Fiscal Year 2025

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Shelf Stable Meals for Home Delivered and Congregate Meal Clients Served by AgeOptions Funded Partners

Diane Slezak, President and CEO
AgeOptions
1048 Lake Street, Suite 300
Oak Park, IL 60301

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

AgeOptions does not discriminate in admission to programs or treatment of employment in programs or activities in compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act; the U.S. Civil Rights Act; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; The Age Discrimination Act; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act; and the U.S. and Illinois Constitution. If you feel you have been discriminated against, you have the right to file a complaint with the Illinois Department on Aging. For information, call (800)252-8966 (Voice and TTY) or contact AgeOptions at (708)383-0258 (Voice) or (708)524-1653 (TTY)
1. **Purpose**
   AgeOptions seeks one vendor to provide boxes of shelf-stable meals to approximately 45
   participating meal site distribution locations throughout suburban Cook County. See Quantities
   section below for estimated volume.

2. **Definitions**
   a. **Shelf-Stable meal**: A group of food items providing approximately one-third (1/3) of the
      Dietary Reference Intake (DRI) for older adults established by the Food and Nutrition Board
      of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences (see **Attachment E** -
      Menu Standards). Each meal must provide a balanced and appropriate portion of protein,
      vegetables, fruit, grains and dairy.
   b. **Unitized meal**: A group of food items meeting the definition of a Shelf-Stable meal and
      packaged together in such a way that a recipient will understand that the group of food
      items constitutes a complete Shelf-Stable meal.
   c. **Shelf Life**: Will be defined as the shortest length of time until any food item in a meal box
      reaches its expiration date. No food item should have a shelf life of less than 180 days. No
      food item should require refrigeration to safely reach its expiration date.
   d. **Meal Box**: A shipping unit containing a standardized number of meals. For the current
      AgeOptions Emergency Shelf-Stable Meal Program, each box contains seven (7) complete
      shelf-stable meals. You may propose different quantities per box as long as the total of
      meals supplied meets the estimated required range of 42,000 to 98,000 meals. (See item
      5, below, "Quantities.")
   e. **Entrée**: The main food item in a Shelf-Stable meal. This item is usually the main source of
      protein. Examples may include but are not limited to:
      i. Canned beef stew or chili
      ii. Vacu-packed pouch of tuna
      iii. Canned hummus

3. **Product Requirements**
   a. **Required Meal Types**:
      - Regular diet meals made up of food items suitable for most healthy older adults.
      - Kosher meals must be certified as Kosher by a qualified rabbinical council.
      - Vegetarian meals should strive to meet the standards for protein through vegetables,
        legumes and dairy products (see **Attachment E**).
   b. **Optional Meal Types**:
      i. Medically tailored meals should be certified by a dietitian to be more appropriate
         for the medical condition targeted than Regular diet meals would be. Medically
         tailored meals most requested are diabetic friendly, low sodium and renal friendly.
      ii. Culturally tailored meals or meals items are designed for people with strong cultural
          or ethnic food preferences. These might include, but are not limited to: Halal, South
          Asian, Latin-X/Hispanic, Korean and Chinese.
   c. Each box will contain a specified number of complete shelf-stable meals, packaged in such
      a way that recipients may quickly determine which meal items make a complete meal. This
      may be accomplished with individualized packaging, box dividers, itemized menus, a
      combination of these techniques or in other ways you may devise. Ideally, the components
      of each box will produce seven complete shelf-stable meals.
d. Each meal in a meal box must provide at least one-third (1/3) of the daily nutritional requirements based on the Older Americans Act standards for Title III-C Home Delivered Meals. See the Summary Nutritional Standards sheet, below for a brief summary of requirements. For detailed menu standards, see Attachment E “Menu Standards.” All menus must be approved by the AgeOptions Registered Dietitian.

e. On the outside of each box will be affixed a 4X5 bright orange or yellow label, with instructions outlining when and why to consume the shelf-stable meals. Text will be supplied by AgeOptions.

f. The outside of each box will have a printed “packaged on” date.

g. The box contents must include a single 8.5X11 insert that includes:
   ➢ a menu of all meals
   ➢ instructions regarding what recipients should do in case of emergency
   Text will be supplied by AgeOptions.

h. All meals will meet certain nutrition standards outlined in this proposal and have a shelf-life of at least six months (180 days) as determined by the manufacturer’s estimated expiration dates printed on the individual food items. See Attachment E – “Menu Standards” for detailed nutritional requirements, also summarized at bottom of this document.

i. Deliveries will be made twice yearly.
   i. The first delivery will be made in the first week of October 2024.
   ii. The second delivery will be made in the first week of March 2025.
   iii. Deliveries do not have to be made to all distribution sites on the same day.
   iv. Deliveries may occur over a one-week period leading up to the due date.
   v. Sites must be notified of delivery dates in advance.

j. The selected vendor will be responsible for making deliveries to the grantees locations found in Attachment D* – Distribution Sites & Quantities (based on current information; sites and quantities may change).

