

**MAURA T.
HEALEY**
Governor

KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL
Lieutenant Governor

KATHLEEN E. WALSH
Secretary, Executive Office
of Health & Human Services

ROBIN LIPSON
Secretary, Executive Office of
Aging & Independence

PI-25-10
Ref: PI-24-16

TO: Aging Services Access Points (ASAP) Executive Directors, Nutrition Directors

FROM: Kelly Slattery, Director of Nutrition Services

DATE: 10/2/2025

RE: Revised Meal Policies Regarding Frozen Meals

Purpose:

This Program Instruction (PI) transmits information regarding the production and handling of frozen meals. The original PI addressing frozen meals, PI-10-06, included guidance on cook/chill and cook/chill/rethermalization systems as well as frozen meals. This PI separates the guidance on frozen meals from guidance on cook/chill and cook/chill/rethermalization.

This PI supersedes and replaces PI-10-06.

Background:

The Older Americans Act authorizes at least one hot or other appropriate meal per day to be delivered to eligible older adults in their homes (OAA Title III Part C, Sec. 331). Nutrition Programs are responsible for conducting assessments to determine if an individual is at high risk of food insecurity, or malnutrition, and therefore may benefit from the provision of additional meals for evening, weekend, or holiday coverage. After assessment, and if it is determined a home delivered meals participant may benefit from additional meals, frozen meals may be provided to help meet their nutritional needs.

Medically tailored frozen meals may be provided to consumers who will benefit from such meals if the nutrition program does not offer medically tailored meals as part of their regular meal program. For guidance on medically tailored meals, see PI-24-16 Revision of Home Delivered Meals Assessment for Nutrition and Home Care.

Revised Frozen Meals Policy:

On behalf of the Senior Nutrition Programs in the Commonwealth, the Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE) procures frozen meal vendor(s). To be considered for this statewide agreement, commercial frozen meals vendors must have already applied for and received a [Grant of USDA Inspection](#). This procurement requires vendors to demonstrate their ability to meet all local, state, and Federal food production laws and regulations. All Nutrition Programs are required to purchase frozen meals from the AGE-procured frozen meal vendor(s) and pursuant to such agreement.

Limited Waiver Process for Alternative Frozen Meals Vendors:

If a Nutrition Program identifies the need to obtain frozen meals which are unavailable from the vendor contracted with AGE, that program can apply for a waiver to purchase a limited number of frozen meals from an alternate source.

The waiver process includes the following considerations:

- Vendor must be located in the commonwealth of Massachusetts.
- Determine if vendor meets Massachusetts regulations regarding preparation, storage, and transportation of frozen food License under (M.G.L. C 94: 73A) and licensed under MGL c.94, 305C Minimum Sanitation Standards for food handling.
- All exempted food service providers are required to have a blast freezer and/or demonstrate that they can cool food in a timeline according to the Food Code (from 140°F down to 70°F or less within two hours, and drop the temperature from 70°F to 41°F or less within 4 additional hours).

Waivers for a limited number of specific meal types or circumstances will be granted by AGE and need to be renewed each year on July 1. The process of procuring frozen meals from an alternate source should follow standard procurement procedures.

Effective Date:

Immediately

Contact:

If you have questions about this PI, please contact Kelly Slattery, Director of Nutrition Programs, at kelly.slattery@mass.gov.