



**GREATER SPRINGFIELD
SENIOR SERVICES, INC.**
DIGNITY - PASSION - PURPOSE

2026 GSSSI Nutrition Program Caterer Bid Specifications

Program Overview

Greater Springfield Senior Services, Inc. (GSSSI), a private nonprofit Area Agency on Aging and Aging Services Access Point, is pleased to announce an open and competitive Federal Title III-C bid for the Massachusetts Nutrition Program for Older Adults in partnership with the Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE).

GSSSI serves older adults age 60 and older, as well as eligible caregivers age 55 and older, in accordance with the goals and requirements of the Older Americans Act Nutrition Program. The program is designed to reduce food insecurity and malnutrition, promote health and well-being, support independent living, and reduce social isolation among older adults throughout the region.

The Nutrition Program currently provides approximately 1,100 Meals on Wheels/Home-Delivered Meals (HDM) each weekday and an average of 325 Community Dining/Congregate meals weekly across seven communities and six community dining sites within the GSSSI service area.

Meals are distributed through strategically located community settings, including senior centers and other community-based locations, and are also delivered directly to eligible homebound older adults residing in Brimfield, Hampden, Holland, Palmer, Springfield, Wales, and Wilbraham.

In addition to Older Americans Act-funded services, GSSSI also maintains limited partnerships with regional healthcare and accountable care organization (ACO) partners to provide medically appropriate meals to eligible adults under age 60 with qualifying disabilities or health conditions, subject to funding availability and program requirements.

In addition to meeting nutritional needs, the program serves as an important connection point for wellness, safety, and social engagement for older adults throughout the region.

GSSSI is seeking proposals from qualified vendors for the preparation of traditional, medically tailored, modified texture, and Latino menus that meet all applicable federal and state nutrition requirements while reflecting the diverse cultural preferences, medical needs, and dietary requirements of the population served.

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Procurement Timeline

Milestone	Date
Request for Proposal Released	May 8, 2026
Caterers' Forum (Virtual)	May 18, 2026
Proposal Submission Deadline	June 18, 2026
Caterer's Tasting & Interviews, by Appointment	June-July 2026
Board of Directors Review and Contract Award Vote	July 15, 2026
Notice of Contract Award	July 31, 2026
Contract Start Date	October 1, 2026

Dates are subject to change at the discretion of GSSSI.

Glossary

- **Aging Services Access Point (ASAP):** An organization designated by AGE pursuant to M.G.L. c. 19A, §§ 4A and 4B, responsible for administering state-funded services and supports for older adults and adults with disabilities.
- **Area Agency on Aging (AAA):** A federally designated regional agency responsible for planning, coordinating, and supporting services that address the needs of older adults within a designated service area in accordance with regulations outlined in the Older Americans Act.
- **Community Dining / Congregate Meal:** Interchangeable terms used throughout this document to describe a nutritionally balanced meal served in a community-based setting, such as a senior center, Council on Aging, housing sites, or other approved location, where eligible participants dine together and have opportunities for social engagement. GSSSI primarily uses the term “Community Dining,” while state and federal guidance may reference “Congregate Meals.”
- **Commodity Foods / Commodities:** USDA-supported food products allocated for use within Massachusetts Nutrition Programs for Older Adults in accordance with federal and state program guidelines.
- **Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE):** The Massachusetts state agency responsible for administering and allocating federal and state funding for Nutrition Programs for Older Adults and establishing program regulations, standards, and oversight requirements.
- **Frozen Meals:** Meals produced by a USDA-inspected commercial kitchen for use within nutrition programs, including emergency, weekend, or supplemental meal services. Unless otherwise approved by AGE, frozen meals must be obtained through the vendor contracted by AGE.
- **Meals on Wheels (MOW) / Home-Delivered Meal (HDM):** Interchangeable terms used throughout this document to describe a nutritionally balanced meal delivered to the home or residence of an eligible participant who is unable to attend a community dining setting. GSSSI primarily uses the term “Meals on Wheels,” while state and federal guidance may reference “Home-Delivered Meals (HDM).”
- **Meals on Wheels America:** A national leadership organization that provides advocacy, training, education, and support to community-based meal programs serving older adults, of which GSSSI is a member.
- **Nutrition Program / Program:** The Older Adult Nutrition Program administered by GSSSI, including Meals on Wheels/Home-Delivered Meal (HDM) and Community Dining/Congregate Meal services funded through federal, state, and other approved funding sources.
- **Provider / Meal Provider:** A food service provider contracted by GSSSI to prepare meals in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and program-specific nutrition requirements.