4. Vendor Program Responsibilities
   a. Identify a primary contact person and a backup for communications with AgeOptions.
   b. Be flexible when changes to the menu are required.
   c. Provide price and/or menu changes in a timely manner. Bids on each semi-annual delivery will be solicited as soon as the delivery quantity is determined and submitted to the vendor.
   d. Promptly advise AgeOptions of any factors, such as financial difficulties or physical plant changes that may affect your organization’s ability to provide contracted services.

5. Estimated Quantities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delivery Period</th>
<th>Estimated individual Meals</th>
<th>Estimated number of boxes, assuming 7-meals/box</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivery October 2024</td>
<td>45,500 – 52,500</td>
<td>6,500 -- 7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery March 2025</td>
<td>42,000 – 45,500</td>
<td>6,000 -- 6,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>87,500 – 98,000</td>
<td>12,500 – 14,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These quantities are based on FY2024 orders. Totals for the FY2025 program may vary.

6. Contract Extensions
   If AgeOptions has funding for future fiscal years, AgeOptions may choose to contract with the successful vendor for up to two additional years (FY2026 and FY2027). For extension years, AgeOptions may offer a cost-of-living increase for food away from home based on the Consumer Price Index.
7. Technical Assistance
If you have questions, please contact RFP@ageoptions.org. Technical assistance is available until Tuesday, February 27, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. Central Time (CT). Answers to questions will be shared via email with all applicants through a weekly “Frequently Asked Questions” update. To ensure that all applicants receive answers to FAQ’s at the same time, send notice of your intent to submit an application to RFP@ageoptions.org. You will not receive answers to FAQs until you send notice of your intent to apply.

8. Due Date
Proposals are due on Tuesday, February 27, 2024, by 11:59 p.m., Central Time. Proposals must be sent, via email, to RFP@ageoptions.org

9. Meal Samples
AgeOptions will invite selected applicants to send a minimum of 15 Regular diet sample meal boxes. The variety of meals should be the same in each meal box. Invited applicants must send samples to arrive no later than Thursday, April 11, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. Central Time to:

AgeOptions
1048 Lake Street, Suite 300
Oak Park, Illinois 60301
ATTN: Phillip Lanier
708-383-0258

10. Evaluation of Proposals
All applications will be evaluated on a variety of criteria that will include:
   a. Best (lowest) price per meal box as indicated by Vendor (Attachment F).
   b. Compliance, per Menu Standards (Attachment E).
   c. Competency (performance history, references, demonstrated ability to provide service, demonstrable capacity sufficient to the project, etc.)
   d. Quality of food items.
   e. Packaging (durability, ease of use, minimal waste, clear unitizing of complete meals).
   f. AgeOptions may seek clarification and negotiate on pricing and scope of service prior to making any final selections.
   g. References supplied by applicant.

11. Summary of Key Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Key Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFP Issued to Interested Vendors</td>
<td>January 23, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Assistance Available via email:</td>
<td>January 23, 2024 – February 27, 2024, ending 4:00 p.m. CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:RFP@ageoptions.org">RFP@ageoptions.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications due to: <a href="mailto:RFP@ageoptions.org">RFP@ageoptions.org</a></td>
<td>February 27, 2024, no later than 11:59 p.m. CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Applicants Notified</td>
<td>April 2, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Meal Boxes Due to AgeOptions</td>
<td>April 11, 2024, no later than 4:00 p.m. CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract Award Date</td>
<td>April 25, 2024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initial Delivery Date</td>
<td>Week of October 7, 2024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Delivery Date</td>
<td>Week of March 3, 2025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrient</td>
<td>1 Meal per Day</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calories (Kcal)</td>
<td>No less than 600 per meal; Average 685 per day for the week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td>19-21 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbohydrate</td>
<td>43 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat</td>
<td>&lt;26 grams≤30% calories averaged over one week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiber</td>
<td>10 grams average over one week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin A (RAE)*</td>
<td>300 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin C</td>
<td>30 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin E (AT)**</td>
<td>5 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin B6</td>
<td>.6 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folate (DFE)***</td>
<td>133 mcg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin B12</td>
<td>.8 mcg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calcium</td>
<td>400 mg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Magnesium</td>
<td>140 mg</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.7 mg</td>
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<td>-------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zinc</td>
<td>1133 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potassium</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>800 mg or less (900 mg averaged over one week)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*RAE = Retinol Activity Equivalent; **AT = Alpha-tocopherol; ***DFE = Dietary Folate Equivalent

Revised August 2021