



Policy: PA.5054
Title: **Provision of Food Service and Menu Preparation**
Department: CalOptima Health PACE
Section: Not Applicable

CEO Approval: /s/ Michael Hunn 02/21/2025

Effective Date: 10/01/2013

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Applicable to:

- ☐ Medi-Cal
- ☐ OneCare
- ☒ PACE
- ☐ Administrative

I. PURPOSE

This policy outlines the guidelines and procedures for food service and menu preparation for Participants in the CalOptima Health Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) Center.

II. POLICY

- A. CalOptima Health PACE shall serve safe, nourishing, palatable and well-balanced meals. Meal services shall also include dietary counseling and education.
- B. CalOptima Health PACE must provide substitute foods or nutritional supplements that meet the daily nutritional and special dietary needs of any Participant who has any of the following problems:
 - 1. Refuses the food served.
 - 2. Cannot tolerate the food served.
 - 3. Does not eat adequately.

III. PROCEDURE

- A. CalOptima Health PACE shall ensure all designated food service employee, including contracted food service vendors, adhere to the following meal service and menu guidelines:
 - 1. Meals served in the CalOptima Health PACE Center shall meet the recommended dietary allowances adopted by the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences.
 - 2. All food shall be selected, stored, prepared, and served in a safe and healthful manner.
 - 3. All food shall be prepared and served at the proper temperature.
 - 4. Participants who are present in the CalOptima Health PACE Center for four (4) hours or more shall receive one (1) meal that supplies at least one-third (1/3) of the National Research Council's recommended dietary allowances.

5. Participants who are in the CalOptima Health PACE Center for eight (8) hours shall receive one (1) meal and between meal nourishment that supplies at least one-half (1/2) of the National Research Council's recommended dietary allowances.
 - a. Nourishments between meals shall consist of, but not be limited to, a beverage and either fruits, vegetables, or grain products, such as crackers, cookies, or bread.
6. Participants receiving care for periods longer than eight (8) hours shall receive at least two (2) meals and between meal nourishments.
7. Any Participant accepted at 7 a.m. or earlier shall receive a nourishing breakfast unless it is determined that the Participant received a meal prior to arrival at the CalOptima Health PACE Center.
8. Meals served at the CalOptima Health PACE Center shall consist of a variety of food and be planned with consideration for medical needs, cultural and religious background, and food habits of the Participants.
 - a. CalOptima Health PACE shall adhere, as much as possible, to Participant food preferences, including ethnic foods.
9. The CalOptima Health PACE registered nurse and registered dietitian (RD) shall meet, as necessary, to adjust menus to provide for special dietary requirements of Participants.
 - a. CalOptima Health shall provide low-sodium and low-cholesterol diets through the Older Americans Act nutrition sites.
10. Monthly menus for all meals, between meal nourishments, and therapeutic diets shall be written at least one (1) week in advance and approved by the CalOptima Health PACE RD, and posted in the kitchen.
11. The CalOptima Health PACE RD shall note in writing on the menu posted in the kitchen area if any meal or between meal nourishment varies from the planned menu.
12. The CalOptima Health PACE RD shall retain a copy of the menu served for at least one (1) year.
13. Menus shall be available for review by each Participant who is receiving a meal or the Participant's designated representative.
14. Therapeutic diets shall be served as ordered by the Participant's provider or RD and prepared under the guidance of the CalOptima Health PACE RD.
15. The CalOptima Health PACE RD shall review the diet order for each Participant at least every ninety (90) calendar days.
16. Food provided by an outside commercial food service shall meet all applicable dietary requirements.
17. When prepared food and beverages are obtained from a food management service vendor, CalOptima Health PACE shall obtain documentation from the vendor to confirm that such food management service has been approved in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local requirements and that the menus have been planned by a qualified dietitian.

