



# Meal Box Tip Sheet

**Identify the communities you wish to serve** by conducting and evaluating results from community needs assessments.

- Area plans, needs assessments, census data, and other local, state, and national reports are helpful tools for identifying populations that would benefit most from a meal box program.

**Utilize available menus** from the many Home Delivered Meal and Congregate Dining programs featuring culturally inclusive menus for ethnic communities.

- These are great for inspiration during menu development because the portion sizes usually reflect 1/3 daily nutrition.

**Engage your food sourcing partner** in the early stages of menu development.

- Knowledge of unit sizes, bulk ordering, and product availability will direct the general flow of the menus.

**Purchase optimal portion sizes** by ensuring your partners have the capabilities to meet your desired portion sizes.

- Menus will likely need to be adjusted to accommodate the quantities able to be sourced.

**Establish a delivery partner** as early as possible.

- The quantity of food delivered within food safe temperatures and delivery windows can be complicated logistics. Our most successful delivery model involves a network of volunteers and paid staff to create one cohesive meal box program.

**Establish reassessment protocols** with referral partners to ensure only eligible participants are enrolled in the program.

- During full implementation, program participants should be reassessed at regular intervals to ensure eligibility.

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