

State Regulations Pertaining to Frequency of Meals

Note: This document is arranged alphabetically by State. To move easily from State to State, click the “Bookmark” tab on the Acrobat navigation column to the left of the PDF document. This will open a Table of Contents for the document. The relevant federal regulations are at the end of the PDF.

Alabama

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420-5-10-.12 Dietary Services.

(6) Frequency of meals.

- (a) Each resident receives and the facility provides at least three meals daily, at regular times comparable to normal mealtimes in the community.
- (b) There must be no more than 14 hours between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day, except as provided in (d) below.
- (c) The facility must offer snacks at bedtime daily.
- (d) When a nourishing snack is provided at bedtime, up to 16 hours may elapse between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day if a resident group agrees to this meal span, and a nourishing snack is served.

Author: Rick Harris

Statutory Authority: *Code of Alabama, 1975, 22-21-20, et seq.*

History: Original rules filed: July 19, 1996; effective August 23, 1996

Amended: April 20, 2005, effective May 25, 2005.

Alaska

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Alaska does not address frequency of meals in its regulations.

Arizona

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4. A resident is provided:

- b. Three meals a day with not more than 14 hours between the evening meal and breakfast except as provided in subsection (B)(4)(d);
- c. The option to have a daily evening snack identified in subsection (B)(4)(d)(ii) or other snack; and
- d. The option to extend the time span between the evening meal and breakfast from 14 hours to 16 hours if:
 - i. A resident group agrees; and
 - ii. The resident is offered an evening snack that includes meat, fish, eggs, cheese, or other protein, and a serving from either the fruit and vegetable food group or the bread and cereal food group;

Historical Note: Adopted effective November 1, 1998, under an exemption from the provisions

of the Administrative Procedure Act pursuant to Laws 1998, Ch. 178, § 17; filed with the Office of the Secretary of State October 2, 1998 (Supp. 98-4).

Arkansas

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564 Frequency of Meals

564.1 At least three (3) meals are served daily

564.2 There shall be at least a five (5) hour span between breakfast and the noon meal and between noon meal and supper. The meals shall be served at approximately the same hours each day.

564.3 There shall not be more than fourteen (14) hours between a substantial supper and breakfast. Supper shall include as a minimum: two (2) ounces of a substantial protein food, a starch (or substitute) or soup, vegetable or fruit, dessert and beverage, preferably milk.

564.4 Bedtime snacks of nourishing quality shall be routinely offered to all patients whose diets do not prohibit the services of this night feeding. Milk, juices, cookies, or crackers shall be offered

California

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s 72335. Dietetic Service -Food Service.

(a) The dietetic service shall provide food of the quality and quantity to meet each patient's needs in accordance with the physicians' orders and to meet "The Recommended Daily Dietary Allowance," the most current edition, adopted by the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences, and the following:

(1) Not less than 3 meals shall be served daily and with not more than a 14-hour span between the last meal and the first meal of the following day.

(2) Between-meal feeding shall be provided as required by the diet order. Bedtime nourishments shall be offered to all patients unless contraindicated

Note: Authority cited: Sections 208(a) and 1275, Health and Safety Code. Reference: Section 1276, Health and Safety Code.

Colorado

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The facility shall have an organized food service, appropriately planned, equipped, and staffed to prepare and serve the number of meals created in the kitchen. The facility shall offer at least three meals or their equivalent per day, at regular times, with not more than 14 hour between the beginning of the evening meal and breakfast. Routine seatings shall be no later than 8 A.M. for breakfast and no earlier than 5 P.M. for the evening meal. Timing of meals shall generally comport with cultural practices in the community, unless inconsistent with these regulations.
6 CCR 1011-1, eff. 7.30.06

Connecticut

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D. Serves at least three meals, or their equivalent, daily at regular hours, with not more than a 14 hour span between evening meal and breakfast;

F. Provides bedtime nourishments for each patient, unless medically contraindicated and documented in the patient's care plan;

Delaware

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9.6.1 A minimum of three (3) meals shall be served in each twenty-four (24) hour period. There shall not be more than a fourteen (14) hour span between the evening meal and breakfast.

District of Columbia

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3220 GENERAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

3220.8 The supervisor or manager of food services shall make weekly rounds at mealtime to observe the preparation and serving of food to residents in order to determine general acceptance of the food by residents.

Florida

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Florida State Rules and Regulations does not address frequency of meals in Nursing Homes.