Notice to Bidders

Proposals are hereby solicited for the preparation of meals for the Title III-C Nutrition Programs at Greater Springfield Senior Services, Inc. in accordance with the specifications outlined in this document.

Bidders must complete and submit the GSSSI Caterer's Application included in **Attachment D**.

Proposals will be accepted until **5:00 PM on Thursday, June 18, 2026**. Late or incomplete proposals will not be considered. Proposals must be submitted electronically with the subject line "**Catering Bid Proposal**" to both the following email addresses:

Katherine.senn@gsssi.org

Anna.randall@gsssi.org

Caterers' Forum

A virtual Caterers' Forum will be held on **Monday, May 18, 2026, at 1:00 PM**. The purpose of the forum is to provide all interested bidders with equal opportunity to clarify the bid specifications, operational expectations, meal service requirements, and procurement process.

Interested bidders must contact GSSSI's Nutrition Program Director, Kate Senn, at katherine.senn@gsssi.org or 413-781-8800 ext. 1190 to request the meeting link.

Questions related to the bid specifications should be reserved for the Caterers' Forum whenever possible. Responses to significant questions or clarifications may be distributed to all participating bidders to ensure consistency and fairness throughout the procurement process.

Procurement & Proposal Requirements

All proposals submitted in response to this solicitation are subject to review and approval by Greater Springfield Senior Services, Inc. (GSSSI). The Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE) reserves the right to review and comment on proposals and the agency's evaluation process before final contract award.

Awards shall be made to the bidder whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous to the Nutrition Program and represents the best overall value, considering cost, operational capacity, experience, quality, responsiveness, and compliance with all applicable program requirements. A low-cost proposal will not necessarily be the determining factor in award selection. The detailed evaluation must include the reason for the Provider's selection, the evaluation criteria, and a three (3) to five (5) year budget forecast.

GSSSI reserves the right to reject any or all proposals when such action is determined to be in the best interest of the Nutrition Program or the older adults served.

Bidders must demonstrate the operational capacity and qualifications necessary to prepare and deliver meals in adequate quantity on a consistent and reliable basis, including bulk meals, individually packaged meals, chilled meals, and frozen meals, as required by the program.

All bids shall include evidence of the ability and qualifications to prepare and deliver both bulk and pre-packed hot, chilled, and/or weekend-frozen meals in adequate quantities regularly. This evidence includes prior and/or existing similar contracts, as well as a copy of the bidder's most recent financial statement that reflects

the capability of maintaining satisfactory operations for the contract period. A copy of the bidder's most recent annual report may also be included as documentation.

Factors in Bid Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated based on, but not limited to, the following criteria:

- Completion and competitiveness of the Meal Cost Analysis included in **Attachment E**.
- Ability to meet Massachusetts Nutrition Standards (**Attachment A**) set forth by AGE.
- Experience and reputation of the bidder, including contract history for the past ten (10) years & references
- Financial stability & operational capacity, including a 3-5 budget forecast that must be submitted with the final bid
- Ability to meet required meal volume and service expectations
- Experience with medically tailored and modified texture meals
- Ability to utilize the USDA commodity foods and AGE frozen meal contracts
- Food quality, consistency, and menu variety
- Operational responsiveness and communication practices
- Kitchen facility location and production capabilities

GSSSI Program-Specific Requirements

Greater Springfield Senior Services, Inc. operates one of the largest regional nutrition programs for older adults in Western Massachusetts. The selected Provider will be expected to function as an operational partner in supporting the delivery of safe, nutritious, and appealing meals to older adults throughout the GSSSI service area.

The selected Provider must have the operational capacity to prepare and distribute meals daily, Monday through Friday, in a consistent, timely, and reliable manner. The Provider's kitchen or distribution location must accommodate the daily pack-out and traffic flow associated with approximately twenty five (25) to thirty (30) Meals on Wheels drivers, trainees, and GSSSI staff.

The Provider will also be responsible for:

- Delivery of Community Dining meals to all approved dining sites
- Delivery of Meals on Wheels meals to the Palmer Council on Aging drop-off site
- Accurate daily meal packing and distribution
- Maintaining required food temperatures during transport
- Timely communication regarding shortages, delays, or emergencies

GSSSI maintains a Registered Dietitian on staff who collaborates with the selected Provider on menu development, nutrient analysis, and compliance with AGE nutrition standards. The selected Provider will collaborate in menu planning and must provide recipes, ingredient labels, and product documentation to GSSSI, as required for nutrient analysis and program compliance.

