



# National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity Healthy Meeting Toolkit







This toolkit was developed by the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA). A coalition of over 440 national, state, and local organizations advocating for policies and programs to promote healthy eating and physical activity, with the aim of reducing the illnesses, disabilities, premature deaths, and costs caused by diet- and inactivity-related diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, high blood pressure, diabetes, and obesity. For more information on NANA, please visit: <http://www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/nana.html>

This toolkit is intended for anyone that holds meetings and conferences. It could be used by governments, non-profits, associations, businesses, or as an option for hotel chains or conference centers. This resource is a model that can be modified to fit the specific needs of the organization using it.

The guidance addresses four topic areas: nutrition, physical activity, tobacco-free, and sustainability. Each of the four topic areas are set up in a two-tiered system: Standard Healthy Meeting and Superior Healthy Meeting. Organizations can choose which tier works best for them, which can vary by topic area. For example, an organization might choose to follow the Superior Healthy Meeting recommendations for nutrition and physical activity, but use the Standard Healthy Meeting recommendations for tobacco-free and sustainability. The general recommendations are intended to be followed by all organizations regardless of which tier they choose for each topic area.



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# Meeting Guidance

## Introduction

Creating a culture of health and wellness in meetings and conferences is an important way to help people eat well and be physically active, foster healthier work environments, and cultivate social norms around healthier choices and behaviors. Supporting healthy food and beverage choices, providing physical activity opportunities, requiring a tobacco-free environment, and promoting sustainability are the major areas of focus for the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA) meeting and conference guidance. This toolkit is available at: [www.healthymeetings.org](http://www.healthymeetings.org).

## General Recommendations

- ☐ Support healthier choices, provide leadership and role modeling, and help to create a social norm around healthy choices and behaviors
- ☐ Offer nutritious food and beverage options
  - ☐ Offer the recommended servings of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, especially for all-day meetings
  - ☐ Place healthier foods and beverages in prominent positions, where they are most likely to be seen and more likely to be chosen
  - ☐ Post calories in worksite cafeterias and at conferences and meetings when appropriate and/or possible
- ☐ Provide reasonable portions of foods and beverages (i.e., avoid large portions)
- ☐ Consider not serving food at breaks that are not mealtimes; instead provide physical activity
- ☐ Ensure healthier options are attractively presented, appealing, and taste good
- ☐ Offer physical activity opportunities that are relevant to the audience and environment to help people achieve at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day
- ☐ Provide a tobacco-free environment
- ☐ Prioritize sustainable practices when possible, by minimizing waste, encouraging recycling, and sourcing products from sustainable producers
- ☐ Evaluate your efforts to hold healthy meetings and conferences and make adjustments over time to continue to improve the acceptability and healthfulness of choices



# Meeting Guidance

## Nutrition

### Beverages

#### Standard Healthy Meeting

- Make water the default beverage
- Do not offer full-calorie sugar-sweetened beverages. Serve beverages with 40 calories per container or less, 100% juice, 100% juice diluted with water, low-fat or non-fat milk, or calcium and vitamin D-fortified soymilk
- Offer low-fat or non-fat milk with coffee and tea service in addition to or in place of half and half

#### Superior Healthy Meeting

*In order to meet this tier, all Standard Healthy Meeting recommendations above also must be met.*

- Eliminate all sugar-sweetened beverages (including those with less than 40 calories per container that are allowed under the Standard Healthy Meeting)

### Food

#### Standard Healthy Meeting

- Offer fruits and/or vegetables every time food is served
- Offer reasonable portion sizes (see page 17)
- In buffet lines or self-service, support sensible portions by offering reasonably-sized entrees and appropriately-sized serving utensils and plates
- Use whole grains whenever possible (100% whole grain or whole grain as the first ingredient) (see page 11)
- Serve healthier condiments and dressings and offer them on the side
- Look for or work with the caterer to offer lower-sodium options
- Make the majority of the meat options lean meat, poultry, or seafood
- Provide a vegetarian (non-meat) option
- For special occasions and dinner, cut desserts in half or serve small portions. For lunches, breaks, or regular meetings serve fruit as the dessert
- Do not place candy or candy bowls in the meeting space
- Whenever possible, choose foods that are prepared in a healthy way (grilled, baked, poached, roasted, braised, or broiled). Avoid fried foods.

#### Superior Healthy Meeting

*In order to meet this tier, all Standard Healthy Meeting recommendations above also must be met.*

- All grains must be whole grain-rich (51% or more whole grains by weight or whole grain as the first ingredient)
- Serve only lean meats, poultry, or seafood options; seek alternatives to processed and red meats
- Replace all desserts and pastries with fruit or other healthful foods
- Do not serve fried foods
- If there is the capacity to do nutrient analysis or if the caterer can provide nutrient information, have all foods and meals meet the nutrition standards in appendix A (see page 30)



# Meeting Guidance

## Physical Activity

### Standard Healthy Meeting

- Mention to attendees (through announcements or in written materials) that it is fine to move within the meeting space (standing, stretching); integrate exercise equipment if possible within the space (exercise balls in place of chairs, raised tables for standing)
- When possible, allow for comfortable clothes/shoes to support physical activity during breaks
- Periodically break up sitting time
- For conferences or all-day meetings, support physical activity before, during, and after the work of the day
- Provide adapted programming or alternative activities for those with physical disabilities
- Identify someone to facilitate a short physical activity break

### Superior Healthy Meeting

*In order to meet this tier, all Standard Healthy Meeting recommendations above also must be met.*

- Try to choose meeting/conference locations where there are walkable destinations; provide walking/running maps
- Only contract with hotels that have a fitness facility available at no cost to attendees. If the hotel does not have a fitness facility, contract with a local exercise facility
- Provide exercise stations in the hall or within the meeting room
- Implement walking meetings when possible

## Tobacco-Free

### Standard Healthy Meeting

- Give preference to meeting locations that are 100% tobacco-free, including indoor and outdoor areas
- If the hotel is not smoke-free, negotiate that your guests be placed on non-smoking floors

### Superior Healthy Meeting

*In order to meet this tier, all Standard Healthy Meeting recommendations above also must be met.*

- A tobacco-free environment is provided at all times
- Choose to host your conference in a city with a comprehensive smoke-free policy that includes restaurants and bars



## Sustainability

### Standard Healthy Meeting

- Reduce waste and packaging whenever possible
- Consider appeal to meeting attendees, sustainability, and usefulness of conference giveaways
- Have recycling bins available
- Provide handouts on a flash drive or make them available online to reduce paper

### Superior Healthy Meeting

*In order to meet this tier, all Standard Healthy Meeting recommendations above also must be met.*

- Conduct a zero-waste meeting or conference
- Use locally-sourced and sustainably-produced food and giveaways when possible

For additional information or clarification on this guidance see relevant sections of the toolkit.





# Healthy Meeting Rationale

Studies show a strong relationship between the physical and social environments of the workplace and the health behaviors of employees. Nearly half of our waking hours are spent at work, and many of those hours are spent in meetings and conferences. Unfortunately, the foods and beverages available at meetings and conferences are often high in fat, added sugars, and sodium, and contain few fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Meetings and conferences also generally involve a lot of time sitting and provide little opportunity for physical activity, which reduces concentration, productivity, and energy levels.

Currently, Americans eat portion sizes that are too large, too much saturated and trans fat, sodium, added sugar, and refined grains, and do not eat enough fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. In addition, most Americans do not meet the minimum recommendation for physical activity, which is 150 minutes a week. By adopting healthy meeting standards you can help to create a high-energy meeting environment that supports healthy choices.

