

# Regulations on Student Nutrition at Universities and Faculties of Medical Sciences and Health Services

## **PREAMBLE:**

One of the duties of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education (MOHME) is to provide, maintain, and promote the livelihood and, consequently, the nutrition of students at the universities and faculties of medical sciences across the country. A prerequisite for achieving this goal is the provision and management of resources as the most fundamental pillars of development and one of the most critical axes of service delivery to students. Homogenizing procedures, preventing arbitrary and spontaneous decision-making, and organizing the directives, regulations, and laws governing student dining halls will facilitate operations in this sector. Therefore, the purpose of formulating this regulation is to address the aforementioned objectives.

## **Article 1 – Definitions**

**The terms used in this regulation shall have the meanings detailed below:**

**1-1- Ministry:** Refers to the Ministry of Health and Medical Education (MOHME).

**1-2- University/Faculty:** Includes all universities and faculties of medical sciences and health services, as well as educational centers and institutions under the supervision of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education.

**1-3- Student:** An individual accepted for study in one of the academic degrees based on the educational regulations of the University/Faculty, whose enrollment is confirmed by the educational structure of the University/Faculty.

**1-4- Dormitory Student:** A student who, in accordance with the accommodation regulations, has qualified for residence in a dormitory and resides in one of the student dormitories of the University/Faculty, whether owned, leased, or non-owned.

**1-5- Nutrition Council:** Formed by the Vice-Chancellor for Student and Cultural Affairs of the University/Faculty for policymaking, planning, and supervising student nutrition affairs, whose members are listed in Article 2 of this regulation.

**1-6- Multi-purpose Smart Card:** A card issued individually for each student by the Vice-Chancellor for Student and Cultural Affairs after verifying their active student status at the respective University/Faculty, used for various student services (student identification, dining, dormitory, counseling, welfare, etc.).

**1-7- Forgotten Card Ticket (Forgiveness Ticket):** The provision of student dining hall services for students who have previously reserved meals but lack their multi-purpose smart card or issued ticket shall be facilitated by the head of the Student Nutrition Office.

**1-8- Daily Sale Ticket:** A permit issued for utilizing the University/Faculty student dining hall services for students who have not previously reserved their meals.

**1-9- Student Nutrition Office:** An office within the student management department of the Vice-Chancellery for Student and Cultural Affairs, responsible for addressing, following up on, and implementing student nutrition affairs based on welfare indicators and standards defined by the Ministry's Vice-Chancellery for Student and Cultural Affairs. For universities/Faculties that do not have a dedicated nutrition office in their organizational structure, this responsibility falls under the University/Faculty Student Affairs Management.

**1-10- Student Disciplinary Committee:** A committee comprising preliminary, revision, or central student disciplinary committees that investigates and makes decisions on student disciplinary matters in accordance with the composition and criteria specified in the Executive Procedures of the Student Disciplinary Regulations approved in 2022 (1401 AP).

**1-11- Student and Residents Guild Council:** A structure composed of elected representatives of students from each university unit, whose members are chosen through elections within the framework of the Regulations of the Student and Residents Guild Council of the Country's Universities and Faculties of Medical Sciences.

**1-12- Student Meal Ticket Price:** The price of each student meal (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) across all universities/faculties, factoring in all components involved in meal preparation, which is determined and communicated annually by the Ministry's Vice-Chancellery for Student and Cultural Affairs.