Menus will be finalized approximately six (6) weeks in advance. All menus must receive approval from the GSSSI Registered Dietitian before production unless otherwise authorized by GSSSI.

The GSSSI Nutrition Program is closed on the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Presidents Day
Patriots Day	Memorial Day	Juneteenth
Independence Day	Labor Day	Indigenous Peoples Day
Veterans Day	Thanksgiving Day	Christmas Day

If a holiday falls on a weekend, the Nutrition Program will generally observe the holiday on the following Monday. Additionally, certain Community Dining locations may observe additional site-specific closures throughout the year. GSSSI will communicate these closures to the Provider in advance whenever possible.

Meals on Wheels / Home-Delivered Meals

The Meals on Wheels/Home-Delivered Meal Program provides nutritious meals to older adults who are unable to attend a Community Dining location or prepare meals independently. In addition to nutritional support, the program also serves as an important wellness and safety check for many participants.

The Provider must utilize the Oliver Packaging System or another GSSSI-approved packaging system for all individually packaged meal types.

All packaged meals must:

- Be securely sealed to prevent spills
- Be microwave and oven-safe when appropriate
- Be clearly labeled in English and Spanish
- Include service and discard dates
- Identify meal type and contents
- Include the GSSSI name and logo

The Provider must provide a cold pack, including milk (or approved substitute), bread, dessert, fruit, and condiments, as directed by GSSSI.

It is expected that the Provider will be able to produce nutritious and flavorful meals, including pureed and ground-textured meals. The Provider is expected to train food production staff in the proper preparation of pureed and ground meals, focusing on taste, consistency, variety, and appearance. Frozen pureed meals will be allowed under certain circumstances and with the permission of GSSSI.

All standard meals shall follow AGE nutrition standards for a No-Salt Added diet. Individual meals should generally contain no more than 1,200 milligrams of sodium unless otherwise approved by GSSSI and the GSSSI Registered Dietitian. GSSSI reserves the right to offer meals containing up to 1,500 milligrams of sodium up to twice per month.

Meals should be visually appealing, properly portioned, flavorful, and produced with attention to consistency and presentation.

Home-Delivered Meal Types

GSSSI currently offers the following Meals on Wheels meal types:

Meal Type	Estimated Meals Served per Day
<p>Regular Hot Lunch Meals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes modified, ground, and pureed versions of the regular HDM meal. Modified meals are regular HDMs with a sugar-free or low-sugar dessert. Fresh or canned fruits, when served, should be the same for all meal types. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 650 Regular Hot Lunch HDM 100 Modified Hot Lunch HDM 10 Ground Hot Lunch HDM 10 Pureed Hot Lunch HDM
<p>Latino Hot Lunch Meals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The selected Provider must be able to provide modified versions of the Latino HDM. Menus and menu items must incorporate authentic Latino foods such as plantains, yucca, and pernil, and use traditional seasonings such as sofrito and adobo. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75 Latino Hot Lunch HDM Served 2-3 days a week, to be determined by GSSSI and the menu development team.
<p>Cold Supper Meals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Served with a sugar-free or low-sugar dessert or fresh or canned fruit. Consists of sandwich items and salad combinations that are served cold. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 175 Cold Supper HDM
<p>Medically Tailored Meals (MTM)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The selected Provider must be able to adhere to the nutrient parameters and standardized recipes and menus approved by GSSSI. The selected Provider must prepare these meals in-house, only using frozen meals when approved by GSSSI. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 Renal HDM 120 Cardiac/Diabetic HDM
<p>Low Lactose Meals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The selected Provider must be able to provide low-lactose versions of regular, modified, ground, and pureed meals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>New for FFY 2027</i> – no routine low-lactose meal volume at this time.
<p>Frozen Meals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The selected Provider must include a cold pack for each frozen meal unless approved by GSSSI. Frozen meals may only be used for approved meal types and program purposes. Frozen meals must be ordered from the AGE-approved distributor and meet required standards as outlined in Attachment A. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50-250 Frozen HDM daily with an average of 500 Frozen HDMs served weekly. The selected Provider must supply frozen meal usage reports and inventory to GSSSI each month as part of the meal ordering process.

