Meal Plan/FlexDine Policy and Procedures

Policy Information

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Policy Statement

University Dining Services (UDS) provides dining services to the 7 residence hall dining centers and 30 plus other dining establishments at the University of Minnesota. UDS operations are managed by a private food service management company. Contract Administration oversees the contract with the vendor and any other contracts needed to operate Dining Services at the University of Minnesota. University Dining Services also administers the Meal Plan and FlexDine programs. Students use FlexDine in residence halls, residential convenience stores and in campus retail dining venues to purchase food using money that is deposited in a FlexDine account.

Reason for Policy

The purpose of this policy is to document the established guidelines for Meal Plans and FlexDine.

Meal Plan Purchase and Use Policy

Identification

All Meal Plan holders must submit their U Card as proof of identity before being allowed to utilize any features of their Meal Plan or FlexDine. Any other method of identification will not be accepted.

Residence Hall Meal Plan Policy

Residents of the traditional residence halls are required to select one of a pre-determined selection of meal plan options as part of their contract with Housing and Residential Life. There are no exceptions allowed. A current resident cannot cancel a meal plan unless their housing residence status is changed, either through a housing contract cancellation/release or a move to an on-campus University apartment. Listed are the eight traditional residence halls that require a meal plan:

- Bailey Hall
- Centennial Hall

- Comstock Hall
- Frontier Hall
- Middlebrook Hall
- Pioneer Hall
- Sanford Hall
- Territorial Hall
- 17th Avenue Hall

FlexDine and Meal Plans

Included with each of the meal plan options are specified FlexDine amounts, which may differ depending on the Plan selected. Plan holders also have the option of placing additional money into their FlexDine account during the year. FlexDine is intended to be an augment to allow additional opportunities for Residents to obtain Food Services on campus. It is not available to residents by itself, but only as part of a defined Meal Plan package.

"Meal" Usage

Usage is defined by the type of meal plan chosen. *Weekly* plans allow for a maximum number of entrances ("meals") into a residence hall dining facility in a designated Monday through Sunday week. Unused entrances ("meals") do not carry forward to the next week, nor is any reimbursement made based on unused "meals" from prior weeks. *Per Semester* plans offer a stated number of entrances ("meals") that may be used at any time during a semester. Unused entrances ("meals") are not refunded or allowed to carry forward at the end of a semester.

For either kind of plan, there is no restriction on frequency of repeat entrances, except that each entrance deducts a "meal" from the respective plan.

"Meals" may not be assigned, given, shared, or otherwise transferred to another person.

Guest Meals

Some meal plans may also include a specific number of "guest meals," which can be used to allow additional people entrance when accompanied by the meal plan holder. Guest Meals may be used by the plan holder, if needed when they may not have regular Meals

available. Unused guest meals expire at the end of their assigned semester. Unused guest meals are not reimbursed.

Payment

All Residential Meal Plans (including initial FlexDine amounts) are charged to students using the Student Accounts Receivable System (SARS) by the Department of Housing and Residential Life. No other payment options are allowed. Cash, check, or credit card purchases of additional FlexDine are permitted when purchased directly from University Dining Services.

Meal plans and FlexDine are purchased as part of a board contract and are not subject to sales tax, either at the time of purchase or the time of use, for enrolled students, pursuant to Minnesota Rule 8130.4700, Subpart 8, item C.

Plans Offered

Residential Meal Plan offerings and costs are finalized during the spring and summer semesters of each year for the following academic year, and are the definitive set of plans available to residence hall students. Other meal plans may be offered to other members of the University community, but these meal plans are not available as a substitute for those plans offered to residence hall residents. Exception: If a resident has enrolled in one of the offered plans, they may additionally purchase any plan offered to anyone in order to augment or extend their original plan. Example: a residence hall student who chose a 150 meal per semester plan (offered as part of their contract), may in addition purchase a 25 meal per semester plan (not offered as part of their contract, but available to non-residents), in order to have 175 meals available to them.

On-Campus University Apartments Meal Plan Purchase

Students living in the on-campus University apartments (Roy Wilkins Hall, Mark G. Yudof Hall, or University Village), who wish to have a meal plan, may purchase a meal plan on the current UDS website, via an enrollment form available at any UDS location, or by calling the UDS Meal Plan Office at 612-624-0558.

Meal plans are valid for only one semester and must be repurchased for each semester.

Students, when initially applying for an apartment, are asked to select a meal plan, in the eventuality that they may be assigned to a traditional residence hall. If they are assigned

to an on-campus University apartment, their meal plan enrollment will automatically be canceled. They may then reapply for a meal plan as outlined above.

Otherwise, offerings and terms of purchase, payment and use of Meals, FlexDine, and Guest Meals are the same as for Commuter/Non-Resident Meal Plans noted below.

Commuters/Non-Resident Meal Plan Purchases

Anyone with a valid U Card may purchase a pre-defined Commuter/Voluntary meal plan or FlexDine only plan. No proof of enrollment or employment is required. These may be purchased on the current UDS website, via an enrollment form available at any UDS location, or by calling the UDS Meal Plan Office at 612-624-0558.