## **Article 2 – Composition of the Nutrition Council**

The composition of the “Nutrition Council” members is as follows:

- Vice-Chancellor for Student and Cultural Affairs of the University/Faculty (Council Chairman)
- Student Affairs Director of the University/Faculty (Council Secretary)
- Head/Director of the Student Nutrition Office or one of the nutrition experts selected by the Council Chairman
- A representative from the Vice-Chancellery for Management Development, Resources, and Planning of the University/Faculty

- Two students from the members of the Student and Residents Guild and Welfare Coordination Committee of the University/Faculty (preferably one female and one male student)
- Head of the Student Dormitories Office

***Note 1:** At the beginning of each academic year, the student members of the Nutrition Council shall be introduced to the Council Chairman by the Secretary of the University/Faculty Student, Resident Welfare and Guild Affairs Coordination Committee, in accordance with the National Regulations for Student and Resident Guild Councils, and shall be subject to confirmation by the Vice-Chancellor for Student and Cultural Affairs.*

***Note 2:** If necessary and deemed appropriate by the Vice-Chancellor for Student and Cultural Affairs, inviting academic experts to attend the council meetings without voting rights is permitted.*

***Note 3:** All individual members of the council shall receive official appointments from the Vice-Chancellor for Student and Cultural Affairs, valid for one year from the date of issuance.*

***Note 4:** The presence of the Chairman, the Secretary, and at least three members is necessary for meetings to proceed, and the responsibility for supervising the proper execution of the Nutrition Council's resolutions lies with the Council Secretary.*

## **1-2 – Duties of the Nutrition Council:**

- Planning to enhance the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the student nutrition process.
- Planning to develop and strengthen the infrastructure of student dining halls and kitchens.
- Supervising the proper performance of contractors related to the student nutrition process based on the expert opinion of the Nutrition Office.
- Planning toward the realization of a healthy student nutrition model.
- Planning to increase efficiency and satisfaction in student nutrition, prioritizing the smart nutrition card program.
- Reviewing and approving executive proposals to improve student nutrition and following up on complaints, criticisms, and suggestions provided by students.
- Deciding on the meal prices for international students and other related matters.
- Holding Nutrition Council meetings at least once a month and preparing minutes concerning the quantitative and qualitative status of student dining halls and kitchens.

## **2-2 – Duties of the Student Nutrition Office:**

- Preparing and organizing weekly or monthly meal plans in student dining halls for submission to the council.
- Drafting and formulating specific terms and conditions for contracts and tenders related to student nutrition.
- Collecting, compiling, and presenting statistics and data related to student nutrition affairs and assessing needs.
- Following up on and supervising matters related to student nutrition automation.
- Following up on matters concerning the multi-purpose smart cards of students.
- Supervising all personnel affairs and facilities under the jurisdiction of the Nutrition Office.
- Inspecting and supervising the quality, quantity, and hygiene of the storage, preparation, cooking, and distribution stages of student meals.
- Submitting performance reports to the Nutrition Council.
- Providing appropriate communication to students regarding departmental processes and activities (including the displaying of posters in student common areas, the Vice-Chancellor's official website, etc.) as well as student nutrition-related operations (comprising nutrition automation systems, meal schedules, hygiene compliance standards, and the performance metrics of the Nutrition Office, etc.).
- Conducting student surveys and documenting results at least once per season, analyzing data, and making decisions based on findings to improve student nutrition.
- Following up on obtaining health certificates for all personnel involved in the preparation, cooking, and distribution of student meals.
- Supervising the personal hygiene of student dining hall and kitchen staff.
- Analyzing the student nutrition status and identifying areas for improvement.
- Proposing executive recommendations to improve student nutrition.
- Following up on equipping dining halls with updated automated reservation and meal delivery software.
- Following up on equipping food storage facilities, industrializing kitchens, dining halls, and dormitory meal distribution rooms.
- Following up on the establishment and upgrading of a dedicated web portal within the University/Faculty website.

*Note 1: Equipping student dining halls and kitchens located outside the main university headquarters (central campus), including individual faculties and affiliated medical healthcare centers, shall be the responsibility of the respective faculty or unit, under the supervision of the Vice-Chancellery for Student and Cultural Affairs.*

*Note 2: The web portal (website) of the Student Nutrition Office must be continuously updated and must comprise information introducing the office and its personnel, institutional objectives, meal schedules, access to the automated food system, nutritional education, and a portal for receiving suggestions and complaints.*

*Note 3: The procurement of a nutritional survey software for integration into the University/Faculty nutrition system is mandatory.*

**2-3-** The eligibility requirements for appointment to the Head of the Nutrition Department, in addition to the general conditions for the employment of government personnel, include holding at least a Bachelor's degree in Nutrition, Food Science and Technology, Public Health, or Food Hygiene, and preferably two years of relevant work experience in student cafeteria services.

