
Healthy Food and Drink Policy for Organisations

Creating a healthier food and drink environment for staff

Introduction

Healthy eating is essential for good health and wellbeing, and supports a healthy, productive workforce.

With increasing rates of obesity and the subsequent rise of associated poor health outcomes, including type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease, it is important that organisations support their staff by providing healthy eating environments.

This Healthy Food and Drink Policy has been adapted from the National Healthy Food and Drink Policy, developed by the National District Health Board Food and Drink Environments Network in 2016.

Overview

Purpose

The Policy supports organisations to:

- demonstrate commitment to the health and wellbeing of staff and visitors by providing healthy food and drink options, which support a balanced diet in accordance with the *Eating and Activity Guidelines for New Zealand Adults*
- provide an environment that supports and promotes healthy food and drink choices.

In providing healthy food and drink environments, consider:

- the needs of different cultures, religious groups and those with special dietary needs, and accommodate these on request, where possible and practical
- ecologically sound, sustainable and socially responsible practices in purchasing and using food and drinks, which includes encouraging the procurement of seasonal and locally grown and manufactured (regional and national) food and drinks, where possible and practicable
- the importance of discouraging association with products and brands that are inconsistent with a healthy food and drink environment, as defined by the Policy.

Scope

The Policy applies to all staff and includes:

- all food and drink provided by or able to be purchased from any retailer, caterer, vending machine, snack box or volunteer service on the organisation's premises for consumption by staff and visitors
- any gifts, rewards and incentives offered to staff, guest speakers and/or formal visitors on behalf of the organisation if containing food and/or drinks

- any fundraisers where food and drinks are sold or intended for consumption on the premises. Fundraisers associated with groups outside the organisation that do not meet this Policy should not be promoted on the premises or through the organisation's communications (eg, chocolate fundraisers) and alternative healthy fundraising and catering ideas should be encouraged
- any external party that provides food or catering:
 - on site at any of the organisation's facilities
 - off site where the organisation arranges and/or hosts a function for staff, visitors and/or the general public (eg, conferences, training).

While the provision and consumption of healthy food and drink options is strongly encouraged, the Policy excludes:

- food and drink brought to work by staff for their own consumption
- gifts to staff from clients or customers
- self-catered staff-shared meals, both on and off site (eg, food brought for special occasions, off-site self-funded Christmas parties or similar celebrations)
- gifts, rewards and incentives that are self-funded
- alcohol-related recommendations (please refer to your organisation's position on alcohol).

Healthy Food and Drink Policy

Healthy food and drink environments

This Policy supports organisations to provide an environment that consistently offers and promotes healthy food and drink options.

Consistent with the *Eating and Activity Guidelines for New Zealand Adults*, messages and practices relating to food and drinks in the organisation will reflect the following principles.

Healthy Food and Drink Policy principles

Offer a variety of healthy foods from the four food groups.

This means:

- plenty of vegetables and fruit
- grain foods, mostly wholegrain and those naturally high in fibre
- some milk and milk products, mostly low and reduced fat
- some legumes, nuts, seeds, fish and other seafood, eggs, poultry (eg, chicken) and/or red meat with the fat removed.

Food should be mostly prepared with or contain minimal saturated fat, salt (sodium) and added sugar, and should be mostly whole or less processed.

This means:

- some foods containing moderate amounts of saturated fat, salt and/or added sugar may be available in small portions (eg, some baked or frozen goods)
- no deep-fried foods

- no or limited confectionery (eg, sweets and chocolate).

Water and unflavoured milk are the predominant cold drink options.

This means:

- the availability and portion sizes of drinks containing ‘intense’ sweeteners¹ and no-added-sugar juices are limited
- no sugar-sweetened drinks.²

For guidance on how the principles could be implemented, refer to the National Healthy Food and Drink Policy (National Policy).³ The National Policy categorises foods and drinks, includes recommended portion sizes for some foods and provides examples of healthy options (refer to the healthy food and drink environments nutrient criteria table).

Make sure appropriate healthy food and drink choices (including vegetarian and some vegan items) are available to a wide variety of people. Consider cultural preferences, religious beliefs and special dietary requirements, such as gluten free food.

