January 9, 2012

TO: Los Angeles County Department Directors

FROM: Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H. Director and Health Officer

SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF VENDING AND FOOD SERVICE PROCUREMENT IN COUNTY DEPARTMENTS

On March 8, 2011, on a motion by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, the Board of Supervisors directed County departments to work with the Department of Public Health (DPH) prior to the release of any Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for County food services contracts that involve the purchase, distribution, and/or sale of food and beverages in County facilities and programs to ensure that dietary requirements within the final contract promote healthy, nutritious foods and comply with previously adopted Board policies. The motion further directs DPH to work directly with affected agencies to incorporate nutrition recommendations to the extent feasible within each food service contract. Attached is a copy of the motion.

In response to the Board motion, DPH has established a review process that incorporates evidence-based nutrition recommendations including standards to limit calories, sugar, fat and sodium. Other recommendations to promote healthy food options include menu labeling and signage encouraging customers to make healthier choices. During the past several months, DPH has worked closely with three County departments to include these recommendations into their food service RFPs.

To help ensure effective implementation of this Board motion, DPH is respectfully requesting the following information from your department:

- Please identify on the attached document whether your department purchases, distributes, and/or sells food and/or beverages in cafeterias, vending machines, and/or snack shops or other concessions.
• If your department does engage in any of the above activities, please designate an individual in your department who would be able to best complete a brief telephone interview with DPH. The interview, which will be approximately one hour, will collect information on the types of food service settings in your department, existing food service contracts, and current nutrition standards. Ideally, the individual should be familiar with contracts for any foods and/or beverages that are purchased, distributed, and/or sold.

Findings from this process will help DPH collaborate more effectively with your Department as well as other County departments in fulfilling the requirements of the Board motion. We will share findings with your agency if you would like to use the information for internal purposes.

Please complete the attached questionnaire and return it to Michael Leighs by fax (213/637-8272) or e-mail (mleighs@ph.lacounty.gov) by January 20, 2012. This information will also be transmitted to you via email.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

JEF: ml

Attachments