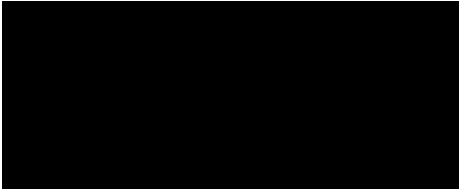


23 July 2024

C183898



Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your email of 26 June 2024 to the Department of Corrections – Ara Poutama Aotearoa, requesting information about the costs associated with prison meals. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

The current Corrections national menus were developed in consultation with a dietitian. They provide adequate amounts of all food groups and vitamins and minerals. They are basic, meet nutritional requirements and rotate every four weeks. The menus are not based on a specific intake or portion size per day, but rather on healthy eating guidelines developed by the Ministry of Health. Medical diets for dietary control or treatment for a medical condition are provided as prescribed if a medical officer recommends them. Vegetarian and vegan meals are provided if requested by the prisoner.

All meals in prison are cooked by prisoners taking part in industry training and employment in prison kitchens, under the supervision of qualified instructors. This gives prisoners skills which prepare them for employment upon release, with the chance to earn NZQA unit standards as they work.

You requested:

*can you please provide me with your budget per person for prison meals.
Please provide a cost for men and for women, if this is different.
If costs vary by prison facility, can you please provide me with the per person cost across the three largest prisons, for men and for women respectively.
Please also break out a total food cost per person per day.
Please provide me with current information.
And, for comparison, please provide the same information as of Jan 2018 or similar (I'm looking for a point of comparison).*

Corrections provides the same menu across all of our men's and women's prisons, and costs do not vary between prison facilities. While the cost per prisoner can vary through the year due to changing food prices and menu variations, the budget for the 2023/24 financial year

was \$8.21 per prisoner per day. This compares to \$5.56 for the 2017/18 financial year. The increased costs from year to year are primarily associated with an increase in food prices.

The budget for the 2024/25 financial year is still being finalised and is currently unavailable.

Please note, this figure does not include Auckland South Corrections Facility (ASCF), which managed by Serco under a Public Private Partnership.

Please cover the cover the meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner and any other food provided daily such as morning/afternoon tea.

The meals served in prison are outlined in the National Prison Menu, which is part of the Prison Operations Manual. These are publicly available on our website at the following links:

- Week 1: https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy_and_legislation/Prison-Operations-Manual/POM-Related-Links/menus/national-menu-week-1
- Week 2: https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy_and_legislation/Prison-Operations-Manual/POM-Related-Links/menus/national-menu-week-2
- Week 3: https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy_and_legislation/Prison-Operations-Manual/POM-Related-Links/menus/national-menu-week-3
- Week 4: https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy_and_legislation/Prison-Operations-Manual/POM-Related-Links/menus/national-menu-week-4

In addition to breakfast, lunch, and dinner, a muffin is supplied to each prisoner every day for supper. No morning or afternoon tea is provided to prisoners.

Separate to these meals, prisoners can also make regular purchases of additional basic items for personal use or consumption, including a range of food items. Prisoners use their own money for these purchases and are limited to spending a maximum of up to \$70 per week, or the balance of their trust account. More information about the prison canteen system is available on our website:

https://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy_and_legislation/Prison-Operations-Manual/Prisoner-finance-activities/F.05-Prisoner-accounts-and-purchases

Please note that this response may be published on Corrections' website. Typically, responses are published quarterly or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

I hope this information is helpful. I encourage you to raise any concerns about this response with Corrections. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alice Sciascia', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alice Sciascia
Deputy Chief Executive
Strategy & Corporate Services