The selected Provider must be capable of producing all required meal types in accordance with the AGE-approved Standards and Policies for the Massachusetts Nutrition Program for Older Adults, as outlined in **Attachment A**, and any additional requirements established by GSSSI and the GSSSI Registered Dietitian.

Meals must be appropriately labeled, packaged, and distributed according to participant needs while maintaining quality, consistency, appearance, and nutritional integrity.

GSSSI reserves the right to modify or expand meal offerings during the contract period based on participant needs, referral sources, healthcare partnerships, funding opportunities, or program development initiatives.

The selected Provider must demonstrate flexibility and a willingness to collaborate on implementing additional meal types or service models as requested by GSSSI.

Community Dining / Congregate Meals

Community Dining provides older adults with nutritious meals in a social setting that promotes connection and community engagement. GSSSI currently serves approximately 325 Community Dining meals at six (6) locations throughout the service area.

The selected Provider will be responsible for the timely preparation and delivery of meals to all approved sites in accordance with established schedules and food safety standards.

The selected Provider must:

- Deliver meals to designated Community Dining locations
- Maintain required food temperatures during transport
- Ensure accurate meal counts and portion sizes
- Maintain transport equipment in clean and sanitary condition

Food temperatures must be recorded before departure from the Provider’s kitchen and upon arrival at each meal site.

Community Dining sites may periodically host special events or holiday meals requiring modified menus or additional meal components. GSSSI must approve any associated cost increases in advance. The Provider may also be responsible for approved supplemental meal items or celebratory food service components, including a monthly birthday cake for each site.

GSSSI reserves the right to add, modify, or relocate Community Dining sites during the contract period based on participant needs, funding, partnerships, or program operations.

Current Community Dining site locations, operating days, meal service times, and delivery expectations are outlined below, but are subject to change.

Site	Location	Days	Delivery Time	Meal Start Time
Baystate Place	Springfield	Mon, Wed, Fri	10:50 A.M.	11:30 A.M.
Brimfield COA	Brimfield	Tues & Thurs	10:45 A.M.	11:30 A.M.
Grove Village	West Springfield	Mon thru Fri	10:20 A.M.	11:15 A.M.
Hampden COA	Hampden	Mon thru Fri	11:15/11:35 A.M.	12:00 P.M.
Palmer COA	Palmer	Mon, Wed, Fri	10:15 A.M.	11:30 A.M.
Wilbraham COA	Wilbraham	Mon, Wed, Fri	11:30 A.M.	12:00 P.M.

Disposables and Community Dining Site Supplies

Disposables required for packaging Meals on Wheels/Home-Delivered Meals and Community Dining meals shall be the responsibility of the selected Provider and must be incorporated into the proposed meal cost analysis. GSSSI strongly prefers environmentally responsible packaging materials and discourages the use of Styrofoam products whenever feasible. GSSSI reserves the right to purchase or supply disposables directly at its discretion.

The selected Provider shall also distribute disposables and approved site supplies to Community Dining locations as directed by GSSSI.

Frozen Meals

Frozen meals received by the Provider must be used only for approved meal types delivered to older adult nutrition Program recipients. If a Provider holds contracts with multiple Nutrition Programs (i.e., AAAs/ASAPs), frozen meals must be kept separate for each account.

Frozen meals are not to be used for Provider meal shortages or any purpose other than their intended use. Provider will create a “cold pack” to be delivered with a frozen meal, creating a complete meal that meets AGE nutrition standards (often milk, bread, and fruit). The price of the cold pack should be included in the bid response.

Meal Ordering

GSSSI will provide meal counts no later than 1:00 P.M. on the business day before service.

The selected Provider must maintain email capability to acknowledge the meal count via read receipt or an equivalent confirmation. The Provider shall accommodate meal count adjustments in accordance with the Program’s established reservation procedures, including changes submitted up to one (1) business day prior to service whenever operationally feasible.

Reservation System

The selected Provider shall accept meal count changes up to 24 hours before meal service. All Programs shall have a documented reservation system with a minimum 24-hour notice. Meals ordered should match the number of meals expected to be served as closely as possible under the 24-hour reservations system.

Sanitation and Food Safety

The selected Provider must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local food safety and sanitation regulations, including the Standards and Policies for the Massachusetts Nutrition Program for Older Adults outlined in **Attachment A**, as well as all applicable [Massachusetts food establishment sanitation requirements](#).

