

# **California Department of Aging**

## **Older Americans Act Title III C-1**

### **Congregate Nutrition Program Narrative**

#### **Program / Element / Component – 10.10**

##### **Description**

The Congregate Nutrition Program provides nutritionally balanced meals, nutrition education, and nutrition risk screening to Californians aged 60 years and older and their spouses, and encourages socialization and better health through disease prevention and health promotion programs. In addition, Nutrition Counseling may be available in some Planning Service Areas. The Program targets low-income minority elderly Californians. The Program encourages the use of volunteers and gives all participants the opportunity to contribute to the cost of the meal. Meals meet nutritional standards by incorporating the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and providing a minimum of one-third of the Dietary Reference Intakes.

The Program is funded by the federal Older Americans Act (OAA), the State General Fund, participant donations, and local funds. Services are provided through a network of 33 Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) and their contracted service providers.

##### **Benefits**

The Program encourages socialization of seniors by providing nutritionally balanced meals at various centralized locations, nutrition education, nutrition risk screening, and better health through disease prevention and health promotion programs in a group setting.

##### **Eligibility**

Individuals eligible for Congregate Nutrition services must be 60 years of age or older. Spouses of eligible participants, regardless of age, volunteers who provide needed services during meal serving hours, disabled persons who live with an eligible person, seniors who live in senior housing facilities that provide meal services may also be eligible for meals and other nutrition services. The OAA emphasizes serving individuals in greatest economic or social need, seniors living in rural areas, and seniors who are low-income minorities.

##### **Access**

Information on the Congregate Meal Program and how to qualify and receive services can be obtained by calling the statewide toll free line at **1-800-510-2020**, the local AAA listed in the blue bordered pages of the Community Services section of the telephone book under Senior Information and Referral/Assistance, or access the California Department of Aging website at [www.aging.ca.gov](http://www.aging.ca.gov).

## **Background**

Authorized under Title III C-1 of the OAA of 1965, as amended in 2000, this program has the largest budget of all OAA programs.

The Nutrition Services Incentive Program is an allotment of funds provided by the Administration on Aging. The purpose of the funds is to provide incentives and reward improved performance by states in the effective delivery of nutritious meals to older individuals. Funds received must be used to purchase food for use in the nutrition projects.