

Washtenaw County Community Mental Health

**FOOD PURCHASES - (policy)**

**PURPOSE:**

To develop sensible rules for purchases of food for employees and consumers which can be consistently applied by Washtenaw County Community Mental Health (WCCMH) employees.

**POLICY:**

To ensure the most judicious use of public funds, WCCMH shall institute cost guidelines and standards with regard to food purchases to be followed by all staff.

**STANDARDS:**

- Generally, funds may not be used to feed employees during a normal workday, with the following exceptions, which require preapproval from the Program Administrator:
  - Special meetings or events may have coffee, tea, soft drinks, or light snacks.
  - Food expenses incurred while traveling (See WCCMH policies for Business Expense Reimbursements and Conferences)
  - Commonly accepted office refreshments including coffee, tea, and water
- Staff should minimize costs and be mindful of perceptions of outside parties when planning food purchases. Healthy options are encouraged and dietary restrictions should be considered.
- Purchases will be made through the credit card (see policy for Use of County Issued Credit Card) or the I/DD kitchen when possible. Use of petty cash funds is allowed if the other options are not readily available (see policy for Petty Cash).
- Program Administrators are responsible for monitoring budgets, informing staff of limitations throughout the year, and preapproving all purchases except those through the I/DD Kitchen. Office coordinators must make sure that food intended for consumers is not personally used by staff.

**GROUP THERAPY SERVICES:**

CMH provides a variety of group therapy services with a range of therapeutic goals. The development and enhancement of social skills and relationships is a common element. These goals are often promoted with a welcoming environment which may include food and beverages. Staff facilitating the group are responsible for obtaining Program Administrator preapproval, setting up, cleaning up, following standards, and keeping

costs within the Cost Guidelines for Food Purchases and budgetary restrictions. Any outside contributions must be completely voluntary.

**HABILITATION PROGRAM SERVICES:**

Consumers in habilitation programs typically spend a full day with WCCMH. While it is expected that consumers bring their own lunch, the program should keep an emergency food supply on hand to make sure that consumers have access to adequate nutrition on any given day. Office coordinators must monitor the supplies for freshness, nutritional adequacy, proper labeling and storage.

Occasionally, a socialization, skill development, or community involvement activity will include a snack or meal. Typically, a consumer will cover the cost of a planned meal out that takes place in lieu of bringing a lunch. Financial assistance to consumers, who would otherwise not be able to participate, may be provided if preapproved by the Program Administrator. Program funds may be used to celebrate holidays and milestones, or for special activities like cooking classes, picnics, etc. However, all costs must be within the Cost Guidelines for Food Purchases and budgetary restrictions of the program.

**COST GUIDELINES FOR FOOD PURCHASES:**

Group Snack	\$3 - \$5 per person
Group Meal	\$5 - \$10 per person
Offsite Meal	\$5 - \$15 per person* *Limited to once per month per group

**DEFINITIONS:**

Food Purchase: Using funds to provide refreshments to employees or consumers. Staff may also place an order with the I/DD Kitchen and have their business unit charged directly via reallocated expenses.

Snack: A small amount of food eaten between meals. This can include coffee, tea, and foods such as yogurt, muffins, vegetables, and other light food and drink items.

Meal: Any of the regular occasions in a day when a relatively large amount of food is eaten, such as breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

**REFERENCES:**

- WCCMH Policy: Business Expense Reimbursements
- WCCMH Policy: Conferences, Workshops and Seminars
- Washtenaw County Policy: Petty Cash / Change Funds
- Washtenaw County Policy: Use of County Issued Credit Card