



Food@Work:

What you need to know

Chronic disease accounts for 70% of all annual deaths in the United States. Poor diets lead to chronic illnesses, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and obesity.

What we eat impacts our health, well-being, and how we perform as employees. Healthy eating can lead to increased productivity at work, decreased absence due to sick days, reduced risk for chronic illness, and improved overall well-being.

Food Service Guidelines can help employers assess and improve the foods and beverages served at their worksites.

What are Food Service Guidelines?

- Food service guidelines are evidence-based best practices for serving healthier foods and beverages in worksites and community settings.
- Initially developed for federal worksites, The Federal Food Service Guidelines (FSG) serve as a model that can be adapted and used in other workplace settings.
- FSG encourage the availability of healthier foods and beverages, environmentally responsible practices, and food safety practices that minimize food-borne illness.

Which worksites and venues can utilize Food Service Guidelines?

Worksites:

- Federal, state and local government facilities
- Hospitals and healthcare facilities
- Colleges and universities
- Correctional institutions
- Private worksites

Venues:

- Cafeterias/Cafés
- Vending machines
- Concession stands/snack bars/carts
- Food Trucks
- Distributive meal programs
- Meals served to institutionalized populations

How can the Health Links® Food@Work Module help enhance employee health, safety, and well-being at your workplace?

1. Assessment of Current Landscape

- **Food@Work Survey:** Your organization can use the online survey to evaluate existing food and beverage options available to employees, identifying gaps and areas for improvement.

2. Data-Driven Insights

- **Report Card:** After completing the survey, your organization receives a comprehensive report card that highlights strengths and weaknesses in current food offerings, providing clear direction for improvement.

3. Tailored Recommendations

- **Customized Strategies:** Based on your survey results, Health Links advising offers specific, actionable recommendations tailored to your organization's needs, ensuring that changes align with your specific needs.

4. Expert Guidance

- **Advising Sessions:** Your organization receives personalized consultations with experts who can help interpret survey results and help you implement effective changes. Advising sessions provide ongoing support throughout the improvement process.

5. Comprehensive Toolkit

- **Resources and Tools:** The module includes a toolkit with evidence-based practices, resources, and strategies to promote healthy eating and active living, equipping your organizations with the knowledge and tools necessary to foster a healthier workplace.

By providing healthier food and beverage options, your organization can enhance employee well-being, leading to decreased absenteeism, lower healthcare costs, and increased productivity. Implementing the Food@Work Module helps your organization promote a culture of health and well-being.

<https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/food-service-guidelines/easy-access-to-healthy-foods.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/food-service-guidelines/federal-facilities.html>

Federal Food Service Guidelines

Category	Guideline/Recommendation
Fruits and Vegetables (Fruit can be fresh, canned, frozen, or dried. Vegetables can be fresh, frozen, or canned, and served cooked or raw)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a variety of at least 3 fruit options, with no added sugars • Offer a variety of at least 3 non-fried vegetable options • Offer seasonal fruits and vegetables
Grains (Examples include oatmeal, wild rice, barley, or quinoa. Products such as bread, pasta, or tortilla shells should be made with a blend of whole grain meal or flour and enriched meal or flour, of which at least 50% is whole grain.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer half of total grains as “whole grain-rich” products • Offer a “whole grain-rich” product as the first (i.e., default) choice.
Dairy (Dairy products include milk, yogurt, cheese, and soy beverages. Low-fat dairy is no-fat or low-fat options that meet FDA nutrient claims)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a variety of low-fat dairy products (or dairy alternatives) daily, such as milk, yogurt, cheese, and fortified soy beverages. • When yogurt is available, offer at least one low-fat plain yogurt.
Proteins (Protein includes seafood, lean meats, poultry, eggs, legumes, nuts, seeds, and soy products)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a variety of non-fried protein foods, such as seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, legumes (beans and peas), nuts, seeds, and soy products, daily. • Offer seafood at least two times a week.
Sodium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All meals* offered contain 800 mg sodium or less • All entrees** offered contain 600 mg sodium or less • All side*** items contain 230 mg sodium or less
Trans Fat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All foods do not include partially hydrogenated oils

Category	Guideline/Recommendation
Packaged Snacks (Examples include granola bars, chips, crackers, raisins, nuts, and seeds. Standards apply to each package, regardless of its size or number of servings)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contain ≤200 mg sodium per package • Have 0 grams of trans fat • Have as the first ingredient a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food; a whole grain-rich grain product; or a combination food containing at least ¼ cup of fruit and/or vegetable • Calorie limit: ≤200 calories • Saturated fat limit: <10% of calories • Sugar limit: ≤35% of weight from total sugars in foods
Beverages (Includes drinks such as water, milk, 100% juice, soft drinks, energy drinks, teas, and coffees)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide free access to chilled, potable water. • When milk and fortified soy beverages are available, offer low-fat beverages with no added sugars. • When juice is available, offer 100% juice with no added sugars. • At least 50% of available beverage choices contain ≤40 calories per 8 fluid ounces (excluding 100% juice and unsweetened fat-free or low-fat [1%] milk). • At least 75% of available beverage choices contain ≤40 calories per 8 fluid ounces (excluding 100% juice and unsweetened fat-free or low-fat [1%] milk).
Food Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean (wash hands, sanitize surfaces, clean appliances, rinse fruits and vegetables) • Separate (use separate cutting boards for fruits/vegetables and raw proteins) • Cook (use a food thermometer to ensure food is safely cooked) • Chill (store perishable food in plastic containers in the refrigerator)

* A meal consists of

** An entree consists of

*** A side consists of

Adapted from:

Food Service Guidelines Federal Workgroup. Food Service Guidelines for Federal Facilities. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2017.