The Provider shall purchase food and raw ingredients from safe and reputable vendors and maintain appropriate product quality standards at all times. All food preparation, storage, packaging, and transportation areas must be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.

The Provider shall maintain a written, documented, formal sanitation program which meets or exceeds the minimum requirements of State, Federal, municipal, or other agencies authorized to inspect or accredit the food of the Program at the latter’s discretion. The Provider shall provide regular, documented in-services regarding sanitation and food handling to its employees involved in the preparation, handling, and storage of food.

The Provider shall:

- Utilize safe food handling procedures at all times
- Maintain all required licenses, permits, certifications, and inspections
- Provide copies of current licenses, permits, certifications, and inspection reports upon request by GSSSI
- Conduct regular sanitation and food safety training for staff
- Maintain appropriate food temperature and sanitation logs
- Utilize proper food inventory rotation and storage practices to minimize waste and prevent the use of expired products
- Retain test meals for foodborne illness investigation purposes in accordance with applicable regulations
- Maintain accurate inventory and storage records for USDA commodity foods and other program food products
- Permit announced or unannounced inspections of kitchen, storage, production, and transportation operations by GSSSI or authorized representatives

Bidders shall provide the location of all proposed meal production facilities and copies of the most recent applicable health inspection reports as part of the proposal submission.

The following temperature standards must be maintained:

- Hot foods must be delivered at a minimum temperature of 135°F
- Reheated foods must reach an internal temperature of at least 165°F
- Cold foods must be maintained at 41°F or below
- Frozen foods must remain frozen at 0°F or below during storage and transport

GSSSI reserves the right to reject meals and withhold payment for meals that fail to meet required food safety, sanitation, quality, temperature, packaging, or menu specifications.

USDA Commodities and Group Purchasing

The selected Provider shall participate in AGE's Group Purchasing Program and utilize USDA Commodity Foods in accordance with all applicable federal and state requirements, as described in **Attachment A**.

Providers are required to use USDA Commodity Foods purchased through AGE and credit the Nutrition Program for the full value of all items received. Commodity foods shall be used solely for approved Nutrition Program meals and maintained in accordance with all applicable inventory control, storage, and recordkeeping requirements.

The approved USDA Commodity Food list for State Fiscal Year 2027 is included in **Attachment B**. The list is subject to change based on USDA availability, AGE allocations, and program needs.

The selected Provider shall maintain accurate inventory, storage, distribution, and usage records for USDA Commodity Foods and frozen meals and make such records available to GSSSI upon request. Providers serving multiple nutrition programs must maintain separate inventory and accounting records for each program's commodity and frozen meal allocations, including those designated for GSSSI.

Providers are responsible for inspecting all USDA Commodity Foods upon delivery and rejecting any items that show signs of spoilage, expiration, damage, or are otherwise unusable. Any rejected items must be reported to AGE with supporting photographs, including the box serial number when applicable.

Personnel Requirements

The selected Provider must maintain adequate staffing levels to support all aspects of meal production, packaging, delivery, sanitation, and communication, ensuring reliable, timely, and orderly operations. Provider personnel are expected to maintain a clean and professional appearance at all times.

At a minimum, the Provider must maintain:

- **Food Service Manager/Supervisor:** At least one (1) competent full-time Food Service Manager or Supervisor responsible for overseeing daily meal service operations. This individual must be available and responsive to address food service-related concerns and operational issues and must be able to visit meal sites as needed. Additional operational management staff may be required based on meal volume or program needs, as determined by GSSSI and the selected Provider.
- **Nutrition Support:** It is recommended that the Provider maintain access to a qualified Licensed Dietitian Nutritionist (LDN) or Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN). This individual may be shared across programs but must be available for menu development, nutrient analysis, product review, and consultation regarding nutrition or sanitation concerns, as needed.
- **Operational Staffing:** Adequate production, packaging, transportation, sanitation, and support staff necessary to meet all specifications, meal volume requirements, and service expectations outlined in this solicitation in a reliable and timely manner.
- **Management Structure:** All management-level personnel shall be employees of the Provider. Bidders shall provide an organizational chart identifying key operational and supervisory staff for the proposed Nutrition Program.
- **Program Coordination:** GSSSI reserves the right to assign Program staff or authorized representatives to support meal distribution, monitoring, compliance activities, training coordination, or other Program-related functions. Such personnel shall not supervise, direct, or manage Provider employees or internal food service operations.

