



# **OKANAGAN CHARTER**

**McMaster University Hospitality Services**





## **Land Acknowledgement**

McMaster University recognizes and acknowledges that it is located on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee nations, and within the lands protected by the "Dish With One Spoon" Wampum agreement.







## **WHAT IS THE OKANAGAN CHARTER?**

The Okanagan Charter is a new international charter for health promoting universities and colleges. It is the outcome of the 2015 International Conference on Health Promoting Universities and Colleges and signals a challenge to universities and colleges to create healthier campuses and healthier communities. People from 45 countries drafted the Charter, an indication of a global desire to confront increasingly complex issues related to the health, well-being and sustainability of people and the planet. The Okanagan Charter puts higher education at the forefront of this movement. Conference delegates committed to take the Charter back to their countries and organizations to mobilize health promotion action locally and globally.

### **Why?**

Health promoting universities and colleges transform the health and sustainability of our current and future societies, strengthen communities and contribute to the well-being of people, places and the planet. Health promoting universities and colleges infuse health into everyday operations, business practices and academic mandates. By doing so, health promoting universities and colleges enhance the success of our institutions; create campus cultures of compassion, well-being, equity and social justice; improve the health of the people who live, learn, work, play and love on our campuses; and strengthen the ecological, social and economic sustainability of our communities and wider society.



## **PURPOSE OF THE OKANAGAN CHARTER**

The *Okanagan Charter* provides institutions with a common language, principles and framework to become a 'health and wellbeing promoting campus'.

The purpose of the Charter is threefold:

1. Guide and inspire action by providing a framework that reflects the latest concepts, processes and principles relevant to the Health Promoting Universities and Colleges movement.
2. Generate dialogue and research that expands local, regional, national and international networks and accelerates action on, off and between campuses.
3. Mobilize international, cross-sector action for the integration of health in all policies and practices, thus advancing the continued development of health promoting universities and colleges.

## **TWO CALLS TO ACTION**

The Charter has two Calls to Action for higher education institutions:

1. Embed health into all aspects of campus culture, across the administration, operations and academic mandates.
2. Lead health promotion action and collaboration locally and globally.



## **OUR ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE MCMASTER COMMITMENT TO THE OKANAGAN CHARTER**

McMaster Hospitality Services recognizes that our daily actions and decisions not only impact our customers, but also the lives of millions of people around the world. As our customer base becomes increasingly aware of these broad impacts, a commitment to aligning a socially responsible business approach with the McMaster commitment to the Okanagan Charter is paramount.

Higher education is at the forefront of today's efforts to contribute to the health & well-being of our communities; to minimize impacts on the environment; and, to influence future leaders to become responsible global citizens. University food service operations are in a position filled with opportunity and challenge that goes beyond simply providing menu options, they must now provide responsible leadership and guidance to enhance social, environmental and economic stewardship.

Hospitality Services has developed a departmental social responsible approach to align with the objectives of the Okanagan Charter through a focus on nutrition, environmental sustainability and our communities. It is a journey of continuous improvement in which we will take a positive, proactive approach in educating and contributing to the advancement of people, planet and community. Demonstrating the commitments outlined in our approach will require leadership and collaboration with our service partners as well as multiple stakeholders. The scope of our approach is departmental and includes all Hospitality Service locations on campus, with extension to our satellite and catering operations.

The health & well-being of our people, our environment and our community is created within the settings of everyday life, including where we learn and where we work. It is our goal to infuse this approach into our everyday operations and business practices and in doing so, we will contribute to advancing the objectives of the Okanagan Charter thereby positively impacting human and societal health & well-being.



## Our Approach

Our approach is organized around three pillars: Nutrition, Environment and Community. Within each of these pillars we have identified our departmental commitments. Each commitment provides for either a definitive completion or progression tracking on an annual basis.

1. **Nutrition** - A balanced diet can help to increase energy levels, promote a functioning immune system, improve the ability to cope with stress, and increase concentration. Healthy eating is influenced by a variety of factors including time, availability of healthy options, allergy restrictions, and nutritional knowledge. To support the nutrition, health and wellness of our customers, we are committed to providing nutritious food choices, a variety and balance of options, education, and support for those with diverse dietary needs.

Our Nutrition Commitments:

### Provide Nutritional Information

Nutritional information is required to make healthy food choices and is an important tool to promote a balanced diet. Information such as calories, fat, cholesterol, sodium and sugar are very important for people with varying health concerns. The information can assist with following a healthy diet, and will make it easier to choose the most nutritious foods. The availability of information affects people's food choices and allows for the comparison between two foods to determine which are lowest in calories, fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium and sugar - ingredients that should be limited for good health.