By implementing healthy meeting standards your organization will create a supportive environment that cultivates a culture of health and helps employees and members to eat well, be active, reduce exposure to tobacco products, and protect the environment. Adopting healthy meeting standards sends the message that health is important to your organization and that you support the health of your employees, members, and partners. It models healthy behavior and helps organizations and governments to “walk-the-talk.” These standards can be used for every type of meeting, from small department-level meetings to multi-day conferences.

## Healthy Meeting FAQs

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Won't healthy meetings cost more?

Some healthy foods may be more expensive, but by making portion sizes more reasonable, ordering less food, reducing waste, and rethinking whether snacks need to be provided at each break and meeting, you may end up saving money by reducing your overall food purchases. In addition, following sustainability guidelines can cut down on waste, and could save additional money.

## Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

### Why shouldn't I serve sugar-sweetened beverages?

Sugar-sweetened beverages are the single largest contributor of calories to the American diet. In addition, the calories we consume when drinking a beverage do not make us feel as full as when we consume a food with the same number of calories, which can lead to higher calorie intakes. By removing sugar-sweetened beverages and replacing them with water, flavored waters, seltzers, coffee, unsweetened iced tea, and other low- and no- calorie beverages, you make it easier for your employees, members, and partners to make a healthy choice while still leaving them satisfied with refreshing offerings.

### Why should I ask the caterer, restaurant, or hotel to modify portions?

Portion sizes in the U.S. have grown. Often restaurant meals provide two to three times more than a healthy portion. Plus, the proportions of foods from different food groups on most restaurant plates are inconsistent with expert dietary recommendations, see page 17 for more information on reasonable portions. By serving reasonable portions of healthier foods, your employees and members will feel satisfied without feeling the discomfort of overindulging.

### Why should I remove or reduce desserts and pastries?

Desserts and pastries add excess calories, added sugars, and fats, while adding few, if any, positive nutrients. Providing desserts and pastries causes people to eat extra calories they probably wouldn't have (how often do you eat dessert with your lunch at work)? By replacing desserts and pastries with fruit or another healthful food you help your employees, members, and partners make healthier choices instead of tempting them with extra calories few can afford.

### Why should I reduce sodium at my meeting?

The average American consumes approximately 3,400 mg of sodium per day. Yet, most Americans should consume no more than 2,300 mg per day, and people age 51 and older, those with high blood pressure, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease, and African-Americans should consume no more than 1,500 mg per day. Serving foods with less sodium will help your employees and members moderate their sodium intake and spur hotels and caterers to think about how much sodium they add to their dishes.

### Why should I incorporate 30 minutes of physical activity into my conference?

#### Shouldn't people be getting their 30 minutes outside of work time?

Physical activity opportunities enhance the value of your meeting by increasing attendee concentration, productivity, and energy levels. Many people are not getting the recommended 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity a day. By providing physical activity opportunities during your meeting or conference you help your employees and members reach the daily minimum recommendation. You also help to cultivate healthier social norms around exercise. Your meeting or conference could show attendees how easy it is to be physically active and show people new ways to incorporate physical activity into their daily lives.



# Working with Hotels and Caterers

## Planning

### Registration

- Use an online meeting registration site for your guests. One example is RegOnline (<http://www.regonline.com/>).
- Get an accurate headcount of people who will be attending each meeting, event, and meal.
- If you can accommodate them, ask people about dietary restrictions. Special requests can be tied to attendees' names.

### Choosing a Location

#### Identify 5 or more possible locations in which to host your event.

- Use Yelp, Foursquare, Urban Spoon, and other websites to read reviews online before choosing a restaurant or hotel.
- Send out Requests for Proposals (RFPs, see pages 28-29 for sample language) for large meetings explaining your organization and the type of meeting that you are planning to have.
- Look at each establishment's menus and prices.

#### Narrow down your options by reviewing each location.

- Ask the sales manager about the venue's experience with healthy meetings and the options that they offer for healthy catering.
- If possible, sample the food offered on the menu.
- Ask for photos of entrees—generally hotels have many for promotional purposes.
- Look at vending machines, if the rooms are stocked with soda or other food, or if there are communal "break" areas with less healthy food.
- Evaluate the food in hotel or conference center concession stands and other food outlets; assess whether healthy options are available.
- Ask if less healthy foods can be removed from the guests' rooms and replaced with healthier options or provide no food at all.
- Determine whether there is a fitness facility or other opportunities for physical activity, such as safe places to walk in the area.

#### Things to avoid/look out for:

- Hotels and resorts often charge hidden fees. Pay careful attention to the cost of meals. Some locations charge everyone at the rate of the most expensive dinner option—be sure to double-check the fine print.
- Companies that help organize meetings and conferences and serve as liaisons between you and the hotels may steer you towards hotels with more expensive options, as they get a portion of the profits.
- Conference centers sometimes have "break stations" with soda fountains, along with unhealthy snacks. You may not have the option to remove the unhealthy items, because other groups also access the break stations.

# Working with Hotels and Caterers

## Developing the Catering Contract

- Open the discussion by asking about options for the menu. Then discuss needed modifications and substitutions.
- Be sure to communicate your definition of “healthy” to the catering manager; send them a copy of this Healthy Meeting Toolkit. Ask for recommendations of what options they have that meet your definition of healthy.
- Carefully cross-check the order forms from the caterers to make sure that they are correct.
- Explain your sustainability standards, how and what to recycle and compost, any zero waste requirements, and request a map showing the central waste collection area(s).

### Headcount per meal

- Depending on the hotel, portion sizes for buffets are often large. For breakfast buffets, to save money and avoid food waste, consider ordering portions for only 80% of the number of people that have RSVP'ed to attend.
- At receptions with hors d'oeuvres, attendance is often lower than expected. Consider ordering food for 75% of your expected headcount.
- Plated meals will require an accurate headcount.

## Determining the Menu

**When determining a menu for your meeting or conference, think of the initial menu provided to you by the caterer, restaurant, or hotel as a starting place for customization.**

- Modify the soups, salads, entrees, snack, etc. to fit your meeting's needs. See the cooking techniques on pages 13-14 for suggestions you can offer to make meals healthier.
- Make sure that you, the catering manager, and/or chef are in agreement about portion sizes. See page 17 for more information on reasonable portion sizes.
- Ask for fruits and vegetables to be served whenever food is provided.
- Ask for larger portions of fruits and vegetables to work toward offering half the plate as fruits or vegetables.
- Offer more than one variety of fruits and vegetables so that people can find choices they like.
- Specify that free drinking water should be provided at all times.
- Request whole grain cereals, breads, rice, and pasta be used whenever possible. See page 11 for examples of whole grains.
- Ask about using lower-sodium options and cooking techniques, see page 13 for cooking technique suggestions.
- Refer to the sample food and menu suggestions on pages 11-12 for more ideas.

## During the Event

- Monitor implementation with constant vigilance. Every time a meal or break is being set up, have someone on site cross-check that all the food and beverage options are consistent with your approved banquet event orders.
- If you see something that should not have been served, request that it be taken back and replaced with the proper food item that you did order.
- Assess how attendees like the food by looking at which options people choose, eat, or leave uneaten.

## After the Event

- Get feedback about which food options and physical activity opportunities meeting attendees liked and ideas for future events. Consider sending out an online evaluation form (like SurveyMonkey) that asks guests to anonymously rate and comment on the meeting or conference. See pages 8-10 for a model evaluation.