Transportation and Equipment

The selected Provider shall maintain vehicles, transport equipment, and delivery systems sufficient to safely transport meals in compliance with all applicable food safety, sanitation, and temperature control requirements. All vehicles and transportation equipment utilized for meal distribution must be maintained in clean and sanitary condition and cleaned regularly in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local food safety standards.

Bidders shall submit, as part of their proposal, information regarding the type, number, model year, condition, transportation capacity, and intended use of all vehicles to be utilized for the Nutrition Program. Proposals shall also include a description of delivery procedures, transport methods, and the equipment utilized for food transportation and temperature control, including insulated carriers, coolers, warmers, ice packs, and related equipment. The proposal should additionally indicate whether vehicles are capable of transporting Program-owned equipment when necessary.

Food for congregate meal sites shall generally be delivered in bulk unless otherwise directed by the Program. All meals shall be packaged and transported in approved containers designed to maintain food quality and required temperatures throughout transport and delivery. Providers shall take all necessary precautions to minimize spills and maintain food integrity during transport, including the use of secured lids, insulated carriers, stretch wrap, aluminum foil, or other approved methods.

The Provider shall ensure that all meals are transported and delivered in compliance with required food temperature standards. Temperatures must be documented before departure from the kitchen, and upon arrival at delivery sites, and temperature logs shall be maintained and made available to the Program upon request.

At the beginning of each contract year, the Program and the Provider shall establish a mutually agreed-upon delivery schedule. The Program may transport the majority of Home Delivered Meals; however, in certain circumstances, the Provider may be responsible for direct meal delivery to participants or designated locations. The Provider shall remain responsible for maintaining required food temperatures and meal integrity until meals are transferred to GSSSI staff, volunteers, or designated delivery personnel.

The Program reserves the right to inspect vehicles, transportation equipment, temperature logs, delivery practices, and meals at any time to determine compliance with AGE meal requirements, food safety standards, packaging requirements, and overall meal quality. The Program may reject meals or withhold payment for meals that fail to meet contractual, nutritional, sanitation, packaging, or temperature requirements.

Emergency Procedures

The Provider and GSSSI shall maintain ongoing communication procedures for hazardous weather events, meal disruptions, emergencies, and other operational interruptions that may impact meal production or delivery. The Provider is expected to notify GSSSI immediately of any circumstances that could affect meal quality, meal availability, food safety, required temperatures, or timely delivery.

In the event of weather-related closures or other service disruptions, both parties shall communicate as early as reasonably possible regarding site closures, delivery changes, or alternative service plans. Any meals prepared before a closure shall be handled, stored, refrigerated, or frozen in accordance with applicable food safety standards. When appropriate and approved by GSSSI, prepared meals or menus may be substituted for service on a subsequent day.

The Provider shall reimburse GSSSI for reasonable replacement meal expenses incurred when meals are not delivered as scheduled or fail to comply with contractual, nutritional, sanitation, packaging, temperature, or other agreed-upon Program standards.

Contract Terms

The contract term shall be three (3) years, beginning October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2029, with the option for two (2) additional one-year renewals upon mutual written agreement of both parties. Contracts awarded under this solicitation shall be subject to all applicable federal, state, and Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE) requirements governing Nutrition Programs for Older Adults.

The selected Provider shall submit monthly invoices and supporting documentation in accordance with procedures established by GSSSI. Detailed invoices and statements of operations must be submitted on or before the seventh (7th) day of each month and aligned with the Program's accounting periods.

Billing statements shall reflect all meals served on a day-by-day basis for the applicable calendar month, including weekdays and holidays.

GSSSI reserves the right to review and audit Provider's financial and purchasing records related to the Nutrition Program as necessary for contract oversight, reimbursement verification, or compliance purposes.

Any requested rate increases during the contract period must be submitted in writing at least ninety (90) days in advance of the proposed effective date and must include supporting justification for the request.

Rate increases shall not be automatic or assumed under the terms of the contract and shall be subject to review, negotiation, funding availability, and written approval by GSSSI. Approval of any prior rate increase shall not obligate GSSSI to approve future increases.

Any approved rate adjustment must comply with applicable contract amendment procedures established by GSSSI and AGE.

Contract Termination

Either party may terminate the contract for material cause upon written notice in accordance with applicable federal and state regulations.

