

Creating a  
**4 STAR Food Environment®**

Recognition Standards



Start working toward your **4 STAR designation** by following these first steps!

<b>1</b>	Provide nutrition information for calories, sodium, trans fats, saturated fats and sugars for food sold.	<b>5</b>	Offer more sodium foods lower in sodium.
<b>2</b>	Stop serving deep fried foods.	<b>6</b>	Increase the availability of whole grain bread and bread products
<b>3</b>	Ensure fruits & vegetables, nuts & seeds, lower fat milk products, water and whole grain snacks are available daily .	<b>7</b>	Reduce the portion sizes of high-calorie and sugary beverages and desserts.
<b>4</b>	Provide at least one vegetarian entree option daily.	<b>8</b>	Communicate your company's commitment to the 4 STAR Food Environment Program to all employees.

# Creating a 4 STAR Food Environment

## Recognition Standards



*Because your employees, customers and guests deserve the best*

*Standards apply to cafeteria, vending, volunteer, fundraising and franchise operations*

Recognition Levels	4 Stars	3 Stars (18-24 months )	2 Stars (12-18 months)	1 Star (First 12 months)
<b>(S) Staff Led Policies</b>				
S.1 Health Committee convened or existing committee identified to lead 4 STAR initiative.	Committee meets quarterly to track progress and re-new 4 STAR action plans	Designated staff identified to oversee 4 STAR planning and implementation	Committee prioritizes healthy eating and commits to 4 STAR initiative	Internal and external stakeholders identified; committee formed/ identified
S.2 Senior management support exists to achieve a 4 STAR Food Environment.	Maintaining a healthy food environment part of strategic planning documents.	Earmarked budget for planning and implementation of 4 STAR initiative.	Management representation on the 4 STAR committee or other health-focused committee.	Letter of support for 4 STAR initiative from Senior Management.
S.3 Complete 4 STAR Survey.	Conducted on an annual basis with results made publicly available	Follow-up survey completed with results and changes communicated	Results communicated to staff and public	Baseline survey Completed
<b>(T) Targeted, realistic improvements over time</b>				
T.1 Action plan with timelines based on results of 4 STAR baseline survey developed.	On-going implementation of 4 STAR initiative and evaluation of progress	4 STAR implementation begins	4 STAR action plan drafted and approved by senior Management	Initial 4 STAR survey completed
<b>(A) Accessibility of healthy foods and beverages</b>				
<b><i>I. Nutrition Information and Labelling</i></b>				
A.1 Nutrition information for calories, sodium, trans fats, saturated fats and sugars is available for foods and beverages at point-of-purchase for all items without a Nutrition Facts Label (NFT).	100% of items	Entrees & Soups Baked goods & Desserts	Entrees and Soups	Ingredient lists and produce specifications obtained for in-sourced food items
A.2 Ingredient list for all products is available upon request.	100% of items	Entrees & Soups Baked goods & Desserts	Entrees and Soups	Entrees