# Evaluating the Meeting

## Healthy Meeting/Conference Model Evaluation

Asking participants to fill out an evaluation after the meeting or conference will help to improve the options offered and acceptance of healthy meetings over time. These questions can be incorporated into a general evaluation of your meeting, if you conduct one. If you receive negative feedback, do not get discouraged. It may take time for participants to get used to having healthy meetings and for you to find the right mix of healthy options. Use the feedback to improve your next meeting, while still keeping it healthy. This is a model evaluation tool. It has not been validated yet, but further development and implementation will enhance its effectiveness.

### General

Do you think this meeting provided a healthy work environment (healthy food options, opportunity for physical activity)?

- ☐ Yes, there were plenty of healthy food options and opportunities for physical activity
- ☐ Yes, there were some healthy food options and opportunities for physical activity
- ☐ No, there were not enough healthy food options
- ☐ No, there were not enough opportunities for physical activity
- ☐ I do not know or do not have an opinion

Additional ideas/thoughts to share: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you support our organization providing healthy meetings?

- ☐ Yes, very much
- ☐ Yes, somewhat
- ☐ No, I am not that supportive
- ☐ No, I am not at all supportive
- ☐ I do not know or do not have an opinion

Would you like future meetings to provide healthy food options and physical activity opportunities?

- ☐ Yes, very much
- ☐ Yes, somewhat
- ☐ No, not really
- ☐ No, not at all
- ☐ I do not know or do not have an opinion

Additional ideas/thoughts to share: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Nutrition

Did you like the food and beverages served at this meeting?

- ☐ Yes, very much
- ☐ Yes, somewhat
- ☐ No, not much
- ☐ No, not at all
- ☐ I do not know or do not have an opinion

# Evaluating the Meeting

## Nutrition (continued)

What were your favorite food options provided at this meeting?

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What were your least favorite food options provided at this meeting?

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Did you like the beverage options provided at this meeting?

- ☐ Yes, very much
- ☐ Yes, somewhat
- ☐ No, not much
- ☐ No, not at all

What beverages would you like to be offered at future meetings?

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Any additional suggestions or recommendations about the foods and beverages served at this meeting?

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## Physical Activity

Were you encouraged to be physically active during the meeting?

- ☐ Yes, very much
- ☐ Yes, somewhat
- ☐ No, not much
- ☐ No, not at all
- ☐ I do not know or do not have an opinion

How could we better support your ability to be physically active at future meetings?

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Did you participate in the physical activity breaks?

- ☐ Yes, most of the time
- ☐ Yes, some of the time
- ☐ No, not really
- ☐ No, not at all
- ☐ I do not know or do not have an opinion

Additional comments/ideas about physical activity breaks?

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How would you rate the physical activity breaks led by the meeting organizers?

- ☐ Very helpful
- ☐ Somewhat helpful
- ☐ Not helpful
- ☐ I do not know or do not have an opinion







# Evaluating the Meeting

## Physical Activity (continued)

Was there enough opportunity for physical activity during the meeting?

- ☐ Yes, there was more physical activity than meetings I usually attend
- ☐ Yes, there was enough
- ☐ No, there was not enough
- ☐ There was too much time for physical activity
- ☐ I didn't need physical activity breaks
- ☐ I do not know or do not have an opinion

Did the meeting schedule allow you to fit in additional physical activity before or after the meeting(s)?

- ☐ Yes, there was ample time
- ☐ Yes, there was some time
- ☐ No, there was not much time
- ☐ No, there was not time for additional physical activity
- ☐ I do not know or do not have an opinion

Any additional comments or suggestions about the physical activity at this meeting?

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## Other

Do you support having future meetings in a tobacco-free meeting space, as this meeting was?

- ☐ Yes, very much
- ☐ Yes, somewhat
- ☐ No, not really
- ☐ No, not at all
- ☐ I do not know or do not have an opinion

Do you support having recycling, waste reduction efforts, and other sustainability measures incorporated into future meetings, as this meeting did?

- ☐ Yes, very much
- ☐ Yes, somewhat
- ☐ No, not really
- ☐ No, not at all
- ☐ I do not know or do not have an opinion

Additional comments/ideas about the healthfulness of the meeting?

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# Sample Menus

## Beverages

- Pitchers of water
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice or 100% juice diluted with water or seltzer, with modest-sized cups or containers (less than 8 ounces)
- Beverages with 40 calories or less per container: water, seltzers, flavored waters, light fruit juices, diet sodas, diet iced tea
- Coffee—regular and decaf with low-fat milk instead of half and half
- Tea—unsweetened, iced or hot, with lemon and low-fat milk instead of half and half
- Low-fat (1%) or non-fat milk and/or unsweetened calcium and vitamin D-fortified soymilk
- **Superior Healthy Meeting:** no sugar-sweetened beverages (includes soft drinks, sports drinks, fruit drinks, energy drinks, and all other beverages sweetened with high fructose corn syrup, sugar, honey, or agave syrup)

## Breakfast

- Always serve fruit. Cut fresh fruit into slices or chop it into a fruit salad (bananas, apples, oranges, grapefruit, melon, etc.) to make easier to eat
- Oatmeal with cinnamon, nuts, and dried or fresh fruit
- Low-fat or non-fat plain yogurt with fresh berries, bananas, or other cut fruit
- Whole grain cereal low in sugar (6g/serving) and high in fiber
- Fiber-rich, whole grain breads – small whole grain bagel (3 ½ inch diameter) or full size cut in quarters, whole wheat English muffins, whole wheat toast
- Spreads: peanut butter, low-fat cream cheese, hummus
- Scrambled eggs, egg whites, or egg substitute with vegetables (bell peppers, spinach, onions, mushrooms, tomatoes)
- Breakfast burrito: scrambled eggs, egg whites, or egg substitute, onions, peppers, black beans, salsa, whole grain tortilla

## What is a Whole Grain?

**Examples of whole grains:** whole wheat, whole corn, oats, barley, quinoa, sorghum, spelt, and brown rice

**How to identify whole grains:** Check if “whole grain” is the only grain ingredient; grains with whole grain as the first ingredient on the ingredients list are also good choices.







# Sample Menus: Lunch and Dinner

## Sandwich Suggestions

- Use whole grain bread or whole grain wraps
- Lean meats, poultry, seafood, and non-meat proteins: sliced turkey, chicken, fish (tuna, shrimp, salmon), egg, tofu, hummus, or bean spread
- Any vegetable: lettuce, raw spinach, tomatoes, bell peppers (fresh or roasted), cucumbers, avocados, artichoke hearts, onions, mushrooms, radish, shredded carrots or cabbage

## Boxed Lunches

When ordering a boxed lunch, choose a salad or sandwich made with lots of veggies, and whole grain bread or wrap. Ask the restaurant to substitute fruit for the cookie and chips, and provide water or seltzer instead of soda. Have condiments or dressings on the side.

## Limit Cheese

Most cheese is high in saturated fat, sodium and is calorically dense. Substitute extra veggies on your sandwich instead of a slice of cheese, leave it out of pasta dishes, and don't offer cheese platter appetizers. If you are concerned about calcium, offer low-fat and non-fat milk.

