



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
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In reply, please refer to:  
File:

April 15, 2015

**INTRA-DEPARTMENTAL DIRECTIVE NO. 15-01**

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** April 15, 2015

**TO:** Division Chiefs, Staff Officers, District Health Officers, and Administrators  
of Attached Agencies

**FROM:** Virginia Pressler, M.D.  
Director of Health

**SUBJECT:** Nutrition Wellness Policy

15-01.1 **PURPOSE**

The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and productive environment for its employees and members of the public using its facilities or attending a DOH sponsored event. The DOH has long served as a role model in promoting health and wellness in the state.

Increasing access to healthy foods and beverages and reducing unwanted exposure to unhealthy ones is a necessary step in promoting a healthy work environment. Healthy foods and beverages can help reduce consumption of energy-dense, processed foods in part by providing options that are more nutritious and satisfying. This policy is intended to be a developmental effort towards supporting a healthier workforce and public. As such, this policy shall be updated as new information is received and best practices are developed.

The adoption of this policy shall ensure that healthy choices are available wherever food and beverages are purchased with state or federal funds for DOH meetings, conferences, and other DOH sponsored events throughout the state.

15-01.2 POLICY

The Nutrition Wellness Policy supports the Department of Human Resources Development (DHRD) Worksite Wellness Policy No. 801.001, effective October 1, 2014, that encourages departmental policies to support wellness including adoption of a policy to encourage healthy foods at meetings and events.

This policy applies to all DOH employees and all contractors, caterers, or other organizations that provide food and beverage services on behalf of DOH for events such as meetings, trainings, workshops and conferences. It does not apply to vending machines, cafeterias, snack shops, or related vending in state buildings.

Food and beverages purchased with state or federal funds for sponsored events such as meetings, conferences, catered events, etc., shall follow the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans as outlined below. To complement offerings of healthful foods at meetings and events, include opportunities for physical activity wherever possible.

When purchasing foods, beverages, or food services with state or federal funds, DOH employees shall:

1. Provide access to drinking water throughout the day.
2. Give priority to foods and beverages that are:
  - Low in added sugars,
  - Fat-free or low-fat (exception: nuts and seeds with no added oils and no or minimal added sodium),
  - Free from trans-fats (0g trans-fat), and
  - Low or reduced in sodium.
3. Offer vegetables and/or fruits (preferably fresh) whenever food is provided.
4. Include whole-grain foods whenever processed grains are offered.
5. Offer a protein source with carbohydrate foods at breaks and meals.
6. Include a vegetarian option at meals.
7. Include small-portion options at meals and low-calorie options for snacks.

8. At full-day conferences or events, offer only healthy foods (or healthy beverages only) at mid-morning or mid-afternoon meeting breaks.
9. Make every effort to include culturally appropriate foods.
10. Give priority to Hawaii-grown and organic foods and beverages.

Employees are encouraged to use the Nutrition Wellness Policy for suggestions on food and beverage items that are voluntarily shared at potlucks and on countertops in common areas of DOH buildings.

### 15-01.3 RATIONALE

Heart disease, cancer, and stroke, the top three causes of death in Hawaii<sup>1</sup> are affected by what we eat and how active we are<sup>2</sup>. Foods such as vegetables, fruits, whole-grains, nuts, legumes, and fat-free and low-fat dairy products are better choices for preventing many diseases and reducing overweight and obesity.

Approximately 56% of Hawaii residents are overweight or obese<sup>3</sup>. In Hawaii, obesity costs an estimated \$470 million each year in health care costs alone<sup>4</sup>. This figure does not include losses due to absenteeism and lost productivity. Obesity is a leading modifiable risk factor that contributes to the growing number of people with Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Obesity is an important risk factor for several types of cancer as well.

Approximately 3,000 people are employed by DOH, and state government in Hawaii employs over 10% of the state's residents. Employees eat many meals and snacks while away from home. By adopting this policy, the DOH is making a strategic move to lead the way to a healthier work environment in the state. Giving priority to healthy foods and beverages is part of a larger, more comprehensive approach to employee wellness. Comprehensive worksite health promotion programs can reduce sick

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<sup>1</sup> Hawaii Health Data Warehouse; Hawaii State Department of Health, Office of Health Status Monitoring; United States Census, Leading Causes of Death in Hawaii, Report Created: 3/5/15 Accessed online 4/1/2015 at <http://www.hhdw.org/>.

<sup>2</sup> Position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: The Role of Nutrition in Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention. Slawson DL, Fitzgerald N, Morgan KT. J Acad Nutr Diet. 2013 Jul;113(7):972-9. doi: 10.1016/j.jand.2013.05.005.

<sup>3</sup> Hawaii State Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Profile. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Accessed online 4/1/2015: <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/stateprograms/fundedstates/pdf/hawaii-state-profile.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Derived from: State- and Payer-Specific Estimates of annual Medical Expenditures attributable to Obesity. Trogon, JG, Finkelstein, EA, Feagan, CW, et al. Obesity, 2012; 20(1): 214-220.

leave, health plan costs, and workers' compensation and disability insurance costs by about 25%, according to an evaluation of 62 studies<sup>5</sup>. This policy to increase healthy food and beverage options demonstrates the broader commitment of the DOH to address the prevention of chronic disease in the workplace and at DOH sponsored events in public venues. It is our intent to serve as a model not only for other state agencies, but also for businesses, institutions, and ultimately, all state residents. The policy is an overall effort to change the environmental cues so each person has health promoting options throughout their day. Subsequently, it is hoped that the DOH policy will contribute to conference and meeting sites and vendors adopting menus that align with the Nutrition Wellness Policy and offer these as standard fare for other state agencies. Nutrition standards and food policies are intended to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

#### 15-01.4 DEFINITIONS

Healthy foods are generally fresh or minimally processed foods, naturally dense in nutrients, that when eaten in moderation and in combination with other foods, sustain growth, repair and support vital processes, promote longevity, reduce disease, and strengthen and maintain the body and its functions. Healthy foods do not contain ingredients that contribute to disease or impede recovery when consumed at normal levels.

Healthy beverages provide water, an essential nutrient, without ingredients that could contribute to disease or impede recovery when consumed at normal levels. Some healthy beverages also provide other nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, protein, and/or fiber.

#### 15-01.5 PROCEDURES

DOH administrators and managers or their designees shall be responsible for:

1. Communicating this policy and its provisions to all DOH employees involved in planning and purchasing foods and beverages as part of events with state or federal funds;
2. Instructing new employees in this policy for employees who will be involved in planning and purchasing foods and beverages as part of events with state or federal funds;

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<sup>5</sup> Meta-Evaluation of Worksite Health Promotion Economic Return Studies: 2012 Update, American Journal of Health Promotion, Chapman LS, March/April 2012, Vol. 26, No. 4, pp. TAHP-1-TAHP-12.

3. Clarifying provisions of this policy with the Administrative Services Office as needed;
4. Supervising procurement done by their employees as appropriate;
5. Enforcing the policy and any amendments hereto; and
6. Informing employees of the appropriate and correct procedure to follow when the policies have not been adhered to.

DOH employees involved in procurement of foods and beverages with state or federal funds shall:

1. Become familiar with and follow the guidance in this policy and supporting documents;
2. Direct questions to their supervisor when in need of clarification; and
3. Follow all applicable procurement policies of the state.