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<b>II. Food and Beverages Sold and Served by Category</b>				
<b>1. Fried Foods -NOT RECOMMENDED</b>				
A.3 Use non-hydrogenated and unsaturated fats or oils for light frying (e.g., canola, olive soybean or peanut oils).	100%	100%	Entrees	Vendor contracts renegotiated
A.5 Deep fryers/deep fried foods removed, including any pre-fried frozen foods (e.g. French fries, potato wedges, battered foods), and replaced with healthier preparation methods including Baking, broiling, grilling, barbecuing, steaming, roasting or sautéing.	100% replaced	75% replaced	50% replaced Process in place to remove fryers	Vendor contracts renegotiated
<b>2. Processed Meats—NOT RECOMMENDED</b>				
A.6 Reduce and ultimately remove. Replace with sliced fresh meats and poultry.	100% replaced	75% replaced	50% replaced	Vendor contracts renegotiated, healthier foods identified
<b>3. Confectionary - NOT RECOMMENDED</b>				
A.7 Candy, chocolate, chips, snacks coated with candy, chocolate, sugars and/or yogurt are removed. Can be replaced by fruit, lower fat milk products, nuts and seeds and whole grain products.	100% replaced	75% replaced	50% replaced	Vendor contracts Renegotiated, healthier foods identified
<b>4. Baked Goods</b>				
A.8 Croissants, Danishes, cakes, doughnuts, pies, turnovers and pastries are replaced by baked products (e.g., fruit crisps, muffins, energy bars, etc.,) with: 1. Whole grain listed as the first ingredient (in ingredient list) 2. Saturated fat: ≤ 2g and trans fat 0g (in nutrition label per serving size) 3. Sodium: ≤ 120mg (in nutrition label per serving size ) 4. Fibre: ≥ 2g and Sugars ≤ 10 g; (in nutrition label per serving size)	100% replaced	75% replaced	50% replaced	Vendor contracts Renegotiated, healthier foods identified
<b>5. Fruits and Vegetables</b>				
A.9 At least one leafy green salad option is included with every entrée with no cost to substitute.	100% of entrees	75% of entrees	50% of entrees	Vendor contracts renegotiated healthier foods identified
A.10 Salads served at noon and supper meals are fresh vegetables (not potato, rice, processed meat or pasta salads).	75%	75%	50%	25%

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A.11 A minimum of three different fresh fruit choices are available at all meals and snacks.	3 or more choices	3 choices	2 choices	Healthier foods identified
A.12 Any canned fruit (if used/offered) is packed in water or its own juice with no added sugars. Frozen fruit should be 100% fruit with no added sugars.	100%	75%	50%	Healthier foods identified
<b>6. Milk Products and Alternatives</b>				
A.13 Cheeses served or used in cooking contain $\leq 20\%$ M.F. , $\leq 360$ mg sodium and $\geq 15\%$ DV of calcium per serving size.	100%	75%	50%	Healthier options identified
A.14 Fluid milk or fortified soy alternative is served at all meals and snacks daily.	100%	75%	50%	Healthier options identified
A.15 All milk used in cooking is 2% milk fat or less.	100%	75%	50%	Vendor contracts renegotiated
A.16 All yogurts/Kefir served or used in cooking contain $\leq 2\%$ M.F. and contain no more than 10 g of sugars per 175 ml (3/4 cup) serving.	100%	75%	50%	Healthier options identified
A.17 Creamers for hot beverages are 5% M.F. or less.	100%	75%	50%	Vendor contracts renegotiated
A.18 Portion size of all chocolate milk offerings is reduced to 250 mL or less .	100%	75%	50%	Vendor contracts renegotiated
<b>7. Entrees/Main Dishes</b>				
A.19 Entrees /main dishes served contain at least two servings of vegetable and/or fruit.	100%	75%	50%	Healthier options identified
A.20 Entrees /main dishes offer whole grain/whole wheat as the first option when using a bread or wrap.	100%	75%	50%	Healthier options identified
A.21 At least 1 vegetarian option, including a meat alternative, available for all meals.	1 or more option	1 option	1 option	Healthier options identified
A.22 Non-battered fish and seafood options available for meals.	3 or more days a week	3 days week	At least 2 days a week	Healthier options identified
<b>8. Soups</b>				
A.23 Soups offered contain $\leq 360$ mg of sodium, per 250 mL serving and $\leq 3$ g of fat	100%	75%	50%	Vendor contracts renegotiated Healthier options identified
A.24 Cream soups should be made from milk that is 2% M.F. or less and/or no more than 3 g of total fat per 250 mL serving	100%	75%	50%	Vendor contracts renegotiated

