Residential Care Services (RCS)
Operational Principles and Procedures for
Assisted Living Facilities (ALFs)
FULL INSPECTION

FOOD SERVICES

I. Purpose
To provide the licensor with an overview of the assisted living facility (ALF) food service operation including preparing food, handling, storing, sanitizing, meal planning, and meeting residents’ dietary needs.

II. Authority
RCW 18.20.110
RCW 18.20.130

III. Operational Principles
A. General observations and data collection regarding food services occurs throughout the full Inspection and are focused on the resident.
B. Dining observation is a part of the food service task and will be conducted at one or more meals.

IV. Procedures
The Licensor will:
A. Use the tour as the first opportunity to observe the food service environment and general food service practices including proper food handling skills and hand washing.
B. Review the resident characteristic roster/sample selection (Attachment D), identify and include any residents with special dietary needs and/or significant weight loss or gain in the sample selection.
C. For EARc – Specialized Dementia Care Contract, observe for and identify residents requiring assistance with eating and the level of assistance required (routine or total).
D. For all residents in the sample that concerns led you to look at them closer:
   1. Interview and observe the residents regarding meals/food services, individual nutritional needs, preferences, and reasonable accommodations including, but not limited to, modified or therapeutic diets or feeding tubes.
   2. Review resident records for prescribed or non-prescribed nutrient supplements and/or modified or therapeutic diets.
E. Conduct informal interviews/conversations and observations regarding food services with residents in the sample. Conduct record reviews specific to food services for these residents only if an issue has been identified.
F. Conduct formal observation of food services, and include temperature of food in response to a complaint or if food sits too long, and document on Attachment P.
and Attachment L if additional space is needed. Document further notes regarding state contract issues on Attachment N or O.

G. Request food handler cards and review for sample staff. If a resident is routinely or regularly involved in the preparation of food to be served to other residents, or as part of an employment-training program, request a food handler card.

H. Conduct further observations and review if potential or actual outcomes and deficiencies regarding food services have been identified. Consider requesting a food tray to evaluate temperature or palatability.

V. Information and Assistance

A. Identify the RCS team member responsible for conducting the food service task at the pre-inspection preparation team meeting.
   1. The team leader or the licensor responsible for the food service task will make introductions to food service staff, conduct informal interview, establish which staff is the contact, and briefly explain the food service task.
   2. Other members of the team will share general observations with the licensor responsible for conducting the food service task.

B. Food services will include the consideration of individual resident needs such as:
   1. Preferences;
   2. Alternate choices;
   3. A system for residents to express their comments on food services;
   4. Prescribed diets;
   5. Prescribed nutrient supplements and concentrates;
   6. A variety of daily food choices:
   7. Temperature of food; and
   8. Assistance with eating, if needed.

C. Interviews with residents, licensee/administrator or designee, caregiver staff, food service staff are important sources of information regarding food services.

D. Interviews with outside contacts, including family members may provide the licensor with information and clarification regarding food service issues.

E. Observation of a meal may require an adjustment in the Inspection to allow time for the observation. For example:
   1. If a meal is occurring at time of entrance and/or tour, RCS staff will conduct general observations if more opportunities will occur during the inspection to observe dining.
   2. If no other meal observations will occur or many residents will be out of the ALF during other meals, the team leader will inform the licensee/administrator or designee that the entrance conference and/or tour will be postponed to conduct a meal observation at that time.

F. Dining Observation:
   1. Conduct meal observation while sitting if possible to avoid standing over the residents. Documentation of observations should be minimized during the observation.
2. Observe dining area for adequate seating capacity (50% or more residents per meal setting).
3. Do residents have a choice as to where they sit?
4. Do residents have to wait an inordinate amount of time to receive their meals?
5. Is the meal service organized so that beverages do not get too cold or warm before the meal arrives, and does the facility rotate the order in which meals are delivered so that one group does not have to always be served last?
6. Note time of meal and if sufficient time and staff is provided to meet resident needs. For example, are there enough staff to serve food in a timely manner so the resident gets the food at the appropriate temperature?
7. Observe meal for food content – nutritious, palatable, alternatives provided if requested by resident, and appropriate for resident needs and abilities.
8. Observe quantities eaten by the residents:
   a. Amounts of food left on plates; and
   b. Portion sizes adequate.
9. Note if any resident appears to require eating assistance and if assistance is available and appropriate. Clarify resident needs with staff.
10. Interview residents informally during dining or at the end of the meal, if appropriate.
11. Identify any residents that are currently receiving meals in their rooms, note the reason, and if the meals are being served and assisted concurrently.
12. There is no need to routinely check the temperature of food. However, if a resident complains about food temperature or if you see prepared food sitting for long enough to impact the appropriate temperature of the food being served, check the temperature just before it is served to residents.

G. Observe resident rooms and corridors noting any presence of trays or dishes outside and clarify the situation with licensee/staff.

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Date