Georgia

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(2) Meals, adequate as to quantity and quality, shall be served in sufficient numbers with a maximum of five (5) hours apart with no longer than fourteen (14) hours between the evening meal and breakfast. Between meal and bedtime snacks shall be offered each patient.

Hawaii

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(b) At least three meals shall be served daily at regular times with:

(1) Not more than a fourteen hour span between a substantial evening meal and breakfast on the following day.

(2) Between meals, nourishments consistent with need shall be offered routinely to all patients.

Idaho

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05. Menu Planning and Meal Service. At least three (3) meals or their equivalent shall be served daily at regular times, with not more than a fourteen (14) hour span between a substantial evening meal and breakfast. (1-1-88)

a. Bedtime snacks of nourishing quality shall be offered, and between-meal snacks should be offered. (1-1-88)

b. If the "Four or Five-Meal-A-Day" plan is in effect, meals and snacks shall provide nutritional value equivalent to the daily food requirements and the last meal (snack) shall provide at least one (1) ounce of a protein food exclusive of beverage served. (1-1-88)

Illinois

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a) A minimum of three meals or their equivalent shall be served daily at regular times with no more than a 14 hour span between a substantial evening meal and breakfast. The 14 hour span shall not apply to facilities using the "four or five meal-a-day" plan, provided the evening meal is substantial and includes, but is not limited to, a good quality protein, bread or bread substitute, butter or margarine, a dessert and a nourishing beverage.

b) Bedtime snacks of nourishing quality shall be offered. Snacks of nourishing quality shall be offered between meals when there is a time span of four or more hours between the ending of one meal and the serving of the next, or as otherwise indicated in the resident's plan of care.

c) If a resident refuses food served, reasonable and nutritionally appropriate substitutes shall be served.

Indiana

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(c) Each resident receives and the facility provides at least three (3) meals daily, at regular times comparable to normal mealtimes in the community.

(d) There must be no more than fourteen (14) hours between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day, except as provided in subsection (f).

(e) The facility must offer snacks at bedtime daily.

(f) When a nourishing snack is provided at bedtime, up to sixteen (16) hours may elapse between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day if a resident group agrees to this meal span and a nourishing snack is served. A nourishing snack is an offering of a minimum of a food item and a beverage.

Iowa

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c. At least three meals or their equivalent shall be served daily, at regular hours comparable to normal mealtimes in the community. (II)

(1) There shall be no more than a 14-hour span between a substantial evening meal and breakfast except as provided in subparagraph (3) below. (II, III)

(2) The facility shall offer snacks at bedtime daily. (II, III)

(3) When a nourishing snack is provided at bedtime, up to 16 hours may elapse between a substantial evening meal and breakfast of the following day. The current resident group must agree to this meal span and a nourishing snack must be served. (II)

Kansas

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Kansas does not address frequency of meals in its regulations.

Kentucky

Downloaded 04.27.07

Kentucky does not address frequency of meals in its regulations.

Louisiana

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C. Each resident shall receive and the nursing home shall provide:

1. at least three meals daily, at regular times comparable to normal mealtimes in the community;
2. food prepared by methods that conserve nutritive value, flavor, and appearance;
3. food that is palatable, attractive, and at the proper temperature;
4. food prepared in a form designed to meet individual needs; and
5. substitutes offered of similar nutritional value to residents who refuse food or beverages served.

E. There shall be no more than 14 hours between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day. A substantial evening meal is defined as an offering of three or more menu items at one time, one of which includes a high-quality protein such as meat, fish, eggs, or cheese.

F. There shall be no more than 16 hours between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day when a nourishing snack is offered at bedtime. A nourishing snack is defined as a verbal offering of items, single or in combination, from the basic food groups.

G. Bedtime nourishments shall be offered nightly to all residents, unless contraindicated by the resident's medical practitioner, as documented in the resident's clinical record.

Maine

Downloaded 05.03.07

18.K.3. At least three meals that are nutritious and suited to special needs of residents shall be served daily, at regular times comparable to normal meal times in the community. This schedule must be modified if necessary to accommodate the individual needs of residents. If a nourishing snack is provided at bedtime, up to 16 hours may elapse between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day, if a resident group agrees to this meal span, and a nourishing snack is served. A "nourishing snack" is defined as an offering of items, single or in combination, from the basic food groups. Adequacy of the "nourishing snack" will be determined both by resident interviews and by evaluation of the overall nutritional status of residents in the facility (e.g., Is the offered snack usually satisfying?).