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<b>8. Grain Products</b>				
A.25 Whole grain or whole wheat products are default. White bread products are available on request only.	100%	100%	100%	100%
A.26 Pre-made sandwiches are on whole grain/wheat bread products .	100%	100%	100%	100%
A.27 Pizza crusts contain at least 50% whole grain/wheat.	100%	75%	50%	Vendor contracts renegotiated
A.28 Breakfast cereals have a whole grain/wheat listed as the first ingredient and contain <120 mg of sodium, ≥ 2g of fibre and <10 g of sugars per referenced serving size .	100%	75%	50%	Vendor contracts renegotiated
<b>9. Condiments, gravies and sauces</b>				
A.29 No butter or mayonnaise on sandwiches. Available on request only.	100%	100%	100%	100%
A.30 Oils and margarines used in food preparation are non-hydrogenated.	100%	100%	100%	Vendor contracts renegotiated
A.31 Serve salad dressings, spreads and condiments on the side.	100%	100%	100%	Vendor contracts renegotiated
A.32 At least one daily salad dressing is made with oil, vinegar, lemon and/or herbs & spices , without added salt, is available daily.	100%	100%	100%	Healthier choice identified
A.33 Salt packets/shakers are available on request only and are not put on table or trays.	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>10. Meats and Alternatives</b>				
A.34 Servings of fresh and/or frozen meat or meat alternatives (fish, poultry) contain ≤ 5g of fat and ≤ 120 mg of sodium per referenced serving size.	100%	75%	50%	Vendor contracts renegotiated
<b>11. Beverages</b>				
A.35 Bottled water, fat-free (skim), low-fat (1%) milk and fortified milk alternatives (soy, almond, etc.), low sodium 100% vegetable juice, plain coffee and tea are available daily.	100% of all beverage choices	75% of all beverage choices	50% of all beverage choices	Vendor contracts renegotiated
A.36 Fruit juices made from 100% fruit juice do not exceed 250 ml.	100% of all beverage choices	75% of all beverage choices	50% of all beverage choices	Vendor contracts renegotiated
A.37 Tap water is available at no cost where food is provided (e.g. drinking fountains) and is readily accessible to all employees.	100%	100%	100%	100%
A.38 Sugar sweetened and/or carbonated juices, waters and pop, flavored water and specialty coffees and teas that contain added sugars and fats are removed.	100%	75%	50%	Vendor contracts renegotiated

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<b>12. Trans fat</b>				
A.40 All food and beverage products contain no artificial (added) trans fat	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>III. Pricing and Promotion</b>				
A.41 Reduced portions for entrees are available and priced appropriately (i.e. relative to the portion).	100%	100%	100%	Vendor contracts renegotiated
A.42 Healthier items are priced competitively or discounted, if possible.	Daily discounts for healthier food/ beverage choices	Weekly discounts for healthier food/ beverage choices	Strategies in place with food service staff buy-in	Vendor contracts renegotiated
A.43 Healthy snacks are placed at prime or most visible point-of-purchase areas and at eye-level.	100%	100%	100%	100%
A.44 Any marketing or promotional tools, signage or space in all point of purchase areas (cafeterias, vending machines, snack bars, etc.) is used to promote healthier items.	100%	100%	Cafeteria and vending machines	Vending machines OR cafeteria
<b>(R) Reinforcement through education, communications and training</b>				
R.1 Educational seminars, webinars workshops, or classes are offered to employees on healthy eating. <i>Education opportunities can be provided in-person, online; on-site or off-site; in group or individual settings; through vendors, dietician counselling, on-site staff, health insurance plans or programs, community groups, or other practitioners.</i>	Offered quarterly to employees	1 or more education session offered and delivered	At least 1 education session delivered	Communication strategy in place
R.2 Make resources from the 4starfood.ca toolkit available to employees.	Resources available and actively promoted	Resources available and actively promoted	Resources available	Resources available
R.3 Inform all employees partners and stakeholders via email, newsletter or through social media of your company's commitment to 4 STAR Food Environment Initiative.	On-going updates about 4 STAR Progress	On-going updates about 4 STAR Progress	On-going updates about 4 STAR Progress	Initial communication sent out
R.4 Provide education and training for in-house food service staff on healthy eating and roll-out of the 4 STAR initiative.	Bi-Annual training offered	Training provided	Training provided	Training date set

For more information and resources to help you get started, visit

[4starfood.ca](http://4starfood.ca)