

## **HOME DELIVERED MEALS INFREQUENT DELIVERY TRANSITION PLAN**

Section 336 of the Older American Act establishes “nutrition projects for older individuals that provide—on 5 or more days a week (except in rural areas where such a frequency is not feasible and a lesser frequency is approved by the State agency) at least 1 home delivered meal per day, which may consist of hot, cold, frozen, dried, canned, or fresh foods and, as appropriate, supplemental foods and any additional meals that [the Area Agency on Aging] elects to provide.”

An essential component of the Home Delivered Meal (HDM) program is the social interaction and well-being check that naturally occurs during meal delivery. Within the broader aging network, there are concerns that this vital aspect of the HDM program may be lost when bulk meals are delivered less frequently, particularly in rural areas where participants are often isolated or vulnerable, and/or they may lack other sources of contact. Further, there is also a concern that commercial carriers, like FedEx or UPS, whose primary focus is on package delivery, are not designed to address the social, safety, nutritional, or functional needs of HDM participants. While there are financial constraints that also impact HDM programs, especially in rural areas, commercial delivery of home delivered meals should really only be reserved for the small percentage of participants who are geographically isolated and cannot be reached by regular HDM routes, if applicable.

**Not all Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) are eligible to request a Home Delivered Meals Infrequent Delivery (HDM-ID) Waiver.** Agencies eligible to request a HDM-ID Waiver must have at least 50 percent or more of the localities within their planning and service area (PSA) defined as “rural” using the same definition provided in the State Plan for Aging Services Intrastate Funding Formula (IFF).

**Eligible AAAs that deliver meals less than weekly to 25 percent or more of their total HDM participants due to feasibility constraints must, in cooperation with any service provider(s), develop and submit a HDM-ID Waiver for DARS review and approval through the Area Plan.**

**For AAAs that received an HDM-ID Waiver in previous Area Plan years but no longer meet the at least 50 percent rural locality requirement for the FFY 2026 Area Plan year, DARS will allow HDM-ID Transition Plans for two years so those AAAs can move towards compliance with the HDM requirements by the next Area Plan Cycle.**

For the FFY 26 Area Plan, an AAA that no longer meets the eligibility criteria for a HDM-ID Waiver but has an existing approved HDM-ID Waiver must complete this HDM-ID Transition Plan. If approved by DARS, the HDM-ID Transition Plan allows the AAA to continue the current HDM-ID program for the duration of the current Area Plan Cycle while the AAA works towards full compliance with the HDM requirements for the next Area Plan Cycle. When the new Area Plan Cycle begins in FFY 28, the AAA must be fully compliant with the HDM requirements.

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The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) requests a HDM-ID Transition Plan Waiver due to the feasibility of providing at least 1 home delivered meal per day on 5 or more days per week in a rural area while it works towards delivery compliance within the PSA:

PSA #:

*Select the PSA # from the drop down list then click the button to auto fill the localities within the PSA. Returning to -select- then clicking the button clears the fields.*

**Select the localities within the PSA where meals are delivered less than weekly and state the method and frequency of delivery for those localities:**

	Locality	Method	Frequency

**Total number of participants receiving HDMs in the PSA:**

**Total number of participants receiving less than weekly delivery:**

**Percentage of HDM-ID participants:**

What is the AAA's **specific criteria** for identifying HDM clients who are most vulnerable?

Describe the AAA's plan for contact of socially isolated and vulnerable HDM participants:

How will the AAA provide access to Nutrition Education and Nutrition Counseling for these participants?

What is the AAA's detailed plan (including specific action steps and timeframes) to come into compliance with the at least weekly delivery requirements for the HDM program by the next Area Plan Cycle?