We are committed to:

- o Identify nutritional information for all menu items within Hospitality Services
- o Ensure nutritional information is available through our website, our social media App and in hard copy form in all of our locations
- o Identify menu item calories on Hospitality Services menus





### Varied and Balanced Food Options

Eating a varied, well-balanced diet means eating a variety of foods from each of the five food groups daily, in the recommended amounts. Eating many different foods helps maintain a healthy and interesting diet which provides a range of different nutrients to the body. This lifestyle choice promotes good health and can help reduce the risk of disease. It is also important to choose a variety of foods from within each food group as different foods provide different types and amounts of key nutrients.

We are committed to:

- Modify our menu's to include
  - Vegetarian and vegan options
  - Allergen options
  - A varied source of plant-based and meat proteins
  - *Healthy Option* symbols
- Provide access to Canada's Food Guide through the Hospitality Services website
- Introduce healthy menu sides as default options
- Increase the number of healthy snack choices while decreasing unhealthy choices

### Food Allergy Management

A growing number of students and customers with food allergies are looking for nutritious, allergen-safe meal and snack options. Hospitality Services plays a vital role in helping those affected to safely manage their food allergies on campus through an aggressive and thorough approach to food allergies. Providing a greater understanding of allergies will allow for the provision of more nutritious foods for those with limited choices.

We are committed to:

- Develop and maintain an Allergy Risk Management (ARM) Plan
- Provide access to a Registered Dietician for consultation and menu development
- Provide allergen training to staff and management
- Communication of allergy warnings and procedures within all Hospitality Service locations
- Increase the number of allergen-free options on our menus



## Hydration

Being well-hydrated is a core component of maintaining good health, it enhances feelings of wellbeing and is key to improving quality of life. It also helps to keep your digestion flowing, regulates your metabolism and aids in the prevention of conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and low blood sugar. However, selecting the *appropriate* beverages for hydration is a major factor in health and nutrition. A major contributor to the obesity epidemic is the sugar consumed in sweetened beverages such as soda, coffee beverages, fruit drinks and sweetened teas. These beverages provide excess calories and few essential nutrients. Water and low-calorie beverages are the best options for healthy hydration and should be a part of daily nutrition.

We are committed to:

- Increase water and low-calorie beverage options
- Marketing/placement strategies to promote healthier beverages

- 2. Environment-** The decisions we make in our kitchens, dining halls and offices have an impact on the environment and we must be accordingly responsible in as many ways as possible to limit this impact. We are committed to contributing toward the University Energy Management Plan, making environmentally conscious purchases, and, sustainably managing our waste.

Our Environment Commitments:

## Energy

Historically, foodservice operations have focused on controlling food and labour costs and have applied little emphasis on energy costs. Nonetheless, commercial kitchens in campus dining environments consume up to eight times more energy than other campus building types and therefore, have the greatest opportunity to implement effective energy conservation practices.

We are committed to:

- Contribute to the Campus Energy Management Plan by improving the efficiency of our kitchen equipment through the purchasing of Energy Star rated equipment only
- Requiring our vending company partners to install Energy Star rated equipment only





### Waste

Our operations include kitchens, dining halls and offices which results in a large range of organic, and inorganic waste being generated. Minimizing waste sent to landfills can be achieved by implementing practices that incorporate reducing, reusing and recycling waste materials from all aspects of operations.

We are committed to:

- Implement initiatives to recycle through our waste streams
- Reduce the volume of food waste in our operations through kitchen production efficiency
- Implement programs to reduce use of disposable take-out and beverage containers

### Purchasing

Our operations require a wide range of products and equipment. In order to reduce our environmental footprint, we must make responsible sourcing decisions in order to reduce negative effects on the environment and human health.

We are committed to:

- Purchasing local products when possible
- Purchasing ethically sourced products when possible
- Ensure our major suppliers observe a Supplier Code of Conduct outlining Business Integrity, Responsible Business Practices, Responsible Treatment of Individuals, and the Environment

3. **Community** - Commitment to community service has been, and continues to be, a key part of McMaster University's history. Our engagement occurs at multiple stages of operations; from serving our customers to engaging, enhancing and contributing to the local community. Mobilizing our staff to support and volunteer within the McMaster and local community is essential to our social responsibility commitment.



Our Community Commitments:

#### Local

Hospitality Services will engage with our community by supporting our staff to positively engage in charitable community initiatives.

We are committed to:

- o Providing opportunities for our staff to volunteer and engage in community initiatives

#### On-Campus

Hospitality Services will engage and support students and student organizations with charitable and socially responsible initiatives.

We are committed to:

- o Providing departmental and resource support for on-campus initiatives

## **Summary**

In communicating our approach, we seek to raise awareness and influence individuals to become more responsible global citizens. We hope to influence decisions that are made in everyday life, at home and at work. Our commitment to the Okanagan Charter is part of our journey of continual improvement in which we strive to improve the health & wellness of our community and reduce our impact on the environment.

As we work to weave the objectives of the Okanagan Charter into our daily business operations, we are open to suggestions and comments to improve our approach. Any comments, feedback and/or inquiries can be directed to [hospitality@mcmaster.ca](mailto:hospitality@mcmaster.ca).