18. At the CalOptima Health PACE Center, CalOptima Health PACE shall provide equipment and employees to receive and serve the food and for cleanup. CalOptima Health PACE shall maintain equipment for in-house preparation and service of food in emergencies.
 19. Itemized records of foods purchased shall be kept for one (1) year and be available for review by the Department Health Care Services (DHCS).
- B. CalOptima Health PACE shall ensure all designated food service employees adhere to the following food safety guidelines:
1. CalOptima Health PACE employees shall receive training on food safety practices, as appropriate.
 2. Kitchens and kitchen areas shall be kept clean, free from litter and rubbish and protected from rodents, roaches, flies, and other vermin.
 3. No employee should commit any act that may result in the contamination or adulteration of food, food contact surfaces, or utensils.
 4. Plasticware, chinaware, and glassware that are unsanitary or hazardous because of chips, cracks or loss of glaze shall be discarded.
 5. Food held in refrigerators or other storage space shall be covered.
 6. Food which has been opened or prepared and is to be stored shall be labeled and dated. Kitchen and dietary employees will check refrigerators daily to ensure that all prepared food is labeled and dated and will record this inspection on the Food Labeling Log.
 7. All CalOptima Health PACE employees preparing, serving, or handling food or utensils must wear clean, washable outer garments, or other clean uniforms. All employees must wear hairnets, caps, or other suitable coverings to confine all hair when required to prevent the contamination of food, equipment, or utensils.
 8. All CalOptima Health PACE employees shall thoroughly wash their hands and any part of their arms that has direct exposure to food.
- C. Food Service
1. CalOptima Health PACE shall provide a dining area equipped for serving at mealtime.
 2. CalOptima Health PACE shall provide dishes, beverage containers, and eating utensils appropriate for use with the food being served.
 3. Each Participant shall be seated for meals on an individual chair, at a table, or as appropriate if the Participant is in a wheelchair.
 4. Each Participant shall be assisted by appropriate CalOptima Health PACE employees during meals, as needed.
 5. CalOptima Health PACE shall provide special equipment and utensils for self-help in eating, as needed.

6. CalOptima Health PACE shall provide sufficient food to provide additional servings as requested by the Participant served, unless the Participant is on a restricted diet prescribed by a Provider.
7. When necessary, CalOptima Health PACE shall cut, chop, ground, or purée food to meet the needs of individual Participants.

D. Employees

1. CalOptima Health PACE shall employ and train sufficient numbers of employees and shall schedule their working hours to provide for the nutritional needs of the Participants in the CalOptima Health PACE Center.
 - a. If these employees are assigned duties in other services, those duties shall not interfere with food service work assignments.
2. Each employee engaged in food preparation and service shall practice personal hygiene, including hand washing, wearing clean clothing and wearing of caps, or hairnets. This includes Participants who may, as part of their planned program, assist with food preparation.
 - a. Employees shall be excluded from food preparation duty when affected by gastrointestinal illness, skin infections, colds or other communicable illnesses.

E. Monitoring

1. The CalOptima Health PACE RD or designee shall conduct periodic food safety and sanitation audits to ensure compliance and report any issues for follow-up action to the CalOptima Health PACE Quality Improvement Department.

IV. ATTACHMENT(S)

- A. Food Labeling Log

V. REFERENCE(S)

- A. CalOptima Health PACE Program Agreement
- B. Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences, Recommended Dietary Allowances
- C. PACE Desk Reference: ServSafe Food Handler Certification
- D. California Health and Safety Code, §114020
- E. Title 22, California Code of Regulations (C.C.R.), §§54331, 78319, 78321, 78325, 78327, and 78333
- F. Title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.), §460.78

VI. REGULATORY AGENCY APPROVAL(S)

None to Date

VII. BOARD ACTION(S)

None to Date

VIII. REVISION HISTORY

Action	Date	Policy	Policy Title	Program(s)
Effective	10/01/2013	PA.5054	Provision of Food Service and Menu Preparation	PACE
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Revised	02/01/2025	PA.5054	Provision of Food Service and Menu Preparation	PACE

IX. GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)	The single State Department responsible for administration of the Medi-Cal program, California Children's Services (CCS), Genetically Handicapped Persons Program (GHPP), Child Health and Disabilities Prevention (CHDP), and other health related programs.
PACE Center	The location designated by CalOptima Health PACE at which Participants shall receive PCP services.
Participant	An individual enrolled in the CalOptima Health PACE program.
Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE)	PACE is a long-term comprehensive health care program that helps older adults to remain as independent as possible. PACE coordinates and provides all needed preventive, primary, acute and long-term care services so seniors can continue living in their community.