

**Q & A Session for RFP # 2023-031VF Home Delivered Meal Services for Older Adults**  
**Tuesday May 9<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 pm**

Department Staff: James Strusienki, Janice Nowak, Kae Savar, Ryan Gadzo, Melissa Dentice, Anthony Gregorczyk, Maria Anna Vona

- 1) **How many current Home Delivered Meals are Erie County providing?** 746,743 meals served in 2022.
- 2) **How many meals were served in Q1 of 2023?** 195,192 meals served in Q1 of 2023.
- 3) **Do you have a weekly forecast of meals currently?** Approximately 15,016 per week.
- 4) **Will the vendor be responsible for the initial nutrition assessment?** This will be a collaboration between the vendor and Erie County.
- 5) **Under Section 3, subcategory A, are providers mandated to provide a hot meal or are chilled meals accepted as well?** We are asking for a hot lunch and a cold/chilled dinner as part of the proposal. Any deviations from the written RFP requests should be clearly noted in proposal narratives and cost proposals, if applicable.
- 6) **If a hot lunch was not provided, would that provider be considered un-eligible for Home Delivered Meal service?** No, proposals would not be deemed ineligible if they only offered cold/chilled meals and we welcome all proposers to submit a proposal. Responses will all be graded on the same metrics by our Review Committee based on the information requested in the RFP.
- 7) **Was the weekly data going to be provided for 2022 as well or just Q1 of 2023?** There was an average of 14,360 meals served per week in 2022.
- 8) **For delivery methods, is UPS considered acceptable under Erie County?** Any delivery method is deemed acceptable as long as the way that the food is handled meets all requirements for food safety such as temperature and timeline guidelines.
- 9) **Under Section B, line 5, (“Proposers may be required to give an oral presentation to the County to clarify or elaborate on the written proposals. Those Proposers will be notified to arrange specific times.”) does that need to be completed in person or is virtual allowed?** Virtual is allowed; the meeting will be scheduled in a manner that would be agreed upon by the proposer and the County.

**Written Q & A submitted by May 12<sup>th</sup>, 4PM EST**

- 1) **You are requiring monthly nutrition education via non-printed materials, which is not in keeping with the realities of a home-bound clientele. Was this an accidental carry-over from another RFP?** No, in line with Federal and State requirements, Erie County is requiring monthly nutrition education meetings via non-printed materials.
- 2) **If the requirement regarding monthly training is accurate, you note that all HDM participants must participate in monthly nutrition education that is interactive and have the ability to ask questions during sessions. Please confirm that you mean must have the opportunity to participate in such training?** The goal of the Home Delivered Meal program is to reach all the participants and provide them with monthly, interactive nutrition education.
- 3) **In terms of the interactive nutrition education training, is an online training option acceptable or must this be a hybrid option?** An online format is acceptable, as long as it is interactive. We

do recommend having a variety of formats to fit the restrictions of some clients who do not have internet access. Erie County can assist with this, if needed.

- 4) You discuss the possibility of less than two meals per day per client (which we interpret as a one- or two-meal unit option). Is this a change that you are anticipating for newly onboarded clients or for legacy clients as well? Do you have a targeted % of one-meal versus two-meal clients? This will be important for us as we develop a budget. No anticipated change, but we will be accepting proposals that allow for meal amount flexibility.
- 5) You are asking for additional information on several areas. However, you have changed the maximum pages (outside of appendices) from 35 to 25. Is this correct or was this page count in error? The maximum number of pages is 25.
- 6) The service need in the 2023 RFP does not include the under 60 population currently funded in part by EC Dept. of Social Services. Was this a deliberate exclusion? No
- 7) Who is the incumbent? Currently Erie County contracts with three providers: FeedMore of WNY, Amherst Meals on Wheels, and Ken-Ton Meals on Wheels.
- 8) Is the incumbent eligible to rebid? Yes, all proposers are welcome and eligible to bid or rebid.
- 9) Can you share the per meal price for the incumbent? / Can you please provide the 2022 unit price for HDM? We are engaged in Home Delivered Meal contracts with several vendors. Erie County contracts, including the Home Delivered Meal contracts are subject to NYS FOIL law. To obtain information on how to obtain and submit a FOIL request, please visit: [Freedom of Information Law | Erie County, New York](#)
- 10) Are uniformed personnel required? No
- 11) Are program logos required on delivery vehicles? No
- 12) If a delivery provider is delivering to multiple municipalities, is there flexibility on the timeframe for lunch and dinner delivery (between municipalities)? A noon-time meal is the goal but may be flexible within an hour. Timing for non-hot meals may have room for flexibility according to Federal and New York State guidelines.
- 13) Are there specific requirements for a “good” source of Vitamin C or A? Vitamins A and C should come from a variety of fruit and vegetable sources. For the purpose of this RFP requiring a two-meal component, the combined values of Vitamins A and C should be at a minimum of 600 RAE and 60 mg, respectively.
- 14) What is considered a “low” sodium product? Erie County Nutrition staff are willing to work with providers to come up with appropriate products that meet specifications.
- 15) What is considered a “moderate” level of saturated fat or sodium? Erie County Nutrition staff are willing to work with providers to come up with appropriate products that meet specifications.
- 16) Can you share the reasons for Grand Island’s nonparticipation in 2022? They have not requested to participate in the Home Delivered nutrition program for 2022. Erie County is open to contracting with the municipality of Grand Island for any of the Nutrition programs, at any time, if they so wish. All municipalities within the County are invited to participate in Erie County Department of Senior Services’ nutrition programs.
- 17) If anyone has tried and failed to add a municipality, what was the reason? No municipality has tried and failed to be added to the Erie County Department of Senior Services’ nutrition programs.

- 18) **What is an accepted reason for not delivering a meal?** Emergency situations only to be discussed between provider and Erie County.
- 19) **What is the policy for dealing with pets during a delivery?** There is no policy in place, though meal recipients are asked to have their pets secured and out of the way during delivery time.
- 20) **How far in advance can we receive access to PeerPlace?** This would depend on how fast access can be gained after a fully executed contract between the provider and Erie County is completed.
- 21) **What is the final authority for weather-based cancellations?** Cancellations are determined together between Erie County and the vendor. Advance cancellations are permitted when extreme weather/emergencies events are forecasted for the safety of emergency personnel and drivers of home delivered meals.
- 22) **Are we permitted to deliver frozen meals in advance of anticipated weather events?** This would be determined after discussions between Erie County and the vendor prior to the anticipated weather event, but it is preferred that there be a plan to deliver supplemental meals ahead of anticipated weather events.
- 23) **How often are meals tested?** Delivery meal routes are tested every month.
- 24) **What are the other approved tray types?** Any type of tray may be used as long as it meets the NYSDOH time and temperature guidelines for hot and/or cold food delivery.
- 25) **Regarding the bread requirement – Is the need for bread for calories/micronutrients, our dietitian is inquiring. Other AAA organizations have approved omitting the bread because we are able to achieve 1/3 DRI requirements with fewer components. The proposer will be evaluated and scored based on their adherence to the County provided menus. Any deviations from the RFP requests should be clearly noted in the proposer’s narrative and cost proposal, if applicable.**
- 26) **Regarding the butter requirement – We currently do not use butter in our facility, our dietitian is also inquiring if this is needed for calories/ fat. If so, that is not a problem we can provide the requirement, but please let us know if this is needed from a nutritional standpoint because we would like to offer plant-forward alternatives instead. Butter is preferred, but other options can be discussed.**
- 27) **Is a dairy alternative beverage sufficient for the milk requirement? Milk is preferred, but other options can be discussed.**