

RESOLUTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
TO APPROVE THE INCREASE IN MEAL PLAN FEES EFFECTIVE FALL 2026

PURPOSE: The University of the Virgin Islands is proposing a 20% increase in meal plan fees effective Fall 2026 to address rising food, labor, utility, and maintenance costs and to ensure the continued quality and sustainability of its self-supporting dining services. This adjustment follows only two increases since 2011 and remains significantly more affordable than off-campus dining options. The increase will help maintain nutritious and accessible meals for all residential students.

WHEREAS, the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) is committed to providing students with nutritious, affordable, and culturally relevant dining services that support their academic and personal success;

WHEREAS, UVI’s dining operations are classified as a self-sustaining auxiliary service, requiring all operational expenses—including food, labor, utilities, equipment maintenance, and repairs—to be covered entirely by revenue generated from meal plans and food sales;

WHEREAS, rising costs in food, electricity, labor, and maintenance—as well as economic projections from the USDA—have significantly impacted UVI dining services’ ability to maintain high-quality offerings at current fee levels;

WHEREAS, the current meal plan fees were last adjusted in Academic Year 2024–2025, following a previous 13-year period without an increase, reflecting UVI’s continued commitment to affordability and cost containment;

WHEREAS, an analysis of local market food prices confirms that UVI’s dining services remain significantly more affordable than off-campus meal options, providing value to students and the University community;

WHEREAS, UVI proposes a 20% increase in meal plan fees, effective Fall 2026, to maintain quality, offset rising costs, and ensure the financial sustainability of its dining services;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the University of the Virgin Islands hereby approves the following increases to the meal plan fees, effective Fall Semester 2026:

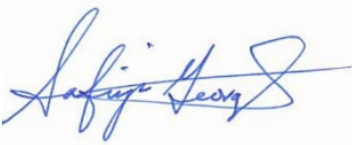
Meal Plan	Current Fee	Proposed Fee	% Increase
Plan A (20 meals/week)	\$3,690.00	\$4,428.00	20%
Plan B (14 meals/week)	\$2,590.00	\$3,108.00	20%

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the University shall engage in a transparent stakeholder communication process, including town hall meetings with students and outreach through residential life, to explain the rationale and impact of this adjustment;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this fee adjustment is essential to preserving the quality, affordability, and sustainability of UVI's dining services for current and future students.

CERTIFICATION

The Undersigned does hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and exact copy of a resolution of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of the University of the Virgin Islands adopted via unanimous written consent on the following date of June 27, 2025.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Safiya Henry", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Secretary of the Board

June 27, 2025
Date

UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PROPOSAL TO INCREASE MEAL PLAN FEES

This proposal recommends a necessary and measured adjustment to the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) meal plan fees, effective Fall 2026. Rising food, electricity, maintenance, and labor costs, along with the cafeteria's self-sustaining operational requirement, make this adjustment essential to maintaining the quality, accessibility, and sustainability of dining services on the Orville E. Kean and Albert A. Sheen campuses. The last adjustment occurred for Academic Year (AY) 2024–2025, with the previous adjustment in 2011, underscoring the University's longstanding commitment to affordability.

BACKGROUND

UVI is committed to offering its students nutritious, affordable, culturally relevant meal options. The UVI dining services also welcome guests, including commuter students, faculty, staff, and community members, who may purchase meals separately.

Café UVI serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner seven days a week. It offers a variety of options, such as hot entrées, sandwiches, grilled items, and salads. Meals include protein, multiple sides, and a beverage.

All residential students are required to participate in a meal plan.

Current Meal Plan Rates:

- **Plan A (20 meals/week):** \$3,690.00 per semester
- **Plan B (14 meals/week):** \$2,590.00 per semester

A La Carte Pricing (Effective 2026–2027):

Meal Type	Price	Description
Breakfast	\$13.00	1 Protein, 3 Sides, 1 Drink
Lunch	\$13.00 - *\$20.00	1 Protein, 3 Sides, 1 Drink
Dinner	\$13.00	1 Protein, 3 Sides, 1 Drink
Other Options (e.g., Brunch, Combos) \$13.00–\$20.00		Depending on the selection

**Depending on the protein. For example, salmon and oxtail are priced higher than most other options.*

The current meal plan pricing cannot cover the full operational costs of dining services, particularly since over the past year:

- Food costs continue to rise, according to data from the USDA Food Price Outlook

USDA, Economic Research Service (ERS) April 2025 Forecast

In 2025, overall food prices are anticipated to rise slightly faster than the historical average rate of growth. **In 2025, prices for all food are predicted to increase 3.5 percent**, with a prediction interval of 1.9 to 5.1 percent. **Food-at-home prices are predicted to increase 3.2 percent**, with a prediction interval of 0.9 to 5.7 percent. **Food-away-from-home prices are predicted to increase 3.8 percent**, with a prediction interval of 2.8 to 4.7 percent.

