

Clarification 5: Meal Time in the PROS Program Day

Clarification on scheduled meal times within the Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS) Program Day.

Guidelines

Many PROS programs offer a breakfast and lunch as part of the PROS day. These meals may be an integral part of the program day and provide individuals with the opportunity to have a healthy meal experience as well as time to interact and socialize with other people. While many PROS programs utilize Federal or State food grants to pay for the meals provided, some programs use agency revenue or fund raising efforts to provide meals. Although not common practice, some programs that do not have Federal Food Grant funding charge a nominal fee for each meal. However, even those programs charging a nominal fee will provide free meals to individuals who are unable to pay.

Meal times are routinely scheduled at the same time each day and individuals participate in this meal period for the whole meal time period or a scheduled part of the meal time period. In addition, programs often utilize the meal preparation time or the meal serving time as an opportunity to provide a structured skill development service for an individual who has identified mental health barrier/s to his/her goal that may be overcome by participation in such a structured activity.

The regularly scheduled meal time is not considered a PROS Service and is not a reimbursable service or activity. In addition, a PROS program may not include the regularly scheduled meal time when calculating "Program Participation Time". By definition "Program Participation Time" is calculated to include the time between an individual's sign-in and sign-out of the PROS program, excluding time for meals and planned recreational activities.

The simple guidance for meal times is:

- The period of time the person is scheduled to be eating does not count as a service and this time is deducted from "Program Participation Time".
- Charging for lunch is an agency decision, but may be prohibited as part of the agreement to accept federal or state grants to offset meal costs.