## Main Dishes

- Broiled, baked, grilled, poached, sautéed, or roasted lean meats, poultry, seafood, or tofu in appropriate portion sizes (see portion sizes section on page 17)
- Bell peppers or tomatoes stuffed with brown rice and vegetables
- Whole grain pasta with tomato-based sauce and vegetables
- Main dish salads (for lunch events)

## Side Dishes

- Mixed greens and assorted vegetables (tomatoes, cucumbers, shredded carrots, peppers)
- Spinach salad with mandarin oranges and toasted almonds
- Roasted vegetables (carrots, broccoli, brussel sprouts, squash, beets)
- Fruit salad
- Brown rice, whole grain pasta/couscous, or quinoa with dried fruit and/or vegetables
- Black beans
- Curried lentils
- Vegetable platter: carrot sticks, celery, broccoli, cucumbers, cherry tomatoes, snap peas with hummus

## Healthier Condiments and Dressings

Condiments and dressings often have lots of sodium, sugar, or fat. Serve them on the side. Try mustard, hummus, or chutney for spreads on sandwiches. For salad dressings, offer oil and vinegar or lower-fat versions.

## Snacks

- Sliced fruit: melon, kiwis, oranges, apples, pineapple, peaches
- Easy to eat (and peel) fruit: bananas, grapes, berries, clementines, plums
- Vegetable tray with hummus
- Pepper strips and cucumber slices with salsa
- Dried fruit (no sugar added)
- Unsalted peanuts, almonds, walnuts, cashews with fruit, sunflower seeds, or pumpkin seeds
- Plain yogurt with berries



# Cooking Techniques

## Tips to Reduce Calories

- Serve reasonable portion sizes.
- Make at least half the plate fruits and vegetables.
- Prepare food grilled, baked, poached, braised, roasted, or broiled; not deep-fat fried.
- Do not use breading.
- Serve dressings and sauces on the side.
- Use tomato- or broth-based sauces, stay away from butter, cream, and cheese sauces.
- Use low-fat ingredients and don't add unnecessary sugar.
- Use cheese sparingly.
- Offer broth-based rather than cream-based soups.
- Add vegetables to recipes.

## Tips to Reduce Sodium

- Use herbs, spices, and acids (vinegar, lemon or lime juice, and non-cooking wine) to add flavor to dishes, instead of salt or chicken broth.
- Try to minimize the use of pre-made sauces, dressings, spice mixes, and stocks/broths which are typically high in sodium. Instead make these from scratch or look for reduced sodium or low-sodium versions.
- Prepare meat and seafood dishes with raw product, instead of meats/seafoods injected or brined in sodium solution. For sandwiches, sliced, cooked turkey breast will generally have less sodium than pre-sliced turkey lunchmeat.
- For salad dressings, soups, sauces, and marinades, use no more than 1 teaspoon kosher salt ( $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon of salt) or 2 tablespoons of soy sauce (3 tablespoons reduced sodium soy sauce) in every 10-serving batch.
- Add salt at the end of cooking rather than throughout the process (for example, don't add salt to water to boil pasta).
- Use no salt-added canned food when possible. Drain liquid from and rinse canned foods that have salt added.

## Sodium

The sodium content in the same type of product can vary greatly depending on which brand you choose. Below are examples of sodium differences between different brands on the market today.

Product	Brand A	Brand B
1 Slice of Whole Wheat Bread	130 mg	400 mg
2 Tablespoons BBQ Sauce	230 mg	510 mg
2 Tablespoons Salsa	100 mg	270 mg
$\frac{1}{2}$ Cup Tomato Sauce	330 mg	660 mg
1 Cup Vegetable Soup	480 mg	740 mg
1 Cup Chicken Broth	390 mg	970 mg

When it comes to sodium reduction, people usually think about the salt shaker. However, salt added at the table and when people cook at home is not a major source of sodium in most American's diets. Almost 80% of Americans' sodium intake comes from processed and restaurant foods; cold cuts and cured meats, pizza, soups, cheese, bread, and snack foods are all major sources of sodium. The sodium content can vary greatly by brand even for the same type of product. Even products that do not taste salty can contribute substantial amounts of sodium to our diets. When planning your event, look at the sodium content on food labels and choose brands with less sodium. If sodium is not labeled, contact the distributor or manufacturer to obtain nutrition information.



# Cooking Techniques

## Tips to Reduce Trans and Saturated Fats

- Use healthier vegetable oils, like olive, canola, or corn, in place of butter, shortening, and other fats that are solid at room temperature (e.g. coconut).
- Avoid foods with trans fat listed on the nutrition facts panel or partially-hydrogenated oils in the ingredients list.
- Limit the use of cheese.
- Use lean meat, poultry, seafood, or protein-rich meat alternatives in place of higher-fat meats.
- Remove the skin and trim excess fat from meats and poultry.
- Limit pastries, pies, and other sweet baked goods.

## Making Healthy Choices Easier

Eating healthy is easier when it is the default option (the main or automatic choice):

- Place fruits and vegetables first in the buffet line, and less healthful foods (if served) at the end.
- Make sure that the food is well-lit and presented attractively.
- Use modest-sized (9") plates and bowls.
- Serve food out of moderate-sized bowls with small serving utensils.
- Cut up fruits and vegetables as opposed to serving them whole, to make them easier to eat in a professional setting.
- Make sure fruit is properly ripened.
- Serve vegetable soup or salad as a first course, if serving a multi-course meal.

## Lean Meats, Poultry, Seafood, and Meat Alternatives

- Fish and shellfish (not fried)
- Chicken and turkey (without skin)
- Lean beef or buffalo (round, sirloin, chuck, loin, fillet)
  - To help with choosing a beef, look at the grade; "prime" has the highest fat content, "choice" is in the middle, and "select" has the least
  - Trim fat from the exterior
- Lean or extra lean ground beef or buffalo (no more than 10% fat)
- Lean pork (tenderloin, loin chop)
- Game (rabbit, pheasant, venison, wild duck without skin)
- Meat Alternatives (lentils, beans, tofu), meat substitutes
- Consider labeling the entrees and sides with descriptive, appealing names, such as "Tuscan Grilled Chicken with Rosemary" and "Roasted Carrots with Fresh Tarragon," as opposed to "Grilled Chicken" and "Carrots."
- Make sure that water is available at all times.
- Offer attractive water options (water with slices of lemon, lime, or cucumber).



# Swappable Items

Adapted from University of Minnesota Guidelines

## BEVERAGES

### CHOOSE...

Water (plain or flavored, carbonated or not, with no sugar), coffee or tea, 100% fruit or vegetable juices

Low-fat or non-fat milk

### INSTEAD OF...

Soda or fruit-flavored drinks

Whole, 2% milk, or half and half



## BREAKFAST

### CHOOSE...

100% juice

Fruit, fresh or canned in water, juice, or light syrup

Low-fat yogurt with less than 30 g sugar/8 oz

Small whole grain bagels – 3-1/2" or smaller

Small or mini muffins – 2-1/2" or smaller

Small whole grain bagels or muffins, low-fat granola bars

Toppings of peanut butter, low-fat cream cheese, hummus, tub margarine

Unsweetened whole grain cereals

Whole grain waffles or French toast

### INSTEAD OF...

Juice drinks

Fruits in heavy syrup

Regular high-sugar yogurt

Regular-sized, refined grain bagels

Regular or large muffins

Croissants, doughnuts, sweet rolls, pastries

Butter, full-fat cream cheese, stick margarine

Sweetened cereals and refined grain cereals

Waffles or French toast made from white bread



## LUNCHES AND DINNERS

### CHOOSE...

Salads with lower-fat dressings on the side

Lower-fat salad dressings or vinaigrette

Soups made with vegetable puree or non-fat milk or vegetable based soups

Whole grain pasta salads with light vinaigrette

Sandwiches on whole grain breads

Lean meats, poultry, fish, tofu (3g fat/oz)