Maryland

Downloaded 05.03.07

G. Frequency and Quality of Meals. At least three meals or their equivalent shall be served daily, at regular times with not more than 14-hour intervals between the substantial evening meal and breakfast. A substantial evening meal is an offering of three or more menu items at one time, one of which includes a high quality protein such as meat, fish, eggs, or cheese. This meal represents no less than 20 percent of the day's total nutritional requirements. To the extent medical orders permit, bedtime nourishments shall be offered routinely to all patients. If the four-or five-meal-a-day plan is used, the meal pattern to provide this plan shall be approved by the Department.

Massachusetts

Downloaded 05.10.07

E) Quality of food

- 1) At least three meals that are nutritious and suited to special needs of patients and residents shall be served daily.
- 2) Meals shall be served at regular times, with not more than a 15-hour span between a substantial evening meal and breakfast. Breakfast shall not be served before 7:00 a.m.; the evening meal shall not be served before 5:00 p.m. When a five-meal plan is in effect, the main evening meal shall not be served before 4:00 p.m.
- 3) Appropriate between-meals snacks and bedtime nourishment shall be offered to each patient or resident.
- 4) Whether a three, four or five-meal-a-day plan is in effect, meals and snacks shall provide nutritional value equivalent to the daily food guide (105 CMR 150.009(D)(2)).

Michigan

Downloaded 05.10.07

Michigan does not address frequency of meals in its regulations.

Minnesota

Downloaded 05.15.07

4658.0620 FREQUENCY OF MEALS.

Subpart 1. Time of meals. The nursing home must provide at least three meals daily at regular times. There must be no more than 14 hours between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day. A "substantial evening meal" means an offering of three or more menu items at one time, one of which is a high-quality protein such as meat, fish, eggs, or cheese.

Subp. 2. Snacks. The nursing home must offer evening snacks daily. "Offer" means having snacks available and making the resident aware of that availability.

Subp. 3. Time between meals. Up to 16 hours may elapse between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day if a resident group, such as the resident council, agrees to this meal span and a nourishing evening snack is provided.

Mississippi

Downloaded 05.16.07

SECTION C -- Meal Service

703.1 Meal and Nutrition.

At least three (3) meals in each twenty-four (24) hours shall be provided. The daily food allowance shall meet the current recommended dietary allowance of the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council of the National Academy Of Science adjusted for individual needs.

703.4 Timing of Meals.

A time schedule for serving meals to residents shall be established. Meals shall be served during customarily-accepted timeframes. There shall be no more than fourteen (14) hours between evening meal and breakfast meal. There may be 16 hours between the evening meal and breakfast meal if approved by the resident involved and a substantial snack (including protein) is served before bedtime.

Montana does not address frequency of meals in its regulations.

Missouri

Downloaded 05.18.07

(2) At least three (3) substantial meals per day, of which at least two (2) are hot, shall be served.

II/III

(3) Meals shall be served with not more than fourteen (14) hours from evening meal to morning meal. III

(4) Fresh water shall be available to the resident at all times. II/III

Montana

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Montana does not address frequency of meals in its regulations.

Nebraska

Downloaded 06.25.07

12-006.11B Frequency of Meals: The facility must provide at least three meals daily, at regular times comparable to normal mealtimes in the community. 12-006.11B1 The facility must ensure that no more than 14 hours elapse between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day. Sixteen hours may elapse if a nourishing snack is offered at bedtime daily.

Nevada

Downloaded 06.11.07

NAC 449.147 Dietary services. ([NRS 449.037](#))

1. Facilities must serve at least three meals or their equivalent daily, at regular times, with not more than 14 hours between a substantial evening meal and breakfast. A second serving must be provided for those clients who desire one.

At least three meals a day must be served at regular intervals. The times at which meals will be served must be posted. Not more than 14 hours may elapse between the meal in the evening and breakfast the next day. Snacks must be made available between meals for the residents who are not prohibited by their physicians from eating between meals.

New Hampshire

Downloaded 06.11.07

New Hampshire does not have regulations pertaining to Frequency of Meals.

New Jersey

Downloaded 06.11.07

(f) Meals shall be scheduled in such a way that no more than 14 hours elapse between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the next morning. The first meal shall not be served before 7:00 A.M. unless requested by the resident.