If GSSSI determines that the Provider's non-compliance endangers the life, health, safety, or welfare of Program participants, GSSSI may immediately terminate the contract upon oral notice to the Provider, followed by written confirmation.

For non-compliance issues that do not present an immediate health or safety risk, GSSSI shall provide written notice identifying the area(s) of non-compliance. The Provider shall have thirty (30) calendar days to restore compliance unless otherwise approved by GSSSI. Failure to restore compliance within the required timeframe may result in termination upon thirty (30) days' written notice.

The Provider may terminate the contract if GSSSI fails to comply with a material provision of the Agreement. The Provider must provide at least forty-five (45) calendar days' written notice before termination. Either party may terminate the contract without cause upon sixty (60) calendar days' written notice.

In the event of termination, the Provider shall be entitled to payment for satisfactorily rendered services through the effective termination date, provided all required invoices are submitted within sixty (60) calendar days following termination.

GSSSI reserves the right to recover reasonable transition-related costs if the Provider terminates the contract without the required notice or otherwise fails to fulfill contractual obligations, resulting in operational disruption.

The contract may also be terminated or modified due to reductions in federal or state funding, regulatory changes, or other circumstances beyond the control of GSSSI or AGE.

Upon expiration or termination of the Agreement, GSSSI may reclaim Program-funded equipment with a useful life exceeding one (1) year in accordance with applicable federal and state requirements.

Non-Discrimination

The selected Provider shall comply with all applicable federal and state non-discrimination laws and regulations in both employment practices and service delivery, including, but not limited to, the Civil Rights

Act of 1964, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and applicable Massachusetts anti-discrimination laws.

The Provider shall not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, national origin, ancestry, or receipt of public assistance in connection with this contract.

Accountability, Insurance, and Records

The selected Provider shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and requirements related to employment practices, food service operations, sanitation, transportation, and Nutrition Program administration.

The Provider shall maintain complete and accurate financial, operational, inventory, production, temperature, delivery, staffing, and service records related to the Nutrition Program and shall make such records available upon request to GSSSI, AGE, or other authorized representatives for monitoring, audit, inspection, or compliance purposes.

All applicable Program and financial records shall be retained for a minimum of six (6) years following final payment under the contract, or longer if required by law or pending audit, litigation, or regulatory review.

The Provider shall maintain, at its own expense, appropriate insurance coverage throughout the duration of the contract, including general liability, product liability, automobile liability where applicable, and workers' compensation insurance as required by law. Certificates of insurance shall be provided to GSSSI upon request.

The Provider shall be responsible for losses, damages, claims, liabilities, or expenses resulting from negligent acts, omissions, misconduct, theft, or failure by the Provider or its employees, agents, or subcontractors to comply with contractual, operational, food safety, or regulatory requirements. The Provider shall indemnify and hold harmless GSSSI, AGE, and their officers, employees, and agents from such claims or losses to the extent permitted by law.

Confidentiality

The Provider shall comply with all applicable federal and state confidentiality, privacy, and data security requirements, including HIPAA and related regulations governing the protection of personal, medical, and confidential information.

Miscellaneous

The Provider shall not reproduce, distribute, publish, or otherwise disseminate reports, data, or materials produced pursuant to this Agreement without prior written consent from GSSSI.

The Provider shall submit current financial statements upon request to demonstrate the ability to maintain satisfactory performance throughout the contract period.

The Provider shall not assign, transfer, or subcontract any portion of this Agreement without prior written approval from GSSSI, except for assignments to financial institutions for payment purposes as permitted by law.

This Agreement may be amended only through a written document signed by authorized representatives of both parties.

Unless otherwise specified, all notices or communications required under this Agreement shall be made in writing and delivered personally, by email, or by mail to the designated representatives of each party.

All attachments and incorporated documents shall be considered part of this Agreement. This Agreement constitutes the entire understanding between the parties and supersedes all prior oral or written agreements related to the subject matter herein.

Attachments

Attachment A – Standards & Policies for Massachusetts Nutrition Programs for Older Adults

Attachment B – FY 2027 USDA Commodity Food List and Order Form

Attachment C – AGE-approved Kitchen Assessment Form

Attachment D – FFY 2027–2029 GSSSI Caterer Application

Attachment E – Meal Cost Analysis

GSSSI appreciates the time and effort invested in the preparation of proposals and looks forward to reviewing submissions from qualified providers committed to supporting older adults throughout the region.