

- Create a Petition. It is important to show that many people want changes. You can ask that a particular item be added or removed from the menu, and then have willing residents sign on.
- Conduct a food survey. Food surveys can tell you what residents like and dislike about the menu. CIAD has sample surveys you can use.
- Keep a food diary. If you are concerned that substitutions are being made too often, have one or more residents volunteer to keep a record of the meals served, with the date of the problem noted.

Step 4: Discuss whom you should meet with to seek change. For example,

- Meet with the nutritionist and/or dietician to make recommendations to the menu.
- Meet with kitchen staff.
- Meet with the administrator.
- Contact Department of Health.
- Seek support from CIAD.
- Invite a guest speaker to discuss health concerns.

If the administration does not respond, the food committee has several options. These options include:

- Speaking to the administration and reminding them of the home's responsibility to respond.
- Calling a CIAD organizer.
- Calling the toll-free Department of Health Hotline at (866) 893-6772 and reporting the situation to an intake worker. This DOH staff person will file a formal complaint to be investigated by the regional office of the DOH. If the call is made after hours or on the weekend, residents can leave a message.



CIAD

**425 East 25th Street
New York, NY 10010
Phone: 212-481-7572**

CIAD

What's cooking in adult homes?



**HOW TO ORGANIZE
A FOOD COMMITTEE
IN YOUR HOME**

**Served by CIAD's
Speakers' Bureau**

**212-481-7572
www.ciadny.org**

What is a Food Committee?

A food committee is composed of a group of adult home residents interested in working with facility staff to improve the food in their adult home. Any resident can attend. A food committee can also focus on health and nutrition. Typically, a food committee will be an arm of the resident council.

In 2007 New York State Social Services Law was amended to give adult home residents the right to form food committees.

Food Committees are given the same standing and consideration as Resident Councils:

- They are resident run and have the power to invite guests.
- Residents choose the resident or residents who will lead the meeting.
- Residents choose a resident to take minutes. The minutes are submitted to the administrator. The administration of the adult home should respond in writing to the food committee's concerns and suggestions.

- A member of the food committee should report to the resident council.
- The minutes will be examined by the NYS Department of Health as part of the inspection process to determine whether or not residents' requests have been met or responded to.

Need Help Forming a Food Committee?

The Coalition of Institutionalized Aged and Disabled (CIAD) has a resident **Speakers' Bureau** that can be invited to your home to help initiate a food committee. They can present several videos about food and nutrition, including one entitled "Meeting with the Inspectors" in which a Department of Health Food Inspector discusses the residents' right to form food committees.

Comments from satisfied customers:

"The Speakers' Bureau gave me food for thought."

"If it's nutritious, it can still be delicious."

Here are some suggested steps you can take:

Step 1: Meet as a food committee and read this pamphlet together.

Step 2: Identify the needs and goals for your food committee. For example,

- Improve the food in your adult home by:
 - i. Making changes to the menu.
 - ii. Asking for new food items to be added to the menu.
 - iii. Asking for food to be cooked in a certain way.
- Learn about health concerns like diabetes, obesity, medication and food interactions, smoking, and high blood pressure.

Step 3: Discuss what kinds of documentation or strategy you will use to best accomplish your goal.

- Document food concerns and suggestions in the minutes of your food committee meeting.



"Never knew food like this before"