- Labor, utilities, and maintenance costs for dining facilities have also seen consistent growth.

Without adjusting the fees, dining services risk quality and menu variety reductions.

OPERATIONAL COST ANALYSIS

Self-Sustaining Auxiliary Status

UVI's dining services are classified as an **auxiliary operation**, meaning they must be financially self-sustaining. Therefore, dining revenues alone must cover all operational, staffing, maintenance, and utility costs.

Utilities: Electricity

Significant utility consumption includes:

- 24/7 operation of refrigeration units
- Heavy cooking equipment
- Air conditioning and ventilation systems
- Facility lighting for extended hours

With the high energy costs in the Virgin Islands, electricity represents a major fixed expense.

Maintenance and Repairs

The dining services are solely responsible for:

- Preventative equipment servicing
- Emergency repairs
- Replacement of major kitchen infrastructure

Our geographic location leads to inflated costs for parts and labor compared to mainland facilities.

Water Costs

Although general water usage is covered centrally by UVI, dining operations are responsible for:

- Grease trap maintenance
- Plumbing system repairs

Labor and Staffing Structure

Dining services staffing (OEK) Campus includes:

- **1 Full-Time Operations Manager** paid **\$46,400.00 annually**
- **24 Temporary Employees**, all hourly, with wages as follows:
 - **Lowest paid staff:** \$13.00/hour
 - **Highest paid staff:** \$18.00/hour

Staff responsibilities include food preparation, service, cleaning, inventory management, and maintenance support.

Given the cost of living in the Virgin Islands, UVI's current wage range of **\$13.00 to \$18.00/hour** is **modest**. However, the rising minimum wage pressures and inflation in the food service industry continue to push labor costs upward.

LOCAL MARKET PRICE COMPARISON

An analysis of the cost of local food vendors indicates prices ranging from \$14.00 to over \$25.00 per plate.

Category	Average Local Price
Breakfast Plate	\$14–\$18
Lunch/Dinner Combo	\$18–\$27
Meal by Weight	\$12–\$20/lb.
Sandwich Combo	\$12–\$18

Purchasing three daily meals off-campus would typically cost **\$40–\$45 per day**, far exceeding the effective daily cost of UVI meal plans.

HISTORICAL FEE ADJUSTMENTS

- **Last Meal Plan Fee Increase:** AY 2024–2025
- **Previous Increase Before That:** 2011

Thus, there was a **13-year gap** between adjustments before the increase in 2024–2025. This history demonstrates UVI's strong commitment to maintaining affordability for students.

PROPOSED FEE ADJUSTMENT

A proposed **20% increase** in meal plan fees (similar to the last increase) will allow dining services to continue meeting quality standards while remaining cost-effective for students.

Meal Plan	Current Fee	Proposed Fee	% Increase
Plan A (20 meals/week)	\$3,690.00	\$4,428.00	20%
Plan B (14 meals/week)	\$2,590.00	\$3,108.00	20%

Meal Plan A: (\$3,690) Seven (7) day meal plan with three (3) meals per day Monday through Saturday and two (2) meals on Sunday; twenty meals weekly.

Meal Plan B: (\$2,590) Seven (7) day meal plan with two (2) meals per day Monday through Sunday; fourteen meals weekly.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

To ensure transparency and community involvement, the following steps should be taken:

- Town hall meetings with students and residential life representatives
- Communication campaigns to explain the rationale and impact

Given the significant operational costs, necessary self-sustainability as an auxiliary service, industry wage trends, and the modest historical frequency of fee increases, a 20% adjustment in meal plan fees is necessary and reasonable. This action will ensure UVI continues to provide students with quality, affordable, and sustainable dining services that support their academic and personal success.