Roasted or baked potatoes topped with Greek yogurt/low-fat sour cream or vegetables

Roasted, sautéed, or grilled veggie with herbs

Vegetable plate with hummus

Whole grain bread or rolls with olive oil

Desserts with lower calories: fresh fruit, low-fat ice cream and frozen yogurt, sherbet, sorbet, angel food cake with fruit

### INSTEAD OF...

Salads with added dressing

Regular salad dressings

Soups made with cream or half and half

Pasta salads made with mayonnaise

Sandwiches on croissants or white bread

High-fat and fried meats, processed meats, poultry with skin, oil-packed or fried fish

Baked potatoes with butter, sour cream, and bacon bits or French fries

Cooked vegetables in cream sauce or butter

Bread basket with butter

Croissants or white rolls with butter

Desserts with higher saturated fat and calories: ice cream, cheesecake, pies, cream puffs, cake, pastries





# Swappable Items

*Adapted from University of Minnesota Guidelines*

## RECEPTIONS

CHOOSE...	INSTEAD OF...
Fresh vegetables, cut up and served with low-fat dressing, salsa, or hummus	Tempura or deep fat-fried vegetables or cheese platters
Cut up fresh fruit	Fruit tarts, pie, cobbler, pastries
Grilled or broiled chicken skewers without skin	Fried chicken tenders
Miniature meatballs made with lean meat or poultry	Large meatballs made of red meat, meatballs served in gravy or high-fat sauces
Broiled or poached seafood: shrimp, salmon, scallops, oysters, clams	Deep fat-fried seafood, seafood in high-fat sauces
Miniature pizzas made with whole wheat crust, tomato sauce, part-skim mozzarella cheese (with less cheese), and vegetables	Pizza with pepperoni, Italian sausage, or other high-fat meats and a thick layer of cheese
Vietnamese summer rolls, fresh, not fried	Egg rolls
Whole grain crackers (5g fat or less/serving)	Crackers made with refined flour
"Lite" popcorn (5g fat or less/serving)	Potato chips
Lower calorie vegetable-based dips (e.g. salsa, hummus, or bean-based dips)	Dips made from regular mayonnaise, sour cream, cream cheese, or cheese sauce

## SNACKS

CHOOSE...	INSTEAD OF...
Cut up fruit	Cookies
Cut up vegetables	Chips
Whole grain crackers (5g fat or less/serving)	Crackers made with refined grains
"Lite" popcorn (5g fat or less/serving)	Potato chips
Plain yogurt with berries	Ice cream bars
Whole grain granola bars (with less than 10g sugar/bar)	Candy
Fruit with yogurt dip	Cupcakes, snack cakes
Vegetables with hummus, low-fat dressing, or salsa	Chips and dip
Fruit cups in water, juice, or light syrup	Pudding cups



# Portion Sizes

## Fruit

2 cups/day

1 small apple = 1 cup  
*Size of a baseball*



8 oz glass of orange juice = 1 cup  
*Size of small water bottle*

## Grains

(most should be whole grains)  
3-4 ounces/day



1 bread roll = 1 oz  
*Size of a computer mouse*

½ cup of cooked pasta or rice = 1 oz  
*Size of a CD*



## Vegetables

2 ½-3 cups/day



1 medium sweet potato  
*Size of a computer mouse*

1 cup of salad greens  
*Size of a fist*



## Protein

5-6 ounces/day

2-3 oz of meat, poultry or fish  
*Size of a deck of cards*



½ cup of cooked black beans = 2 oz  
*Size of a billiard ball*

Above are the United States Department of Agriculture recommended serving sizes of some common foods. MyPlate (in the center) depicts appropriate portion sizes of fruits, vegetables, grains, and proteins relative to one another in a meal. Note that fruit and vegetables should compose half of every meal. Other portion-control tips include:

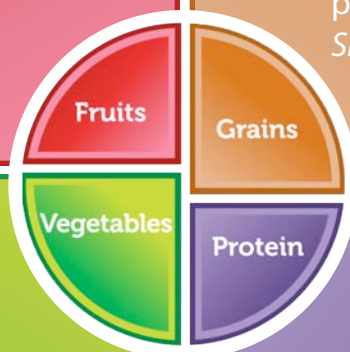
- Cut bagels, pastries, and desserts into halves or quarters.
- Use modest-sized (9") plates, bowls, and serving utensils.
- If you are serving 100% fruit juice, serve it in glasses that are 8 oz or smaller.

## Dairy

## Dairy

2-3 cups/day

1 cup (8 oz) low- or non-fat yogurt  
*Size of a tennis ball*





# Sample Calorie and Serving Cards

For organizations that are trying to do menu labeling, calorie labeling cards, like the samples on this page, could be placed next to the food or beverage item in the a buffet line, or on the table if food is being served by waitstaff.

## Buffet Line Sample

### Gazpacho

One Cup Serving Size

60 Calories

## Table Sample

### Appetizer

Gazpacho - 60 calories

### Entree

Lemon and Dill Baked Salmon - 260 calories

Brown Rice - 110 calories

Roasted Root Vegetables - 165 calories

### Dessert

Seasonal Fruit Salad - 110 calories

## Boxed Lunch Sample

Southwest Chicken Wrap - 350 calories

Sliced Apple - 80 calories

Cucumber Slices - 20 calories

Seltzer - 0 calories



# Food Safety Tips

## Before the event

- Consider your “audience”—are your attendees older adults, those with weakened immune systems, or young children? These populations are most at risk from foodborne illness, so special care should be taken to ensure food safety.
- Discuss the importance of food safety with the catering staff.
- Certain foods are unfortunately unsafe for all populations: unpasteurized (raw) milk and milk products, raw oysters, and raw sprouts. Sprouts are safe if they have been fully cooked (such as in a stir fry or sauté).
- Rinse all fresh fruit and vegetables before use. If the fruit has a thick skin, consider using a scrub brush (but not soap).
- Clean all countertops that the food may come into contact with during preparation.
- Check to be sure there will be enough space to store the food in the refrigerator, freezer, or oven.

## During the event

- The most important consideration for food safety on the day of your event is temperature. Hot food should be kept hot (above 140°) and cold food should be kept cold (below 40°). Anything else is considered the “danger zone,” which pathogens thrive in.
- If food will be out for greater than two hours, these temperatures should be maintained even when the food is being served. Use chaffing dishes or an oven to keep food warm and serve cold dishes over buckets of ice.
- Store hot food in the oven or cold food in the refrigerator until it is ready to be used.
- Check that the food maintains the right temperatures until (and during) the time it is served using a food thermometer. Catering staff should monitor the temperature and remove food that has been sitting out at the wrong temperature for greater than two hours.

## If this event is at your office or somewhere without catering staff, consider these additional tips:

- When serving the food, put out small amounts to ensure the food stays fresh and in the oven or refrigerator as long as possible.
- Once the trays or dishes are nearing empty, put out fresh trays rather than refilling the original one.
- If you’re outside, make sure to keep the food covered to keep bugs out.
- Even if it is held at the right temperature, food should be eaten or refrigerated within two hours, or one hour if it is an especially hot summer day (90° or higher).
- Throw out food that has been sitting out for more than two hours.

