

COLLABORATING TO IMPLEMENT THE GOOD FOOD PURCHASING PROGRAM ACROSS CHICAGO AND COOK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

ILLINOIS STATE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND NUTRITION PROGRAM SUCCESS STORY

AT-A-GLANCE

Procuring and serving healthier foods is one way to address the significant burden of diet-related chronic diseases in Chicago and Cook County, Illinois. Recognizing the opportunity, both the City of Chicago and Cook County approved the [Good Food Purchasing Program](#). As a result of the Illinois State Physical Activity and Nutrition (ISPAN) program, the City and County health departments are working together to implement the program, thus avoiding duplication of efforts, maximizing impact and ensuring public communications are clear and cohesive. Further, ISPAN supports technical resources which help to ensure GFPP is implemented promptly and with fidelity.



PUBLIC HEALTH CHALLENGE

The burden of diet-related chronic diseases in the City of Chicago and Cook County, Illinois is substantial.¹ Poor nutrition is linked to an increased risk for type 2 diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and certain cancers,² and one in five Chicago/Cook County residents consider themselves to be in poor or fair health.³ Exacerbating these diet-related poor health outcomes are inequities in healthy food access and food security. Children, older adults, and people with disabilities all experience higher rates of food insecurity, and food insecurity rates for black and Latinx households are at least twice that of white households.⁴ Managing chronic diseases costs the state of Illinois more than \$12.5 billion every year with an additional \$43.6 billion lost in missed work days and reduced productivity.⁵ Government agencies in Chicago and Cook County spend more than \$320 million on food each year, which impacts the food environment of residents, especially those utilizing government services.⁶

APPROACH

Understanding the potential impact of the purchasing power of Chicago and Cook County government agencies, both the Chicago City Council and the Cook County Board of Commissioners approved the [Good Food Purchasing Program](#) (GFPP) in 2017 and 2018 respectively, to procure and serve healthier foods to staff, visitors, clients, and patients. This approach in government-run facilities, including worksite cafeterias, public hospitals, and correctional institutions is an emerging public health strategy. The GFPP is a national program that harnesses the power of institutional food procurement to create a healthier, more equitable food system. Food purchases are evaluated through five values: nutrition, local economies, valued workforce, animal welfare and environmental sustainability. By supporting local food businesses, living wages, humane animal treatment, and sustainable food production, GFPP not only supports healthier food access, but also addresses social and environmental determinants of health.⁷



ISPAN is made possible with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in collaboration with the Illinois Alliance to Prevent Obesity, administered by the Illinois Public Health Institute





Collaborating around the Good Food Purchasing Program has fostered shared learning and created space for collective problem solving. This is crucial in advancing complex, systems-level change and has increased our ability to support implementation.

- Kate McMahon, MPH
Director, Chronic Disease Prevention
and Health Promotion
Chicago Department of Public Health



ISPAN IMPACT

The Illinois State Physical Activity and Nutrition (ISPAN) grant program has provided the catalyst for the City of Chicago and Cook County government to collaborate on GFPP implementation. The ISPAN grant supports a mutual technical assistance provider, the Chicago Food Policy Action Council (CFPAC). As both the City of Chicago and Cook County share many of same resources, this partnership avoids the duplication of efforts, maximizes impact, and ensures public communication to Chicago and Cook County residents, policy makers and systems leaders is clear and cohesive. This collaboration and influx of resources is effective in both expediting and strengthening the GFPP implementation process.

WHAT'S NEXT

With support from the ISPAN Cooperative Agreement (1807) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the City of Chicago, Cook County, and CFPAC will continue to advance the work of moving governmental institutions from GFPP adoption to implementation. Once the baseline data from institutions is analyzed, key stakeholders from each institution will develop action plans and modify contracts to better align their food purchasing with GFPP values. Moreover, through ISPAN, the Illinois Public Health Institute (IPHI) has the capacity to offer institutions individualized technical assistance to serve the foods they procure in a way that aligns with nutrition standards.

REFERENCES

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ABOUT ISPAN

ISPAN is a five-year, \$4.6 million initiative to implement physical activity and nutrition interventions designed to make it easier for Illinoisans to live the healthiest lives possible. ISPAN is particularly focused on low-income and rural communities and communities of color that have been hardest hit by chronic diseases like type 2 diabetes and heart disease. With funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Illinois Public Health Institute is collaborating with the Illinois Department of Public Health, local health departments in three regions of the state, and a unified coalition of organizations from multiple sectors to tackle the root causes of obesity and related chronic diseases.

MORE INFORMATION

To find out what's next for ISPAN, [click here](#).

To learn about opportunities to help your institution procure and serve healthier foods, [click here!](#)

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