Terms for usage of Meals, FlexDine, and Guest Meals are the same as for Residential Meal Plans, except that:

Access to Residential Dining locations must be arranged ahead of time with the Meal Plan Office. The ability to access specific facilities is subject to regulation by the Department of Housing and Residential Life, and is not assured by the purchase of a Meal Plan or FlexDine.

Payment

Meal plan and FlexDine payments can be made with cash, check, credit card or charged to a SARS account.

Meal plans with FlexDine are purchased as part of a Residential Meal Plan and are not subject to sales tax, either at the time of purchase or the time of use, **for enrolled students**, pursuant to Minnesota Rule 8130.4700, Subpart 8, item C.

Contracts that are subject to sales tax include: meals and lunches sold to faculty and other employees of the University; sponsors of conferences, sports camps, or other activities held on campus; and meals and lunches sold to student clubs or other organizations.

Meal plan or FlexDine purchases made by meal plan holders that are subject to sales tax are taxed when the meal plan or FlexDine is purchased, using the tax rate in effect for the central offices of UDS at 2904 Fairmont St. S.E., Minneapolis, MN.

FlexDine Account Purchase Policy

FlexDine must be purchased in increments of $25. FlexDine purchases can be made with cash, check, credit card or charged to a SARS account, if available. Purchase may be made at the current UDS website, via an enrollment form available at any UDS location, or by calling the UDS Meal Plan Office at 612-624-0558.

Any unused FlexDine Dollars at the end of an academic year will rollover to the following academic year. UDS may remind plan holders of their FlexDine balances periodically throughout the academic year, but is not obligated to do so. It is the account holder's responsibility to keep track of their balances. This may be done by requesting the information at any point of purchase where FlexDine or "Meals" are accepted or by viewing their current balances on-line at https://www.gophergold.umn.edu/balance.php .

Meal Plan Changes and Cancellation Policy

Residence Hall Meal Plan Changes - Fall Semester

Residential Meal Plans may be changed using the "Meal Plan Change" webpage located on the Housing & Residential Life website during the first two weeks of the fall semester. Later submissions during the change period replace earlier submissions.

The only residence hall students who will be allowed to make changes to their meal plans after the fall semester change period has ended will be those students who move in after the change period. Those students will be given two weeks (10 business days) to make a meal plan change request. This request must be made directly to the UDS Meal Plan Office via the published e-mail address at dining@umn.edu.

Residence Hall Meal Plan Changes - Spring Semester

All returning residence hall students will be given the opportunity to change their meal plans for spring semester from mid-November through mid-December of the fall semester. Notification of the exact meal plan change dates are emailed to all residents by Housing & Residential Life via the student's official University email address.

The only residence hall students who will be allowed to make changes to their meal plans after the start of the spring semester will be those students who are new residents for spring semester. Those students will be given two weeks (10 business days) to make a meal plan change request. This request must be made directly to the UDS Meal Plan Office via the published email address at dining@umn.edu.

Verification of new resident status will be made with Housing & Residential Life before changes are made.

Residence Hall Meal Plan Cancellations

Current residents of traditional residence halls may not cancel a meal plan unless their housing residence status is changed (either through a housing contract cancellation/release or a move to an on-campus University apartment).

On-Campus University Apartment and Commuter/Non-Resident Meal Plan Changes

Members of these groups who purchase meal plans prior to the start of the semester can change plans during the first two calendar weeks of the semester. If a meal plan is purchased any other time during the semester, it may be changed within 10 business days of the purchase.

On-Campus University Apartment and Commuter/Non-Resident Meal Plan Cancellations

Meal plans may be cancelled within 5 business days of purchase. After the 5 day grace period, cancellations are only accepted upon submission of proof of withdrawal from the University.

Meal Plan & FlexDine Refund Policy

Residence Hall Meal Plan Refunds

Residents receiving refunds due to withdrawal from the University are refunded the remaining portion of their meal plan as of the date of deactivation or last use, whichever is later. Refunds are only posted to the Student Account Receivable System (SARS) – no other refund mechanism is available. Refunds are based on the remaining value in the meal plan and any remaining FlexDine value.

Residents with a valid housing contract release are offered the option of a continuation of their meal plan in its entirety, keeping only the remaining FlexDine balance, or a prorated refund of their meal plan. Refunds are only posted to SARS.

Adjustment amounts for meal plan changes are calculated separately for Residential Meal Plans and FlexDine. Any additional amount owed is posted to SARS.

On-Campus University Apartment and Commuter/Non-Resident Meal Plan Refunds

Cash, check, and credit card payments are processed at the time the meal plan order is placed. For orders placed before the beginning of a semester, payments to Student Account Receivable System (SARS) accounts are processed during the first two weeks of the semester, otherwise SARS payments are processed immediately.

Canceled plans are refunded via the payment method used for purchase. Refunds due to withdrawal are only done for purchases made within the current term, and are based on the remaining value in the meal plan and any remaining FlexDine value as of the date of notification or last use, whichever is later.

