

Q&A Session for RFP# 2023-028VF – Congregate Services for Older Adults

Department Staff: James Strusienski, Janice Nowak, Kae Savar, Ryan Gadzo, Randy Machelor, Angela Marinucci

Attendees: Melissa Abel (Amherst MOW), Kathy Graim (Feed More WNY), Rachel Leidenfrost (Feed More WNY), Dan Wiles (Ken-Ton MOW), Jessica Nowak (Ken-Ton MOW),

1. **Apart from the pricing form, do you have a required form for the completion of the proposal narrative?**

There is no formal form to complete your proposal on. However, in submitting your proposal, keep in mind the areas highlights in the “A Successful Proposal Will” and the Evaluation Section. These are the areas that will be scored by members of the selection committee.

2. **Is there an “Intent to Respond” form? No. We do not require an Intent to Respond Letter or form.**
3. **Is there any history of general budget detail for frozen grab and go meals? No, not specifically, our frozen meal program is relatively new. Proposers should look at our Price Proposal spreadsheet frozen meal sites tab which lists the number of actual frozen meals ordered in 2022 to see the current size of the program.**
4. **Either way, could a provider just put forward a proposal for frozen meals, and exclude the non-frozen items such as fruit and milk? No, the RFP requires the frozen and non-frozen items in a frozen meal be bid together without separation.**
5. **If not, is there an option to nominate a local supplier for milk and fruit (or any other non-frozen item) as part of a bid? A proposer can use any combination of delivery for frozen and fresh components, as long as it is outlined within the proposal. Proposing agency would be responsible for coordinating fresh component drop-off with frozen meal delivery to sites on delivery dates.**
6. **As an out-of-state provider (licensed in MA and credentialed to deliver frozen meals anywhere), are there any local laws/requirements to be aware of early? We are not specifically aware of any, but vendor compliance with all local laws is required.**
7. **Do the requirements to meet minimum ‘local food’ minimums hold for the frozen grab-n-go model as well? We hope to have fresh fruits and vegetables sourced locally. However, if a proposer cannot meet these requirements, we still encourage them to submit a response knowing that the scoring of their proposal may be impacted.**
8. **Does the 2-week limit (preparation to delivery) hold for the frozen model? Yes.**
9. **You indicate that the pricing proposal must be submitted on the supplied form and under separate cover. If we want to provide a brief narrative or explanation of options in addition to the form, should we do so in the body of the proposal OR with the form submitted under separate copy? Any proposal with cost should be submitted separately from the proposal itself. Please make sure to include pricing on the supplied form based on the menu presented in the RFP. Other pricing options should be submitted as part of the Cost Proposal and can be discussed during contract negotiation after selection, if applicable.**
10. **Are professional references (names, phone numbers, emails) needed for incumbent organizations that you have long-standing experience with? If so, can references on behalf of**

the organization be submitted instead of references for each of the 'key personnel'? Staffing or operations may have changed for incumbents over the life of the last contract. **ALL PROPOSERS** should include resumes and references for key personnel and are encouraged to submit references on behalf of their organization.

11. In terms of last-minute (24 or 48 hour) changes in meal counts, is this still capped at 10% up or down? **There is no cap.**
12. The change in sodium from 1500 mg to ~800 mg in sodium will be a significant change that will negatively impact the opportunity to serve many client favorites (e.g., polish sausage, hot dogs, breaded pork chops, gravy, ham steak, etc.). We also worry that it will negatively impact variety and client satisfaction. Please confirm if this is in fact a desired change and/or what percentage of meals you are hoping to see in the 800 mg range? **Our goal is to provide good-tasting and nutritious meals offering a wide variety of menu items, knowing that keeping sodium levels down has always been a challenge. Erie County has provided the 13 week sample menu that reflects the amount and usage of some higher sodium products. Please use this as your guide upon which to base your proposal.**
13. For the frozen grab and go meals, currently 90% of the meals go out on Monday and 10% go out on Tuesday. Is there an opportunity to spread this out more evenly between Monday and Tuesday? **This would aid operations and efficiency. Yes.**
14. For the frozen grab and go meals, the RFP only mentions the 5-packs and not the 3-packs. Does this mean we are eliminating the 3-packs? (We are concerned that some clients may decline to order instead of increasing due to financial realities and/or freezer storage space. As well, some clients today purchase 3 + 5 to make an 8-pack.) **We are only requesting a five-pack order option, but you are welcome to submit additional cost proposals.**
15. Can you please clarify the following question: "A description of any congregate meal service that the organization provides including source of funding - private pay, municipal funding, Medicaid reimbursement, other"? **We are not sure what is desired here? We will in another space talk about how our fundraising supports programming overall (CON, HDM, and other services). This is asking what other funding sources your agency may serve meals through. For example, we serve clients who receive Medicaid, private pay, municipal, state and federal funds to pay for the meals served.**
16. There is a smaller list of provided congregate sites in the RFP. Does that mean that the remaining sites that have not yet opened since Covid are, in fact, permanently closed? **The sites that are missing from the list are still in process of opening; none are officially closed.**
17. Can you provide a list of companies you are expecting proposals from? **As we do not require a letter of intent for proposals, we do not have a list of companies available that may be submitting a proposal.**
18. The only peanut butter we currently serve is in sealed containers. Peanuts are, of course, an aromatic allergen. Will the peanut butter cookies be served to all clients? And do you have any additional requirements regarding packaging? **We are looking to create a menu that provides variety, if peanut usage is a commissary issue, we are willing to utilize any other cookie options in the menu mix. A pre-packaged peanut butter cookie may be your best option.**
19. We see several brand-new menu items. Can you provide more detail on what these are (or recipes) so that what we price aligns with your expectations for the meals? (This includes

Bavarian Red Cabbage, Cabbage Roll Casserole, Cheesy Chicken & Broccoli Bake, Lentil Soup, Pumpkin Bavarian, Sautéed Cabbage, Tikka Masala Sauce).

4oz. Bavarian Red Cabbage: Chopped red cabbage, bacon, vinegar, sugar, -cooked until tender.

8oz. Cheesy chicken: Rice, pulled chicken, chopped broccoli, chicken broth, cheese sauce.

8oz. Cabbage roll casserole: Rice, chopped green cabbage, ground beef, savory tomato sauce (cream of tomato soup & tomato sauce)

8 oz. Lentil Soup – lentils, chicken broth, onions, celery, carrots, chopped tomatoes, seasonings such as garlic, thyme, bay leaf, oregano, cumin

4 oz. Pumpkin Bavarian – canned pumpkin, butterscotch pudding, whipped topping

4 oz. Sautéed Cabbage – cabbage sautéed in butter and chicken broth

2 oz. Tikka Masala Sauce – chicken stock, tomato sauce, tomato paste, heavy cream, garlic, onion, black pepper, ginger, garam masala, chili powder, turmeric