1. Up to 16 hours may elapse between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day if the following conditions are met:

- i. A resident group agrees to this meal span; and
- ii. A nourishing bedtime snack is served.

(b) The facility shall provide between-meal and bedtime nourishment, and beverages shall be available at all times for each resident unless contraindicated by a physician, as documented in the resident's medical record.

New Mexico

Downloaded 06.12.07

Schedule: At least three (3) meals or their equivalent shall be offered to each resident daily, not more than six (6) hours apart, with not more than a fourteen (14) hour span between a substantial evening meal and the following breakfast.

(6) Snacks: If not prohibited by the resident's diet or condition, nourishments shall be offered routinely to all residents between the evening meal and bedtime.

(7) Drinking water: When a resident is confined to bed, a covered pitcher of drinking water and a glass shall be provided on a beside stand. The water shall be changed frequently during the day, and pitchers and glasses shall be sanitized daily. Single-service disposable pitchers and glasses may be used. Common drinking utensils shall

7.9.2 NMAC not be used.

New York

Downloaded 06.12.07

(f) Frequency of meals.

(1) Each resident shall receive and the facility shall provide at least three substantial meals daily, at regular times comparable to normal mealtimes in the community.

(2) There shall be no more than 14 hours between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the

following day, except as provided in paragraph (4) of this subdivision.

(3) The facility shall offer snacks at bedtime daily.

(4) If a nourishing snack as determined by a qualified dietitian in accordance with generally accepted standards of care, is provided at bedtime, up to 16 hours may elapse between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day provided that a resident group agrees to this meal span and a nourishing snack is served.

North Carolina

Downloaded 06.12.07

(k) At least three meals shall be served daily to all patients in accordance with medical orders. (l) No more than 14 hours shall elapse between an evening meal containing a protein food and a morning meal containing a protein food.

(m) Hour-of-sleep (hs) nourishment shall be available to patients upon request or in accordance with nutritional plans.

(n) Between meals fluids for hydration shall be available and offered to all patients in accordance with medical orders.

North Dakota

Downloaded 06.13.07

5. At least three meals or the equivalent must be served daily, at regular times.

a. There must be no more than a fourteen-hour span between a substantial evening meal and breakfast unless a nourishing snack is provided at bedtime. Up to sixteen hours may elapse between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day if the residents agree to this meal span and a nourishing evening snack is served.

Ohio

Downloaded 06.13.07

B) Each nursing home shall provide at least three nourishing and appetizing meals daily to all residents at regular hours. There shall be at least a four-hour interval of time between the breakfast and noon meal and between the noon and evening meal. There will be no more than sixteen hours between the evening meal and breakfast. Each nursing home shall offer a nourishing snack, consisting of a choice of beverages and a food item from a basic food group, after the evening meal. Food substitutes of similar nutritive value shall be offered to residents who refuse the food served and serving size may be adjusted according to resident preference. The nursing home shall accommodate a resident's preference or medical need to eat at different intervals.

Oklahoma

Downloaded 06.18.07

1) Meals.

A) The facility shall serve at least three regularly scheduled meals, or their equivalent daily. There shall be at least four hours between each meal.

Oregon

Downloaded 06.14.07

- e) At least three meals or their equivalent shall be served daily at regular hours with not more than a 14 hour span between the beginning of the substantial evening meal and the beginning of breakfast. A substantial evening meal is an offering of three or more menu items at one time, one of which includes a high quality protein such as meat, fish, eggs, or cheese. The meal represents no less than 25 percent of the day's total nutritional requirements.
- f) Bedtime snacks of nourishing quality shall be offered routinely to residents who desire one and for whom it is not medically prohibited. Snacks of nourishing quality are those which provide substantive nutrients in addition to carbohydrates and calories, e.g., milk and milk drinks and fruit juice.

Pennsylvania

Downloaded 06.08.07

Pennsylvania does not address frequency of meals in its regulations.

Rhode Island

Downloaded 06.29.07

27.11 Each resident shall receive and the facility shall provide at least three (3) meals daily, at regular times comparable to normal mealtimes based upon the individual preference of a resident or group of residents in a residential area and/or at regular times comparable to normal mealtimes in the community.

- a) There shall be no more than fourteen (14) hours between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day, except as provided in (c) below.
- b) The facility shall offer snacks at bedtime daily.
- c) When a nourishing snack is provided at bedtime, up to sixteen (16) hours may elapse between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day if a resident, or group of residents in a residential area agrees to this meal span, and a nourishing snack is served.

