Improving the Food and Beverage Environment

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Culture of Health

A culture in which people live, work, learn, play and pray in environments that support healthy behaviors, timely quality care and overall well-being.

The healthy choice is the easy choice.
Healthy Food and Beverage Policy, Systems and Environmental Approach

• Improving the types of foods and beverages served and sold in workplaces positively affects employees’ eating behaviors and can result in weight loss.

• Maintaining a healthy workforce can positively impact indirect costs by reducing absenteeism and increasing worker productivity.
**POLICY:**
Policy requiring minimum percent of foods sold in vending machines on city property meet nutritional requirements.

**SYSTEMS:**
Work with existing or new vending machine operators to change product mix.

**ENVIRONMENT:**
Create marketing & educational materials to inform customers about the healthy changes.

Example:
healthy vending machines
Improving Food and Beverage Options in the Workplace

Meetings • Catered Meals • Vending • Snacks
Getting Started
What is a successful plan?

• Fully integrated with the overall goals and objectives of the company/organization
• Clearly state goals, identify strategies and commit resources to those strategies
• Establish a means for evaluating and making adjustments
Engage Key Stakeholders

A team-based approach will help your company/organization increase by-in and identify effective strategies to implement.

- Human resources
- Purchasing/Procurement
- Health and Wellness
- Foodservice/Catering Vendor(s)
- Administrative Directors – across departments
Assess the Environment

- Survey your employees/members about their perceptions of healthy eating
- Assess vending selections (beverage and snack)
- Assess vendor(s) ability to provide healthier options
- Assess on-site and offsite meals being provided by the company
Survey of Employees/Members

• How often do you purchase items from the vending machine and/or the on-site cafeteria?

• What is important to you when making a purchase? Taste, price or nutrition?

• If healthier options were available to you would you purchase them? If not, why?
Assessment of Vending

- Determine where vending machines are located and what products are offered
- % of healthy vs. unhealthy
- Placement of items within the machine
- How many slots are devoted to each type of snack option
Assessment of Vending – Snacks

• **Standards for snack foods** (*other than plain nuts and nut/fruit mixes*):
  – No more than 200 calories
  – No more than **240 mg sodium** (preferably no more than 140 mg)
  – No more than 1 g saturated fat
  – No more than 0 g trans fat and no products containing partially hydrogenated oils

• **Standards for plain nuts and nut/fruit mixes**:
  – Acceptable nuts are almonds, hazelnuts, peanuts, pecans, pistachios and walnuts
  – Mixes are nuts and fruit only; no chocolate or candy
  – Serving size is no more than 1.5 oz
  – No more than **140 mg sodium** per serving (preferably lower; choose products with lowest amount)
Assessment of Beverage Options

• Water (plain, sparkling and flavored) – no more than 10 calories per serving

• Fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk and milk alternatives (soy, almond, etc.) – no more than 130 calories per 8 fl. oz.

• Juice – 100% fruit or vegetable juice
  – No added sugars/sweeteners (except non-nutritive sweeteners)
  – No more than 120 calories per 8 fl. oz. (preferred serving size)

• Other beverages – no more than 10 calories per serving
Assess Options with Vendor(s)

- Does the vendor allow contracts to be amended prior to their expiration date? For example, to specify a healthier mix of food and beverages for vending.
- Are they able to provide the nutritional values for the beverages and snack foods carried?
- Is the vendor able to secure other products not currently on your list if requested?
- Is the vendor able to provide smaller package sizes if you requested it?
- Is the vendor able to provide monthly/quarterly sales reports of the specific food and beverage items purchased by employees/members?
Assess On-site/Off-site Meals

• Does your company have a policy about what types of foods and beverages can be provided when they are paid for by the organization?

• Who plans/selects/orders food and beverages provided by the organization for meetings and events?

• Does your company have a centralized purchasing process?
Determine the Approach

- Establish nutrition standards for the program and implementation plan
  - Access (cafeteria, vending, catering for on-site and offsite meetings, special events)
  - Price
  - Placement
  - Phase-in timeline

- Share proposed plan with Senior Management
Make the healthy choice the easy choice...

Price

Product

Placement

Promotion
Educate staff and other key stakeholders

- Cultivate support for the healthier options through staff meetings, e-communication, cafeteria/vending signage
- Have messages from leadership
- Ask staff to taste test new products
- Administer online surveys
Implementation and Monitoring

- Announce the program to the general public through press release, social media, etc., in addition to your employees.

- Tracking is a critical step to measure progress
  - Ability to report back to leadership
  - Understand the economic impact
  - Recognize the impact of the program
Celebrate Success

• Highlight trends in company newsletter
• Host a spotlight event by inviting local speaker/advocate
• Showcase internal champion(s) and advocates for the healthier options
AHA Resources

www.heart.org/foodwhereur
Toolkit Features

- Provides guidance for healthier meals, snacks and vending machines
- Can be adopted by any size organization
- Qualitative – recommendations, tips and suggestions
- Quantitative – nutrition standards for specific food categories
- Sample menu, tools and additional resources
Healthier Meals

- Make healthier options appealing and accessible.
- Provide reasonable portions of foods and beverages.
- Offer a fruit and/or vegetable every time food is served.
- Bread products should be whole grain (if needed).
- Do not serve butter.

- Provide fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk (if needed).
- No regular soft drinks or sugar-sweetened beverages.
Meal Planning Tools

- Action Plan for On-site Meals
- Menu Plan for Off-site Events
- Guidance for Caterers and Food Vendors
- NEW - Checklist for evaluating meals
Healthier Snacks

- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Whole-grain crackers
- Hummus, salsa and other light dips
- Nuts and trail mix
- Light popcorn
- Fat-free/low-fat yogurt
Healthier Vending Machines

- Offer the smallest package sizes available.
- Set goal that at least 50% of the products are healthy
- Utilize the inventory worksheets to determine baseline
Office Food

• Remove candy bowls or replace with fruit.
• Limit the amount of time it’s available.
• Provide healthier suggestions.
• Avoid less healthy foods (donuts, cookies, etc.).
• Explore new ways to celebrate special occasions.
Benefits

• Helps build the culture of health, making the healthy choice the easy choice
• Meets people where they are and facilitates environmental change from within
• Educates employees about healthier choices and healthy eating patterns
• Helps drive demand for healthier choices from vendors
Sample Policy for Healthy Beverages in Workplaces

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the sale, availability and promotion of beverages in (workplace name).

**Scope of Policy:** This policy applies to any and all beverages offered or sold in (workplace name).

**Policy:**
(Workplace name) will promote water as the preferred beverage. Clear signage will promote water as the healthy option.

The availability of sugar-sweetened beverages will be reduced in the staff cafeteria and vending machines and replaced with low or no-sugar options.

**Signed by: Date:**
Questions?