**2-4-** In accordance with the metrics and standards defined by the Vice-Chancellery for Student and Cultural Affairs, for up to 2,000 meal portions prepared daily, the presence of one full-time nutrition expert is required. For every additional 1,500 portions exceeding 2,000, an additional full-time nutrition expert must be employed in the University/Faculty Nutrition Office to ensure supervision over all facilities and executive processes involved in student nutrition and to prepare periodic and ad hoc reports for the respective university/faculty manager.

**2-5-** The presence of at least one environmental health expert within the Student Nutrition Office shall be mandatory.

**2-6-** The scope of activity and services of the Student Nutrition Office is strictly limited to the designated student meal distribution locations approved by the Nutrition Council, food storage facilities, kitchens, and dining halls under the jurisdiction of the University/Faculty Vice-Chancellery for Student and Cultural Affairs.

### **Article 3 – Multi-purpose Smart Card:**

**3-1-** The responsibility for maintaining and safeguarding the multi-purpose smart card lies with the student. In the event of card loss, the student is obliged to notify the Nutrition Office in writing within three working days. This card is non-transferable.

*Note: If a student provides their card to another individual for use, they will be subject to a fine determined and approved by the University Nutrition Council.*

**3-2-** If a student reports the loss of their card in a timely manner, they can still receive meals according to the rules of this regulation upon paying the fee for issuing a duplicate card.

**3-3-** Meal delivery to students is possible only by presenting the card during the designated hours and at the location selected during the meal reservation.

**3-4-** The University/Faculty Nutrition Office is required to make necessary arrangements and provisions for the nutrition of newly admitted students until their smart cards are delivered.

## **Article 4 – Provision of Nutrition Services**

**4-1-** Every dormitory student, subject to compliance with the provisionary regulations, shall be entitled to three meals per day (breakfast, lunch, and dinner). Furthermore, students who fulfill the criteria for dormitory residency under the "Regulations for Accommodation, Management, and General-Disciplinary Rules of Married and Single Student Dormitories," but do not reside in university-owned, leased, or self-governing dormitories solely due to space limitations, shall also be eligible to receive three meals per day upon confirmation by the Student Affairs Management.

**4-2-** The University/Faculty may provide meals free of charge or with the necessary discount to students covered by welfare and support organizations (including the State Welfare Organization and the Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation) as well as financially underprivileged individuals, subject to evaluation by the Student Affairs Director and final approval by the Vice-Chancellor for Student and Cultural Affairs.

**4-3-** The provision of meals to guest, transferred, evening-session (*Shabaneh*), self-governing campus, international, over-capacity, residency (*Dastyari*), and postgraduate students, as well as the spouses and children (above 2 years of age) of students residing exclusively in married student dormitories (in alignment with the Family Protection and Population Youth Law), shall be subject to the regulations governing full-time, tuition-free (Daytime) students.

**Note:** The issuance of multi-purpose smart cards or the provision of meals by any means to sponsored students of organizations and institutions, faculty members, and university staff is permissible at the total cost price, subject to the availability of facilities and the approval of the University/Faculty Nutrition Council.

**4-4-** The Student Nutrition Office has no obligation to provide meals to students in hospitals or medical centers.

**4-5-** The Nutrition Office must configure the meal reservation system such that students can reserve their meals at least one week in advance.

**4-6-** The minimum time required to reserve a meal is 72 hours, and the minimum time to cancel a reserved meal is 48 hours prior to the respective mealtime. This timeline may vary based on conditions and decisions made by the Student Nutrition Council.