- a) Breakfast shall not be served before 7:00 A.M. nor later than 8:30 A.M. Lunch shall not be served before 11:00 A.M. nor later than 1:00 P.M. Supper shall not be served before 5:00 P.M. nor later than 6:00 P.M.
- b) Between evening meal and bedtime, nourishments shall be offered to all residents, unless medically contraindicated.

South Carolina

Downloaded 06.20.07

(12) Meal Service

A minimum of three nutritionally adequate meals shall be provided in each 24-hour period. Not more than 14 hours shall elapse between the servings of the evening meal and breakfast.

South Dakota

Downloaded 06.25.07

At least three meals must be served daily at regular times with not more than a 14-hour span between a substantial evening meal and breakfast.

Tennessee

Downloaded 06.13.07

(f) A minimum of three (3) meals in each twenty-four (24) hour period shall be served. A supplemental night meal shall be served if more than fourteen (14) hours lapse between supper and breakfast. Additional nourishments shall be provided to patients with special dietary needs.

Texas

Downloaded 07.11.07

Frequency of Meals

- a) Each resident receives and the facility provides at least three meals daily, at regular times comparable to normal mealtimes in the community.
- b) There must be not more than 14 hours between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day, except as provided in subsection (d) of this section.
- c) The facility must offer snacks at bedtime daily. Routine snacks that are not ordered by the physician and are not part of the plan of care do not need to be documented as accepted or rejected.
- d) When a nourishing snack is provided at bedtime, up to 16 hours may elapse between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day, if a resident group agrees to this meal span and a nourishing snack is served.

Utah

Downloaded 07.10.07

Utah does not address frequency of meals in its regulations.

Vermont

Downloaded 06.08.07

- (e) Frequency of meals.
 - (1) Each resident shall receive and the facility shall provide at least three meals daily, at regular times comparable to normal mealtimes in the community.
 - (2) There must be no more than 14 hours between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following date, except as provided in (4) below.
 - (3) The facility must offer snacks at midday and bedtime daily.
 - (4) When a nourishing snack is provided at bedtime, up to 16 hours may elapse between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day if a resident group agrees to this meal span, and a nourishing snack is served.

Virginia

Downloaded 08.06.07

SUPPORT SERVICES.

12 VAC 5-371-340. Dietary and food service program. (revised 1/11/2006)

B. At least three meals, served at regular intervals, shall be provided daily to each resident, unless contraindicated as documented by the attending physician in the resident's clinical record.

C. A between meal snack of nutritional value shall be available upon request to each resident or in accordance with their plan of care

Washington

Downloaded 06.08.07

Washington does not address dietary frequency of meals in its regulations.

West Virginia

Downloaded 07.11.07

8.15.f. Frequency of meals.

8.15.f.1. A nursing home shall provide at least three (3) meals daily at regular times, or in accordance with residents' preferences and customary routines.

8.15.f.2. No more than fourteen (14) hours shall elapse between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day.

8.15.f.2.A. Breakfast shall not be served before 7:00 A.M., unless by a resident's request.

8.15.f.3. A nursing home shall offer a nourishing snack at bedtime daily, as determined by the resident's needs.

8.15.f.3.A. The amount of the snacks consumed by the resident shall be recorded in the resident's medical record.

Wisconsin

Downloaded 06.08.07

a) Schedule. At least 3 meals or their equivalent shall be offered to each resident daily, not more than 6 hours apart, with not more than a 15-hour span between a substantial evening meal and the following breakfast.

(f) Snacks. If not prohibited by the resident's diet or condition, nourishments shall be offered routinely to all residents between the evening meal and bedtime.

Wyoming

Downloaded 07.11.07

Wyoming does not address frequency of meals in its regulations.

State Regulations pertaining to category_dietary_services_frequency_of_meals
Federal Regulations

Federal Requirements

Sent to the University of Minnesota on 03.23.05

§ 483.35 Dietary services.

(f) Frequency of meals.

- (1) Each resident receives and the facility provides at least three meals daily, at regular times comparable to normal mealtimes in the community.
- (2) There must be no more than 14 hours between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day, except as provided in (4) below.
- (3) The facility must offer snacks at bedtime daily.
- (4) When a nourishing snack is provided at bedtime, up to 16 hours may elapse between a substantial evening meal and breakfast the following day if a resident group agrees to this meal span and a nourishing snack is served.