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Catering for Multiple Toronto Shelter and Support Services Locations - Update

Purpose

This Briefing Note provides background, pricing history, menu development practices, and client accommodation processes related to the emergency catering contract used across respite/hotel sites. It responds to questions about current per diem rates, inflationary adjustments, and how client choice and nutritional standards are incorporated.

Background

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, TSSS initiated an emergency catering contract in early 2021 to support clients relocated to respite/hotel sites that lacked kitchens or dietary staff.

In 2021, the per-diem rate for pre-packaged meals was \$26 per client per day. In 2023, due to rising food costs and changing the service from a mix of hot and cold meals to exclusively hot meals, the daily rate increased to \$37 per client and remains at that level.

An evening snack, coffee, tea and juice are part of a separate contract and cost approximately \$3 per client per day.

Pricing History

	2021	May 2023	May 2023	Present
Meal Price (Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner)		\$4 / \$9 / \$13 (Total \$26/day)		\$10 / \$11 / \$16 (Total \$37/day)
Weekly Price per person		\$182/week		\$260/week

Menu Development

The supplier develops a three-week cyclical menu for breakfast, lunch, and dinner and works with each site to finalize selections that reflect client preferences and meet nutritional requirements set by the dietary manager/supervisor.

Menu planning follows the Canada Food Guide and Shelter Standards. On average, meals consist of approximately 30% protein, 35% grains, and 35% vegetables.

Meal Accommodations and Client Input

To support plans for the site, staff and dietary management teams solicit and coordinate client feedback through monthly resident meetings, client surveys and feedback from case managers and relay preferences, requests and required accommodations to the supplier every week for implementation. Clients are also asked some basic questions about meals when entering the shelter.

Meal accommodations include vegetarian, vegan, halal, allergy-alert, and texture-modified meals. A vegetarian option that mirrors the planned meal is always available. Specific requests tied to medical, cultural, or religious needs are addressed through a client's individual case management plan.

Sample Menu

Below is a sample weekly menu of what the City's vendor would provide.

Menu	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Breakfast	Fried egg breakfast sandwich on English Muffin Hashbrown Patty; Whole seasonal fruit	French Toast with syrup and blueberry compote	Egg burrito (pepper, spinach, onion); Tater tots; Whole seasonal fruit	Pancakes with syrup; Turkey bacon	Corned Beef Hash with Toast; Hard-boiled eggs; Home fries; Whole seasonal fruit	Egg omelette (mushroom & cheese); Toast; Potato patty	Boiled eggs; Fried turkey kielbasa; Roasted tomato; Toast; Beans
Lunch	Cod à la Veracruz; Spanish rice; Yellow & green bean with carrot	Chicken tikka; Basmati rice with green peas; Mixed greens	Chicken cacciatore; Penne marinara; Mixed vegetables	Chicken achiote; Mexican rice; Pico de gallo; Broccolini	Lasagna; Garlic bread; Garden salad	Jerk chicken; Rice and peas; Callaloo	Cheese manicotti; Rosé sauce; Sautéed spinach
Dinner	Penne primavera with veal meatballs; Tomato salad	Chicken souvlaki; Tzatziki; Herbed rice; Corn succotash	Chicken kabob (onion & peppers); Roasted potato wedges; Carrots & green beans	Roast beef dinner; Gravy; Mashed potatoes; Vegetable medley	Piri piri chicken; Parisienne potatoes; Broccoli & cauliflower with carrot	General Tso's chicken; Cantonese noodles; Soy-glazed baby bok choy & carrots	Rotisserie chicken; Rustic skin-on mashed potatoes; Peas, corn, mushrooms

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