Promoting healthy options

Providing a healthy eating environment is a health and safety issue that should be supported by all levels of the organisation.

Consider actively promoting healthy food and drink options with staff and visitors through consistent, evidence-based nutrition messages.

Partnerships, fundraisers, associations and promotions involving products and brands that are inconsistent with a healthy food and drink environment, as defined by this Policy, are discouraged.

Where applicable:

- encourage a selection of healthy options by asking retailers to display these prominently
- healthy food options are readily available in sufficient quantities, competitively priced and promoted.

Staff Facilities

Storing and preparing own meals

Provide staff with reasonable access to food storage facilities such as fridges, lockers or cupboards. Wherever possible, this includes reasonable access to a microwave oven.

¹ Intense sweeteners (also known as artificial sweeteners) are a type of food additive that provides little or no energy (kilojoules). Intense sweeteners permitted for use in New Zealand include aspartame, sucralose and stevia.

² Any drink that contains added caloric sweetener, usually sugar. The main categories of sugary drinks include soft drinks / fizzy drinks, sachet mixes, fruit drinks, cordials, flavoured milks, flavoured waters, iced teas/coffees and energy/sports drinks.

³ National District Health Board Food and Drink Environments Network. 2016. National Healthy Food and Drink Policy. Wellington: Ministry of Health.

Drinking-water

Provide reasonable access to drinking-water for all staff and visitors on site. Wherever possible, this should be tap water and/or water fountains. Encourage staff to bring their own water bottle. Where water coolers are provided, they must be replenished, cleaned and serviced on a regular basis. Consider environmentally friendly and recyclable options when purchasing cups for water dispensing.

Support for women who breastfeed

Encourage and support mothers returning to work to continue breastfeeding by:

- providing suitable areas that may be used for breastfeeding and for expressing and storing breast milk
- providing suitable breaks for staff who wish to breastfeed during work, where this is reasonable and practicable.

Support to implement the Policy

If you would like some support to implement the Policy, email the Heart Foundation at: food@heartfoundation.org.nz

For more information, visit: www.heartfoundation.org.nz/hospitality-hub

Find practical tools, ideas and resources to build wellbeing in your workplace at: www.wellplace.nz

Handy links to support breastfeeding in the workplace include:

- www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-and-physical-activity/guidance-nutrition-and-physical-activity-workplaces/guidance-supporting-breastfeeding-mothers-returning-work
- www.bfw.org.nz/default.aspx
- www.health.govt.nz/your-health/pregnancy-and-kids/first-year/helpful-advice-during-first-year/breastfeeding-perfect-you-and-your-baby/breastfeeding-and-returning-work

Associated Documents

Ministry of Health. 2013. *Guidance on Supporting Breastfeeding Mothers Returning to Work*. URL: www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-and-physical-activity/guidance-nutrition-and-physical-activity-workplaces/guidance-supporting-breastfeeding-mothers-returning-work (accessed 18 March 2016).

Ministry of Health. 2015a. *Childhood Obesity Plan*. URL: www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/obesity/childhood-obesity-plan (accessed 17 March 2016).

Ministry of Health. 2015b. *Eating and Activity Guidelines for New Zealand Adults*. URL: www.health.govt.nz/our-work/eating-and-activity-guidelines (accessed 17 March 2016).

National District Health Board Food and Drink Environments Network. 2016. *National Healthy Food and Drink Policy*. Wellington: Ministry of Health.

National Heart Foundation of New Zealand. 2015. *Guidelines for Providing Healthier Cafeteria Food*. URL: www.heartfoundation.org.nz/uploads/HF_MenuGuidelines_2015_FINAL.pdf (accessed 17 March 2016).

New Zealand Beverage Guidance Panel. 2014. *New Zealand Drink Guidance Panel Policy Brief: Options to reduce sugar sweetened drink (SSB) consumption in New Zealand*. URL: www.fizz.org.nz/sites/fizz.org.nz/files/A4%20Policy%20Update%20Office%20print.pdf (accessed 17 March 2016).

National District Health Board Food and Drink Environments Network. 2016. *National Healthy Food and Drink Policy*. Wellington: Ministry of Health.



HP 6456 | September 2016