

Texas Health and Human Services Commission

Office of Area Agencies on Aging

Instructions for Completing the Determination of Type of Meal Assessment

Requirements

Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and nutrition providers are required to complete a Determination of Type of Meal (DTM) assessment to ensure a person can manage the type of meal being considered. The form is also used to document the steps taken by a AAA or meal provider if barriers are identified or resources accessed when flexible meals are not an appropriate option.

The DTM must be completed in a person's home face-to-face with the recipient or the recipient's caregiver before a person receives chilled, frozen or shelf-stable meals which are to be consumed on a different day than they are delivered (flexible meals). A new DTM form must be completed annually.

The DTM form is not needed for a meal that is delivered for consumption the same day, and the DTM form is not needed for meals served in emergency conditions, inclement weather, disasters or on holidays.

Results of the DTM must be entered in the State Unit on Aging Programs Uniform Reporting System (SPURS) by the AAA or the provider. All questions must be answered, unless indicated in these instructions.

Conducting an Interview

To help determine if a person can safely handle and store the type of meals considered, explain the following:

- Estimated size and weight of a box of meals
- Size of each individual meal packet
- Method used to seal (packing tape, glue, etc.) the box and what may be needed to open the container
- Shipping or transportation materials that will need to be disposed
- Where instructions to prepare the meals are in each delivery
- Where the expiration date of a meal is located on each meal packet

Observe the environment of the home to identify any barriers to delivering or managing the meals that may not be covered in the DTM form.

Explain that contacts will be made by the AAA or the meal provider.

Explain that meals will never be left unattended outside the person's home. The meals must be delivered directly to the person who is eligible, or to that person's designated caregiver.

Instructions to complete the Determination of Type of Meal

The following information is required to complete the DTM for each person assessed for flexible meal delivery.

- Name of the proposed meal provider;
- Date the assessment was conducted;
- Name of the person conducting the evaluation;
- Person's first and last name;
- Client ID (primary local client identifier, if known); and
- Type of meals requested (chilled, frozen, or shelf-stable). If the person will receive a combination of meal types, select all that apply.

If the information is entered directly into SPURS, the person's first and last name and primary local client identifier are automatically populated by the system.

Questions

1. Ask the person if they have a working refrigerator or freezer. If the person has both a working refrigerator and freezer be sure to mark "Yes" to both. If "No" and a refrigerator or freezer will be purchased, complete the "Resources to Overcome Barriers" section. This question can be skipped if the person will receive only shelf-stable meals.
2. Tell the person how many meals will come in each delivery and the approximate size of the meals and ask if there is enough room in the refrigerator or freezer to store the requested meal type. If there is not enough space to store the requested meal types mark "No" and if a refrigerator or freezer will be purchased to provide enough room to store the meals, complete the "Resources to Overcome Barriers" section.
3. Explain how the meals will need to be opened and prepared. Ask the person if they can prepare the meals by themselves. Meals may be covered by a removeable film and other packaging, and you should be sure the person has a way to remove the all packaging according to the cooking directions.
4. Explain the type of heating device needed to heat up the requested meal type. Ask if the person has a heating device to prepare the type of meal to be delivered and mark the appropriate heating device. If the person has the

heating device necessary, mark "Yes". If the person does not have the appropriate heating device mark "No" and if a heating device will be purchased, complete the "Resources to Overcome Barriers" section.

5. Ask the person if they have any difficulty reading or understanding instructions. Emphasize the importance of preparing the meals correctly and throwing away meals that have expired.

Identify if the person has someone to help them understand instructions, if instructions need to be verbal, or in the person's identified language. Take note of these needs to determine how those needs can be accommodated, including locating a caregiver. If no accommodation is available, the person should be assessed for other meal services including hot meals.

6. Ask the person if they have difficulty eating specific foods. Select all that apply. If the person has difficulty eating specific foods, shelf-stable meals may not be appropriate.
7. Ask the person if they know when there is someone at the door. The meals must not be left unattended anywhere outside the person's home or at a location other than where the person lives.
8. Describe the approximate size and weight of the package and ask if they will be able to receive the box and carry it to where they store the meals. Observe the home to see if there is a clear pathway from the door to the storage area. Emphasize the importance of storing chilled and frozen meals right away to be sure they are safe.
9. Ask the person if they can open the box of meals, unpack the meals and store them in the refrigerator/freezer/pantry. Some boxes may need to be opened with scissors or other tools and you should be sure the person has those tools available and can use them. Meals should be stored in the refrigerator or freezer immediately.
10. Inform the person of the approximate timeframe and day that meals will be delivered. Ask the person if they will be there on a regular basis to receive the meals. If they are unable to be there, ask if there is someone who can be there on their behalf. Inform the person how they can cancel a delivery if they are unable to be home to receive a shipment and how far in advance they will need to contact the provider to cancel a delivery. Meals must be delivered at least once a week.
11. Explain to the person that someone will be contacting them on a regular basis. Ask if they can participate in these contacts, or if there is someone else you can contact on their behalf. If a person does not wish to receive socialization

contacts, record this in the person's record by selecting "No – do not communicate with me" and communicate this to the meal provider. A meal recipient is not required to receive socialization contacts.

12. Ask the person what their preferred method of contact is for socialization contacts and enter the appropriate information if they do not opt out.

Caregiver Information

If a person indicated they will have someone to help them for any of the questions, identify the primary person who will be assisting with these tasks and collect the caregiver's:

- Name;
- Relationship to the person;
- Telephone number; and
- Email address.

Resources to Overcome Barriers

The intent of flexible meals is to allow people to be served based on their needs, and when possible, to expand services to new areas. It is not intended to reduce services to people who are frail or isolated.

In some cases, certain barriers may exist that prohibit a person from safely storing or preparing chilled, frozen or shelf-stable meals.

Please indicate any resources accessed to address those barriers and allow the person to successfully store and prepare flexible meals. Select all that apply.

- Income support – The AAA provided income support (pay utilities, set up utilities, buy a refrigerator, freezer or microwave as appropriate) so the person can receive the type of meal being considered.
- Caregiver assistance – The AAA was able to find an informal caregiver (family member, friend, neighbor) to help the person manage the type of meal being considered.
- Residential repair – The AAA provided home repairs (electrical, plumbing, gas) so the person could manage the type of meal being considered.

Resources to Meet Nutritional Needs

It is possible chilled, frozen or shelf-stable meals will not be appropriate for some people who are assessed using the Determination of Type of Meal.

Please indicate below how the person's nutritional needs will be met through other resources if it is determined a flexible meal is not appropriate for the person. Select all that apply.

- Homemaker – Title III – The person received homemaker services for meal preparation through Older Americans Act funds, instead of a home delivered meal.
- Homemaker – Medicaid Waiver – The person received homemaker services for meal preparation through a Medicaid Waiver program, instead of a home delivered meal.
- Homemaker – Other – The person received homemaker services for meal preparation through another source, instead of a home delivered meal.
- Hot meals – No solution to identified barriers was available for the type of meal being considered so the provider continues to deliver hot meals to this person.