

**Healthy Meeting Requirements
Center for Community Health
New York State Department of Health**

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) Center for Community Health has adopted the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA) Healthy Meeting Guidelines for foods, physical activity, tobacco-free environments, and waste reduction. For any grant contract where State funds are reimbursing all or a portion of the meeting costs, grantees are required to comply with Healthy Meeting Guidelines (HMG). The Department reserves the right to review the site, menu and agenda so that the State can ensure the nutrition, physical activity, sustainability and tobacco-free guidelines are met. A link to the guidelines is provided below, as well as a link to the Healthy Meeting Toolkit. The toolkit contains additional information and strategies for implementation of the guidelines and serves as the main reference for the following FAQs.

[Healthy Meeting Guidelines](#)
[Healthy Meeting Toolkit](#)

Questions and Answers

Q. What are the Healthy Meeting Guidelines (HMG)?

A. The HMG are a tool for assuring healthy food, physical activity opportunities, tobacco-free environments, and waste reduction at meetings. The guidelines were developed by NANA which is made up of over 400 national, state, and local organizations. NANA advocates nutrition and physical activity policies and programs at all levels of government to work toward reducing obesity and chronic diseases.

Q. What is the purpose of the HMG?

A. The HMG help create a culture of health and wellness at meetings and conferences and support the health conscious efforts of meeting participants. They make it easy for people to eat healthfully, be physically active, avoid tobacco exposure, and reduce waste. Following the HMG also establishes the NYSDOH and its contractors as role models for healthy meetings.

Q. What is the definition of “meeting”?

A. A meeting is any conference, meeting, or training that serves food or beverages, or is more than four hours in duration.

Q. Do the HMG apply to all meetings held by grant-funded contractors, or only meetings held by the contractors using NYSDOH funds?

A. The HMG apply to only those meetings held by grant-funded contractors using NYSDOH funds to cover all or a portion of meeting costs. The Department reserves the right to review the site, menu and agenda so that the State can ensure the nutrition, physical activity, sustainability and tobacco-free guidelines are met.

- Q. *Which level of the HMG must be adhered to – Standard Healthy Meeting or Superior Healthy Meeting?*
- A. Meetings must adhere to at least the Standard Healthy Meeting level. Contractors are encouraged to implement as many Superior Healthy Meeting recommendations as feasible.
- Q. *Do the meetings need to adhere to all four topic areas (i.e., nutrition, physical activity, tobacco-free, sustainability)?*
- A. Yes. Meetings need to adhere to the Standard level in all four topic areas of the HMG.
- Q. *What types of food and beverages meet the guidelines?*
- A. Refer to the nutrition section of the [Healthy Meeting Toolkit](#) sample menus and other suggestions.
- Q. *Must evaluations of the healthy aspects of the meeting be completed?*
- A. If a general meeting evaluation is being conducted, a few questions about the food acceptability and physical activity opportunities may be included. Refer to the [Healthy Meeting Toolkit](#) for a model evaluation.
- Q. *Should the HMG be included in bid requests for meeting space?*
- A. Yes. The HMG should be included in bid requests to ensure that venues understand the expectations.
- Q. *How should water be served to comply with Executive Order 18 – prohibiting bottled water?*
- A. Meeting venues should make potable water available to participants, for example, provide pitchers of water or ensure access to a water fountain.
- Q. *Will providing healthy foods increase meal costs?*
- A. Providing healthier foods can be done without a cost increase. Caterers are generally willing to make changes to meet guidelines. Examples of strategies include making portion sizes more reasonable, ordering less food, reducing waste and rethinking whether snacks need to be provided at each break and meeting. For more suggestions on menu planning see the [Healthy Meeting Toolkit](#).
- Q. *Does the Healthy Meeting Requirement mean that State funds can be used to purchase food and beverages?*
- A. Not necessarily. Food and beverages may be purchased with State funds only when allowed as part of the specific grant contract.
- Q. *What is the penalty if a grantee is not compliant with the HMG requirement?*
- A. Depending on the nature of the noncompliance, the Department reserves the right to not reimburse the grantee for all or a portion of the expenses of a meeting that did not meet the HMG. Multiple instances of noncompliance with the HMG requirement may result in termination of the grant contract.