FlexDine Expiration Policy

FlexDine account activities are reviewed monthly. When no FlexDine activity (either usage or deposit) is shown for a 12 month period, the FlexDine balance will expire and funds will revert to the University. UDS will attempt to send a notice to that effect in the month prior to expiration, if it has a record of the patron's current e-mail. Refund requests will not be accepted, but the balance may be preserved for use by either making a purchase or by making a deposit before the expiration date. It is the purchasers responsibility to be aware of their account balances, and no exceptions to the expiration will be made due to failure to send (or for not receiving) a warning notice.

Data Privacy Policy

All information such as patron biographical information, current balances and usage history and similar will be treated by UDS as Private Data. Meaning that no information about the plan holder or their accounts will be released to non-University authorized personnel, except as mandated by law. Inquiries based on family relationships or making of financial

payment will be politely refused. Such inquires should instead be directed to the plan holder.

Forms/Instructions

Ordering FlexDine & Commuter Meal Plans

Go to: **www.univofminnesota.campusdish.com**

Meal Plan Brochure

Go to:
http://www.dining.umn.edu/MealPlansFlexDine/MealPlansFlexDineDetails

Account Balances and Usage History
Go to: **https://www.gophergold.umn.edu/balance.php**

Online Housing Account

Go to: **www.Housing.umn.edu**

Additional Contacts

Primary Contact(s)	Contact Names	Department	Phone	Fax/Email
Policy/Procedure Questions	Ted Sander	University Dining Services Contract Administration	612-624-4169	sande005@umn.edu
	Dora Baker	University Dining Services Meal Plan Office	612-624-0558	baker151@umn.edu

Definitions

FlexDine

FlexDine is a meal plan either used by itself, or in conjunction with predefined meal privileges in the University Residence Hall Dining facilities. FlexDine allows students to purchase food items in all University Dining Services locations, and in select situations, from approved Dining partners. FlexDine funds are purchased either as part of a defined meal plan, or may be purchased separately at any time.

Gopher GOLD™

Gopher GOLD™ is a separate on line declining balance program operated by the Universities U Card Office. It has replaced an older similarly named off line system.

Gopher GOLD™ is similar to FlexDine in that value can be added to a patron's U Card, and be used for later purchases. FlexDine is restricted to purchases made at UDS locations and specific Dining partners. Gopher GOLD™ may be used for a wide variety of purchases, including Dining, Copies, and Bookstores.

FlexDine is intended as a meal plan, and as such, purchases made with it are sales tax exempt for students. Non-students must pay sales tax at the time of adding funds to FlexDine. There are no fees for adding funds to the FlexDine Account. There are no fees charged for dormant accounts, but accounts that exceed one year of no activity will forfeit their funds.

Gopher GOLD™ is intended for general purchasing, and purchases made with it are subject to normal sales tax rules. There may be a fee charged to deposit funds. Accounts are subject to a monthly fee after 12 months of inactivity, with forfeiture of funds after 18 months of inactivity.

Responsibilities

Creating Meal Plan Responsibility
University Dining Services is responsible for creating meal plans.

Canceling Meal Plan Responsibility
University Dining Services is responsible for canceling meal plans that are outside of Housing Contracts

Changing Meal Plan Responsibility
University Dining Services is responsible for making changes to meal plans that are submitted within the timeframe outlined in this policy.

Canceling Housing Contracts
Housing & Residential Life is responsible for canceling housing contracts.

References

- Minnesota Rule 8130.4700 Food, Drinks and Meals

Frequently Asked Questions

What happens to my FlexDine dollars at the end of the semester or academic year?
FlexDine does not expire until there has been a 12 month period of inactivity. You do not need to be actively taking classes to continue to use your FlexDine.

Where can I eat with my FlexDine dollars?
FlexDine can be used in all UDS dining operations including retail venues, residential convenience stores and residential dining. FlexDine can also be used to purchase guest meals in the residence halls.

Can I change my meal plan if I don't like it?
Residential Meal Plans may be changed with Housing & Residential Life on their website during the first two weeks of the fall semester. All returning residence hall students will be given the opportunity to change their meal plans for spring semester from mid-November through mid-December of the fall semester. Notification of the exact meal plan change dates are emailed to all residents via their University email addresses.

The only residence hall students who will be allowed to make changes to their meal plans after the start of the spring semester will be those who are new residents for spring semester. Those students will be given two weeks to make a meal plan change request. This request must be made directly to the UDS Meal Plan Office via the published email address at dining@umn.edu.

Do I have to have a meal plan as part of my housing contract?
Residents of the traditional residence halls are required to select one of a pre-determined selection of meal plan options as part of their housing contract. There are no exceptions allowed. A current resident cannot cancel a meal plan unless their housing residence status is changed (either through a housing contract cancellation/release or a move to an on-campus University apartment).

Can I get a refund on unused meals in my meal plan?
Unused meals on weekly plans do not carry forward to the next week. Unused meals in a per semester plan are forfeited at the end of the semester.