**4-7-** If a student has reserved a meal but forgot their smart card, they will be granted a 'Forgotten Card Ticket.' This privilege is limited to a maximum of 3 times per month, and for each instance, the student must pay half of the officially approved student ticket price.

**4-8-** In the event of reserving a meal and failing to collect it up to twice a month, students can still use the meal reservation services. However, if it happens a third time, they will be required to pay half of the full cost price of the meal for each uncollected meal.

**4-9-** The Nutrition Office is obliged to inform students about the consequences of failing to collect reserved meals.

**4-10-** If a student has not reserved a meal, they may utilize the 'Daily Sale Ticket' option.

*Note: This option is available only if there is surplus food and during the final 15 minutes of meal distribution in the dining halls, and its cost will be double the officially approved meal ticket price.*

**4-11-** Providing meals to summer semester students is permissible only in the dormitory, subject to the submission of a confirmation certificate from the Educational Vice-Chancellery of the respective University/Faculty and on the condition that financial resources are secured.

**4-12-** Providing meals on Fridays is prohibited, except during the student examination periods and the holy month of Ramadan.

*Note: The provision of meals during holidays on religious occasions (feasts, anniversaries of demise, and martyrdoms) shall remain consistent with regular operational (non-holiday) days.*

**4-13-** In the event of the closure of the University/Faculty and its affiliated educational centers on Thursdays, the three daily meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) shall be provided exclusively to dormitory-resident students.

**4-14-** The provision of meals for lunch and dinner should preferably, and at a minimum, feature a choice of two distinct menus. Furthermore, Universities/Faculties are authorized to plan and offer half-portion meals in proportion to student needs and demand.

## **Article 5 – Nutrition Standards in University/Faculty Student Dining Halls:**

**5-1-** The caloric content of the three meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) provided to full-time students must be at least 2,200 kcal and must not exceed 3,100 kcal.

**5-2-** The distribution of macronutrients must strictly comply with the following:

- 55-60% of calories from carbohydrates, preferably complex carbohydrates.
- 10-15% of calories from proteins.
- 25-30% of calories from fats, preferably monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats.

**5-3-** The Student Nutrition Office must ensure that the daily meal plan in student dining halls preferably does not exceed 11 units of bread and grains, 6 units of meat and legumes, and 6 units of oils and fats.

**5-4-** Providing at least 3 units of dairy products, 3 units of fruits, and 3 units of vegetables in the weekly student meal plan is mandatory.

**Article 6** – Compliance with all directives of the 'Supreme Council for Health and Food Security' , regulations and resolutions pertaining to student nutrition, as well as standards and indicators associated with student nutrition affairs communicated by the Ministry, is legally binding and mandatory.

**Article 7** – In the event of a student's non-compliance with the provisions of these regulations, particularly Clause 3-1, appropriate action shall be instituted in accordance with the prescribed statutory frameworks.

**Article 8** – The annual determination and official communication of the student meal ticket price to the Universities/Faculties, subject to Clause 1-12, shall be the sole responsibility of the Ministry Headquarters' Vice-Chancellery for Student and Cultural Affairs, to be executed at the commencement of each academic year.

*Note: Universities/Faculties are authorized, upon the formal approval of the Nutrition Council and exclusively for high-cost meals, to append a maximum surcharge of 20,000 Rials to the officially approved price of the student meal ticket.*

**Article 9** – Decision-making regarding any matters or contingencies not explicitly addressed in this regulation shall fall within the jurisdiction of the University Nutrition Council.

**Article 10** – Supervision over the proper implementation and enforcement of this regulation shall be the responsibility of the University/Faculty Vice-Chancellery for Student and Cultural Affairs.

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**This regulation, comprising 1 Preamble, 10 Articles, and 12 Notes, has been approved and communicated, and is legally binding from the date of communication, replacing all previous regulations.**