Council for Senior Citizens recognizes the right of participants not to engage in any kind of prayer. Neither prayer nor any other religious activity shall be officially sponsored, organized or led by any member of the Council for Senior Citizens staff at any time.