

Senior Center Meal Provision FAQ (03.23.2020)

In response to the necessary system-wide closure of DFTA senior centers, we shifted congregate meals to take-home meals (grab-and-go) for older adults. Because this is not sustainable for an extended period of time, and because there is a greater emphasis on social distancing and “safer at home” recommendations, DFTA has started to implement its plan for a centralized direct meal delivery system. Centers have been asked to continue take-home (grab-and-go) meal service until the new direct delivery system is fully rolled-out and operational.

The planned schedule is as follows: A central caterer will begin the pilot in the Bronx on Monday, March 23rd. Manhattan is set to begin on Tuesday, March 24th. Staten Island, Queens, and Brooklyn is scheduled to begin on Thursday, March 26th. The kosher meal delivery system across the five boroughs is planned to start on Wednesday, March 25th.

[NOTE: Clients will receive a 5-meal package for each delivery.]

1. When will senior centers stop providing grab-and-go congregate meals?

Starting the week of March 23rd, all DFTA-funded senior centers will gradually transition from providing congregate meals via ‘grab-and-go’ to a centralized direct delivery meal system for older adults. To ensure that there will not be a disruption to older adults access to food, senior centers have been asked to continue take-home (grab-and-go) meal service until the new centralized direct delivery system is fully rolled-out and operational.

2. How will senior centers receive meals for delivery?

DFTA’s goal is to ensure older adults receive the daily meal, which they would receive but for the citywide congregate sites closure. As we transition from grab-and-go to the centralized direct delivery system, not all centers will need to serve as a hub. Depending on the contractor’s catchment areas, meals may be delivered directly to the homes of the older adult. Ongoing coordination between DFTA, the contractor, and the senior center will continue during this transition to help ensure a streamlined and efficient process. In addition, a robocall notification will be instituted to ensure the older adult is alerted to the delivery.

3. How many meals will each older adult receive?

Through the new centralized direct delivery system, a 5-meal package will be delivered to each older adult each week.

4. Will kosher meals be available?

Yes, one DFTA-contracted provider will be providing kosher meals for older adults throughout the five boroughs. The centralized direct delivery meal system will commence on Wednesday, March 25th.

5. How will non-DFTA senior center members sign up to receive meals?

There are a variety of ways an older adult in need can receive a daily meal. The basis for the individual’s need will help determine the most appropriate method. Homebound older adults, for instance, can receive home delivered meals through a DFTA-funded case management agency. If an older adult is not homebound, the senior center may be the most appropriate resource for a congregate meal. As a result of closures of congregate sites, older adults can still receive a daily meal via grab-and-go system, which is gradually transitioning to a direct delivery system.