# Physical Activity

*Adapted from the Alabama Department of Health Guidelines*

## Choosing a Meeting Location

- Make sure that the meeting location has proper lighting, safe sidewalks, and visible pedestrian signs
- Select hotels that have fitness facilities, and negotiate the cost into the contract with the hotel so that attendees have free access

## Pre-Meeting Materials Should Include:

- Information about places to walk in the meeting area
- Maps of nearby attractions and walking trails
- Include information about hotel (or nearby) fitness facilities
- Details about meeting activities and activity breaks and appropriate attire

## Setting the Agenda

- Include physical activity on the agenda so participants can plan accordingly
  - Choose a motivating individual to lead activity sessions
  - Schedule 15-minute breaks in the morning and afternoon
- Provide time in the agenda for attendees to do morning or evening workouts
- Leave time at lunch for physical activity

## Exercise During Meetings

- Have a dynamic person facilitate physical activity at the beginning of each break or use a video (like Instant Recess)
- Let people know it is acceptable to stand if they want to during the meeting/conference
- Incorporate exercise equipment into meeting room space (see page 22 for suggestions)
- Place equipment in your organization's conference room, encourage hotels to purchase, or ship it to your conference

## Ideas for Activities

- Active applause: urge guests to stand up and clap whenever applause is given
- Walk around the room
- "Walk and talk" sessions—encouraging participants to do walking meeting and networking
- Meeting musical chairs: every 20 minutes everyone should get up and switch chairs with someone
- "Sit down if..." with health messages (e.g. "Sit down if you didn't eat fruit yet today")
- Simon Says

## Simple Chair Exercises

- Chair twist (grab one side of the chair while turning in the opposite direction)
- Toe raises
- Knee lifts
- Arms reaching over head
- Arm circles

## Tips for leading activity breaks

- Make activities fun and safe
- Allow each person to move at his or her own speed
- Make sure there is enough space for the activities
- The activities should not be overly strenuous or cause people to perspire



## Exercise During Meetings (continued)

### Ideas for Activities (continued):

#### Stretches

- Calf stretch
- Upper body
- Back
- Calf raises
- Neck/head circles
- Quads
- Deep breathing

#### Small Movements

- Arm circles
- Marching in place
- Side steps
- Side-to-side arm swings
- Arm reaches

### Participants with Disabilities

- Give participants the opportunity to inform you of any special physical access needs ahead of the meeting or when registering for the meeting
- Listen to individual's needs and do not prejudice their requirements
- Adapt activities to the situations—minor modifications such as slowing down the pace can be all that is needed or stretching while seated vs. standing

### Exercise Outside of Meetings/Sessions

- Encourage people to take the stairs instead of the elevator—point out stair locations at beginning of meetings and breaks
  - Post signs directing people to stairwells outside of meeting rooms and near the elevators
- Organize a walking group during breaks/ encourage people to go walking
- Arrange for early morning or evening fitness classes—aerobics, yoga, tai chi
- Provide time in the agenda for people to get in a morning or evening workout
- For an overnight conference/meeting, encourage people to walk to dinner/other events
- Offer dancing during dinners or evening receptions
- Organize outings to local attractions like zoos, museums, farmers' markets, parks, etc.
- Provide incentives for being active:
  - Hand out forms for participants to track their minutes of physical activity—give prizes to those who are active at least 30 minutes each day
  - Give participants a step counter and encourage everyone to walk at least 10,000 steps every day—give people who meet the goal prizes

### Fun giveaways

- Flash drives with meeting materials loaded onto it
- BPA-free water bottles
- Pedometers
- Potted plant kit/vegetable seeds
- Reusable grocery tote bags
- Tupperware containers
- Assorted tea
- Gym bag
- Fanny pack
- Flashlight
- Lunch container
- Small backpack
- Pot holder
- Frisbee
- Baseball cap
- Visor
- Thermos
- Measuring cups or spoons
- Cutting board

### Healthy Prizes (for raffles)

- Fitness club membership
- Gift certificates for sporting goods store or grocery store
- Athletic shoes
- Workout clothing
- Dance lessons
- Jump rope
- Hand weights
- Fitness book
- Cooking utensils
- Cutlery sets
- T-shirt

*Put the logo for the sponsoring organization or a health message on giveaways and prizes*



# Physical Activity

## Examples of Exercise Equipment that Can be Incorporated Into Meetings, Conferences, or the Workplace

**Exercise Ball Chair** – Promotes active sitting. Engages body's core muscles to provide stability and balance.

Gaiam, Inc.  
Gaiam.com  
[customerservice@gaiam.com](mailto:customerservice@gaiam.com)  
[www.facebook.com/gaiam](https://www.facebook.com/gaiam)  
1-877-989-6321

**Desk Cycles** – Portable exercise bikes that fit under your desk.

Fit Desk  
Fitdesk.com  
[customerservice@fitdesk.net](mailto:customerservice@fitdesk.net)  
1-615-669-9004

**Standing Desk Bikes** - Fit beneath standup desks, allowing you to work and ride.

LifeSpan Fitness  
Lifespanfitness.com  
[sales@lifespanfitness.com](mailto:sales@lifespanfitness.com)  
1-877- 654-3837

**Rowing Machines** – Portable; fit in confined office spaces. Allow for brief exercise breaks at varying intensity levels.

LifeSpan Fitness  
Lifespanfitness.com  
[sales@lifespanfitness.com](mailto:sales@lifespanfitness.com)  
1-877- 654-3837

**Pedal Only Elliptical Trainers** – Portable elliptical sans arms and front console. Can fit under a standup desk, allowing the user to exercise while working.

Stamina Products, Inc.  
Staminaproducts.com  
[customerservice@staminaproducts.com](mailto:customerservice@staminaproducts.com)  
1-800-375-7520

**Pull-up/Push-up Bars** – Floor use or can fit in doorframes.

Stamina Products, Inc.  
Staminaproducts.com  
[customerservice@staminaproducts.com](mailto:customerservice@staminaproducts.com)  
1-800-375-7520

**Balance Discs/Wobble Boards** – Usable with standup desks. User must exert effort to maintain balance while standing and working.

Sivan Health and Fitness  
[Sivanhealthandfitness.com/contactus](http://Sivanhealthandfitness.com/contactus)

**Exercise mats** – Portable/easy to store. Allows users to stretch, do situps/pushups, or yoga while on brief office breaks.

Altus Athletic  
Altusathletic.com  
[info@altusok1.com](mailto:info@altusok1.com)  
1-800.654.9873

**Stand Up Desk or Table** - A desk or table sufficiently elevated to allow a conference or meeting attendee to stand up while using the desk or table. A wide range of options is available online and in-store at Amazon and other office supply chains.

TreadDesk Inc.  
[www.Treaddesk.com](http://www.Treaddesk.com)  
<http://www.treaddesk.com/forms/contact-us/>  
1-877- 444-9288

Palmer Snyder, Inc.  
Palmyersnyder.com  
[orders@psfurniture.com](mailto:orders@psfurniture.com)  
1-800-762-0415  
1-859-266-3473

**Treadmill Desk** - A workstation affixed to a treadmill.

TreadDesk, Inc.  
[www.Treaddesk.com](http://www.Treaddesk.com)  
<http://www.treaddesk.com/forms/contact-us/>  
1-877- 444-9288

**Pedometer** - An electronic device that counts a user's steps.

Spri Products, Inc.  
Spriproducts.com  
[customerservice@spri.com](mailto:customerservice@spri.com)  
1-800-222-7774

DigiWalker  
[www.pedometersusa.com](http://www.pedometersusa.com)  
[sales@hrmusainc.com](mailto:sales@hrmusainc.com)  
1-800-403-8285

**Exercise/Resistance Bands** - Elastic bands that are portable and convenient for quick bouts of exercise requiring minimal space.

Spri Products, Inc.  
Spriproducts.com  
[customerservice@spri.com](mailto:customerservice@spri.com)  
1-800-222-7774

**Free Weights** – Dumb bells that are portable and convenient for quick bouts of exercise requiring minimal space.

Ivanko Barbell Co.  
[Ivankobarbell.com](http://Ivankobarbell.com)  
[cs@ivankobarbell.com](mailto:cs@ivankobarbell.com)  
1-310-514-1155

**Jump Ropes** – Highly effective for quick bouts of exercise.

Buy Jump Ropes  
[www.buyjumropes.net](http://www.buyjumropes.net)  
1-800-337-2138

Jump N Rope  
<http://jumpnrope.com/>

This list contains examples of exercise equipment manufacturers, but there are many more in the marketplace.

# Tobacco-Free Meetings & Conferences

Example Tobacco-Free Policy from the American Heart Association

**This is an example tobacco-free policy from the American Heart Association. Organizations are encouraged to create their own tobacco-free policies.**



**All meetings and conferences organized or sponsored by the association will be held in communities that have enacted smoke-free laws that include restaurants by state statute or local ordinance.**

The policy for AHA national and affiliate conferences went into effect on May 1, 2007. The implementation date for national and affiliate meetings was July 1, 2008. Under special circumstances, an exemption to this policy will be considered by the chairman of the board. This policy does not cover local events such as galas, special events and luncheons. But reasonable efforts should be made to conduct these events in smoke-free communities or, alternatively, in facilities or venues with smoke-free policies.

## Internal Resources

As of August 2013, more than 80 percent of the country is covered by smoke-free policies; however, these policies vary in many ways. The differences often include exemptions that result from compromises necessary to secure passage of the legislation. For the purposes of this meetings and conference policy, the AHA definition of an acceptable state or local smoke-free law is one that does not allow smoking in public places, including all restaurants. Currently 77% of the country is covered by laws that include restaurants. Laws that provide smoking rooms, ventilation systems, or red light/green light policies are not acceptable.

**The following 30 states have smoke-free laws in effect that meet AHA guidelines. All communities in these states are covered by these laws.**

Arizona	Kansas	New Hampshire	Rhode Island
California	Maine	New Jersey	South Dakota
Colorado	Maryland	New Mexico	Utah
Connecticut	Massachusetts	New York	Vermont
Delaware	Michigan	North Carolina	Washington
Hawaii	Minnesota	North Dakota	Wisconsin
Illinois	Montana	Ohio	
Iowa	Nebraska	Oregon	

**Many communities in states without strong smoke-free laws have passed their own laws. For a list of communities that require restaurants to be smoke-free, <http://www.no-smoke.org/pdf/100ordlisttabs.pdf>.**



# Tobacco-Free Meetings & Conferences

*Example Smoke-Free Policy from the American Heart Association*

## Q&A:

### **Q: What is the scientific basis for the AHA's smoke-free meetings policy?**

**A:** Smoking kills. Smoking and inhaling secondhand smoke are major causes of cardiovascular disease, including coronary heart disease and stroke — the nation's No. 1 and No. 3 killers. A chemical cocktail hits the bloodstream and damages arteries throughout the body, the heart, brain, and other major blood vessels. Clots in arteries are more likely to form, causing heart attack or stroke. Smoking also lowers the level of HDL or 'good' cholesterol, raises heart rate and blood pressure, and replaces oxygen in the blood with carbon monoxide. In short, smoking wreaks havoc on the cardiovascular system.

Secondhand smoke is formed from exhaled mainstream tobacco smoke and side-stream smoke, and contains more than 250 chemicals known to be toxic, including more than 60 known carcinogens, nicotine and carbon monoxide. As little as 30 minutes of exposure to secondhand smoke can result in hardened, stiffened arteries. This hinders the flow of blood to the heart and increases the risk for heart attack and cardiac arrest.

The report of the U.S. Surgeon General, "The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco" (2006), provides a comprehensive analysis of the hazards of secondhand smoke. In the United States about 35,000 cardiovascular-related deaths are caused by secondhand smoke each year. An additional 3,000 lung cancer deaths are attributable to the same cause. The 2006 Surgeon General's report concludes, "there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke," and that "eliminating smoking in indoor spaces fully protects nonsmokers from exposure to secondhand smoke. Separating smokers from nonsmokers, cleaning the air, and ventilating buildings cannot eliminate exposures of nonsmokers to secondhand smoke."

### **Q: How is this policy consistent with the AHA's advocacy position?**

**A:** One of the AHA's core state and local policy advocacy initiatives is the promotion of clean indoor air/smoke-free workplace laws and ordinances at the state and local levels. The AHA's decision to only hold its meetings in cities with clean indoor air workplace policies reinforces the organization's position that all workers have the right to breathe clean, smoke-free air. By enacting this meeting location policy, the AHA will be providing the same healthy environment for its highly valued staff and volunteers that it advocates for the public at-large.

### **Q: What is considered a specific circumstance that justifies exemption from the policy?**

**A:** As a national organization with essential mission-driven activities that extend across the United States, parts of the country have fewer communities available to host AHA regional meetings and conferences. In the special circumstance that a smoke-free community is not available, every reasonable effort should be made to select a smoke-free venue (hotel, meeting hall, etc).

### **Q: What about existing contracts that are already in place for holding meetings?**

**A:** All existing contracts for future meetings and conferences should be honored and the policy applied to future planning and site negotiations.

# Sustainability

Healthy meeting practices can minimize the negative impact that meetings and conferences can have on the environment. Using “zero waste” or “green” practices incorporates sustainability into your meeting by using waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting techniques. The follow tips can help make your meeting more sustainable.

## Zero Waste:

No waste from your event is sent to a landfill. Any waste is recycled, reused, or composted.

## General Tips

- Use reusable, recyclable, or compostable materials.
- Consider having a waste station instead of single trash cans. A waste station is a set of three containers, one for recycling, one for compost, and one for trash. The three containers are set up side-by-side and clearly marked with what items should be placed in each container. If you are conducting a zero waste event, remove or cover all stand-alone trash cans throughout the event area to encourage attendees to place their waste into one of the other receptacles.

## Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

- Provide handout and meeting materials online or on a flash drive.
- Use tap water with reusable cups or glasses, instead of single-use water bottles or plastic cups.
- Reduce packaging when serving food. For example, serve foods on platters instead of as boxed lunches.
- Provide drinks and condiments (ketchup, mustard, salad dressings, etc.) in bulk instead of individual packages and servings.
- Use reusable plates, glasses, linens, etc. in place of disposable options. This is the ideal option to reduce environmental impact.
- Consider serving foods that do not need utensils.
- Do not use single-use plastic bags or styrofoam containers.
- Do not use disposable decorations, balloons, polystyrene. Choose giveaway items wisely.
- Ask companies to limit packaging of materials when ordering giveaway items.
- If reusable or biodegradable serveware is not available, use recyclable options or try compostable options (e.g., cornstarch based).
- Use recycled/biodegradable paper.
- Identify a vendor to remove the food and other compostable waste following the event. This might include the caterer, site location, or an outside waste management company.

## Recyclable Items

- Metal cans/foil
- Glass jars and bottles
- Plastic bottles, cups, and containers
- Film plastic (wrap and bags)
- Paper (e.g., cardboard, mixed paper, newspaper, magazines)

## Compostable Items

- Food scraps
- Food-soiled paper (e.g., cardboard, paper towels, paper napkins, paper cups, and paper plates)
- Biodegradable plastics (e.g., utensils, cups, and bags)

# Defining Local and Sustainable

It is important to discuss your purchasing intentions with hotels, caterers, and other vendors to ensure that everyone is on the same page about what local and sustainable means. Ask vendors to define their sustainability criteria and communicate yours.

## Local

Local is identified by the distance traveled from the location where the food is grown or produced to the place where the food will be served. The definition of “local” varies depending on your location and what is available to you. Do not dwell on state borders or mileage limits. Think about minimizing the distance from the source of the food to you, to cut down on fuel emissions from transportation and reinvest in the local economy. Some concepts to consider:

- Often a food supplier or distributor will label a product as local with regards to their distribution center, but that does not mean the product was grown or produced near you.
- Some foods and food products are grown in one place and re-packaged or assembled in another. Be sure to take into account both locations when identifying where the product is from.
- For processed foods and foods with multiple ingredients, a general rule is that greater than 50% of the ingredients, by weight, be grown and processed near your location.

Often large facilities maintain food service contracts that dictate which vendors they can purchase from. In order to incorporate local foods you can consider:

- Sourcing outside of their contract.
- Incorporating language that allows flexibility in vendor selection with all food purchases.
- Discuss existing or potential local producers with whom your vendor works.

## Sustainable

Sustainable food is food that is affordable, accessible, and produced with care for the environment, animals, and the women and men who grow, harvest, and serve it.

When determining what types of products to purchase, strive to use third-party certifications and approved label claims, which have consistent and specific definitions. This information can then be directly communicated to your hotel, caterer, or vendor to avoid potential confusion.

### Certifications

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| • USDA Certified Organic               | • American Grassfed           |
| • Food Alliance Certified              | • Non-GMO Project Verified    |
| • Rainforest Alliance Certified        | • Wildlife Friendly Certified |
| • Protected Harvest                    | • Dolphin-Safe Certified      |
| • Fair Trade Certified                 |                               |
| • Bird Friendly                        |                               |
| • Certified Humane Raised and Handled  |                               |
| • Animal Welfare Approved              |                               |
| • Salmon Safe                          |                               |
| • Marine Stewardship Council Certified |                               |

### Approved Label Claims

- Produced without added hormones
- Produced without added antibiotics
- rBGH/rBST-free
- Grass-fed



# Nutrition Standards

If you have the ability to do nutrition analysis or the food service establishment has nutrition information, meals should have no more than:

- 700 calories
- 10% of calories from saturated fat
- No trans fat
- 35% of calories from sugars
- 770 mg of sodium

Meals also should have:

- At least 1.5 cups of vegetables and/or fruits
- No sugar-sweetened beverages
- Whole-grain rich grains

These standards were developed by a group of experts pulled together by the RAND Corporation. The guidelines are based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and can be found at: <http://bit.ly/18ZEr89>.





# Sample Request for Proposal

## Meeting Detail

<b>Meeting Name:</b>	<i>Name of your meeting</i>
<b>Attendees:</b>	<i>Insert estimated number of attendees</i>
<b>RFP Name:</b>	<i>Insert legal name of organization here</i>
<b>Start &amp; End Dates:</b>	<i>Dates of meeting/conference, or list of possible date options</i>
<b>Specification as of:</b>	<i>Insert document date here</i>
<b>Additional Information:</b>	Customer Name: <i>Organization name</i>
	Market Segment: <i>Who is putting on this event. For example, a non-profit, government, or university</i>
	Conferee Profile: <i>Description of meeting/conference guests. For example, state and local government employees</i>
	Competition: <i>Other cities or regions you are considering, as well as venue type (e.g., hotels, and/or conference centers)</i>
	Budgetary Requirements: <i>Cost requirements. You can simply specify "best available rates"</i>
	Hot Buttons: <i>Examples: Properties offering healthy menu options, customizable menus; properties offering physical fitness center; walking/jogging trails; property must be tobacco-free indoors, and preference will be given to properties that are tobacco-free indoors as well as outdoors; 'green' property preferred; recycling bins in meeting space as well as in guest sleeping rooms; goal of having a zero waste meeting</i>
	This contract will be signed out of: <i>Your organization</i>
	Meeting Objective: <i>Brief description of meeting/conference</i>
	Preferred Cities: <i>Preferred cities and/or regions for your meeting/conference</i>
<b>General Comments:</b>	

## Sleeping Rooms

*Insert room requirements, including non-smoking room requirements*

## Agenda

*Insert detailed agenda with meeting room needs and set-up requirements*

## Planner Questions

*Note: the questions included below are solely related to healthy meetings; you will need to add others as relevant for your meeting.*

**Please list what is included in the Complete Meeting Package (CMP)**

**Complete Meeting Package (CMP) Single Rate? (Please enter \$ amount only)**

**Complete Meeting Package (CMP) Double Rate? (Please enter \$ amount only)**

**Resort Fee? (Please enter percentage or \$ amount only)**

**Please list inclusions in the Day Meeting Package (DMP)**

*Continued on next page*

# Sample Request for Proposal

## Planner Questions (continued)

Day Meeting Package (DMP) Full Day? (Please enter \$ amount only)

Day Meeting Package (DMP) Half Day? (Please enter \$ amount only)

Day Meeting Package (DMP) Half Day without lunch? (Please enter \$ amount only)

Average cost of Breakfast? (enter \$ amount or included in CMP or DMP)

Average cost of Breaks? (enter \$ amount or included in CMP or DMP)

Average cost of Lunch? (enter \$ amount or included in CMP or DMP)

Average cost of Dinner? (enter \$ amount or included in CMP or DMP)

Service charge on Food & Beverage? (Please enter percentage only)

Please provide a brief description of your property and its competitive advantage to other considered locations:

This RFP has specific inclusions or concessions outlined. Outline all that you are willing to honor as well as additional concessions you may offer.

*Insert any additional questions here as relevant, e.g., pertaining to property rating, occupancy tax, state and other taxes, total meeting space available, meeting room dimensions and rental charges, distance to nearest airport and average cost of transportation to/from airport*

## RFP Contact

Name:

Organization:

Email:

Phone:

Fax:

Address:

City:

State:

Country:

Zip:

## Additional Documents Required - Submit with RFP:

Current meeting catering menu with prices

*Insert additional documents you require e.g., meeting room maps, current A-V services list with prices*



# Take the Healthy Meeting Pledge

If you are committed to having healthy meetings, please take the healthy meeting pledge below (and also at [www.healthymeeting.org](http://www.healthymeeting.org)). Organizations, institutions, government agencies, or businesses that pledge to have healthy meetings can be recognized on the healthy meeting website.

## The Pledge:

The undersigned organizations, institutions, and companies have pledged to adopt healthy meeting practices. They recognize that having healthy meetings, conferences, and events helps to create an environment that supports employees and members in their efforts to eat well and be physically active.



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To take the pledge or for more information, visit [www.healthymeeting.org](http://www.healthymeeting.org) or email Katie Bishop at [kbishop@cspinet.org](mailto:kbishop@cspinet.org).





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## National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity

For more information, contact any NANA member or Katie Bishop at the Center for Science in the Public Interest at 202-777-8351 or [kbishop@cspinet.org](mailto:kbishop@cspinet.org)



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