



**North  
Texas  
Food  
Bank™**

# **FIGHTING HUNGER 101**

- **How to operate a non-profit 501(c) (3) pantry or onsite feeding program including some key resources**

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**What is a Food Bank?**

A non-profit organization that procures and distributes food and grocery products to non-profit member organizations such as food pantries, onsite feeders, etc.

**What is a Food Pantry?**

A non-profit organization that distributes food for home use directly to individuals and families that meet established eligibility requirements.

**What is an Onsite Feeding or Snack program?**

A non-profit organization that prepares food to be consumed onsite by clients that meet the established eligibility requirements.

**Guidelines for Partnership**

Most Food Banks have requirements that must be met in order for your agency to successfully gain access to their product. The following is a list of guidelines for your organization to follow:

1. Must be a non-profit organization incorporated for the purpose of serving the ill, needy or children/infants. Must have written documentation from the Internal Revenue Service as a charitable organization with a current 501(c)(3) tax status and provide link to primary account holder if necessary. *The 501(c)(3) agency must be programmatically, fiscally and legally responsible for the donated product handling/distribution activities.*
2. Funds
  - a. Funds used to pay ***handling fee fees*** must come from the 501(c)(3) and all money received and disbursed in connection with the donated product handling/distribution.
  - b. A handling fee will be charged for food; one acceptable way of paying for the food is by including it in the agency budget and collecting donations.
3. Be an “established” food center. NTFB does require that all agencies applying for Partnership are active in food distribution. You need to have been distributing food for at least 6 months to qualify as “established.”

4. Be “self-supporting. Have **food sources other than** the North Texas Food Bank and able to provide your own funds and staff.
  - a. Food sources: Establish retail partners and keep outside donations of food items coming in.
  - b. Staffing: NTFB will want to know who is going to run the program, and coordinate volunteers for their time transporting and sorting food. It can easily take a couple of hours a week to sort and stack your product. (See *Job descriptions pg.14* )
5. Have rules of acceptance/participation in the program, which are applied equally regardless of race, color, religion, gender, political affiliation, age or disability in order to receive service.
6. Your organization will need to establish written guidelines:
  - a. Establish service area: zip codes, cities or specific area
  - b. Have “established” days and hours that you are open to the community & posted visible to clients
  - c. Establish guideline of service: determine how often a client can obtain service
7. All food should be provided free of charge and cannot require clients to attend religious/political meetings, to make statements of faith, or to pledge Partnership in exchange for service.
8. Must keep accurate records and screen clients annually to assure that eligibility requirements are met. All intake records must be kept locked and secured on-site for 3 years and 90 days from the initial date of service.
  - a. Client information must be current and confidential
  - b. Client must meet TEXCAP income guidelines: 185% below federal poverty level.
9. Maintain accurate feeding records: You may also want these figures available to show what you are doing in your community.
  - a. Pantries: must record unduplicated families and individuals served
  - b. Onsite & Snack Feeding programs: record number of breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks served including unduplicated individuals served.
10. Must complete and submit an online **Monthly report** to the Partner Agency Resource Team by the **5<sup>th</sup>** of every month for the preceding month.
11. Agree to **scheduled** and **unscheduled** visits to your site by NTFB Representatives.
12. Must comply with the following requirements: (see below for additional storage requirements)
  - a. Adequate refrigeration and storage area for the storage of Food Bank product
  - b. Have someone on staff that has completed the food handler’s (Pantry/Snack program) or food manager’s training (Onsite feeding programs)
  - c. Maintain an effective, on-going pest control program by a licensed professional
    - Pantry & Snack program: quarterly at a minimum
    - Onsite feeding: monthly at a minimum
  - d. Have a current Health Department Permit (only if preparing food for individuals) or State License (if a day care or residential rehabilitation center)

### **Additional Food Storage Requirements**

1. **Store food in a secure room, preventing the entry of bugs and rodents.** Check the walls, ceiling, shelf connections, and around windows and doors. Seal all gaps, holes, and cracks; install a strip on the bottom of the pantry door to seal out bugs and rodents.
2. **Store all food on non-porous, easily sanitized surfaces.** Food may not be stored on bare wood, rusty metal, or shelf liner. Paint shelves with light colored, oil-based enamel paint. Re-painting may be needed once a year, depending on how much your pantry is used. The paint seals the wood or metal, and makes it easier to wipe down during weekly cleaning.

3. **Store food properly.** Do not re-package **any** products except for rice and beans. Only use plastic zip-lock bags not paper bags. Rice and beans may be kept in a tightly lidded container on the platform. The bottom shelf or platform should be 4"-6" off the floor. Food product may not be stored closer than 4" from the wall. This prevents pest from being able to hide and protects your product from moisture.
4. **Check incoming food to see that it is in good condition.** Discard bloated, heavily-dented, or rusty cans. Also discard containers that leak or do not have labels. **Expired or out-of-date baby food and formula must be discarded immediately.** Leave enough room on the shelves so that you can move product around for cleaning purposes. Use oldest product first.
5. **Store non-food items separately from food.** Never store non-food items or cleaning products above or mingled with food products. Some common non-food items are hazardous.
6. **Keep pantry clean.** All food storage areas should be checked and cleaned every time the pantry is used. Post specific cleaning tasks that are to be completed at the end of every shift. Floors and shelving can be sanitized with a solution of one teaspoon of bleach combined with a quart of water. Wipe out refrigerators/freezers as soon as spills occur.
7. **Store non-perishables at safe temperatures.** Food should be protected from extreme heat and humidity. Proper ventilation is between 75° and 80° Fahrenheit, which is the ideal range for non-perishable products.
8. **Store perishables at safe temperatures.** Keep temperature gauges in all refrigeration equipment. Using TDHS temperature chart, record the date and temperature of each unit once every other day, late Friday and early Monday, if there are no operations on the weekend. Safe temperatures in a refrigerator range from 34° to 40° Fahrenheit, in a freezer 0° Fahrenheit or less.
9. **All grain products must be refrigerated from May through September to deter contamination by pest invasion.** Grain products such as flour or corn meal should be kept refrigerated during warmer months to deter the invasion of pests.
10. **Food and other products from NTFB are for the clients of the approved program only.** The pantry, food storage area, refrigerators, and freezers containing product from NTFB are to be kept locked and separated from all other agencies and programs.

### **How to Organize a Successful Feeding Program:**

#### **1. IDENTIFY UNMET COMMUNITY NEEDS**

- **Take a look at your community and answer these questions:**
  - Are there food pantries operating already?
  - What services are they providing?
  - What are their hours of operation?
  - Do they have specific geographic boundaries?
  - How much food do they give to a family requesting help?
  - How many times in a month, quarter, year will they serve the same family?

Have they ever had to close their doors because they ran out of food?  
Does the pantry staff or volunteers know of unmet needs in your community?

- ***Who would you serve?***

- Children
- Families
- Senior Adults on limited fixed incomes
- Single Parents
- Unemployed
- Widows
- Working poor
- People experiencing a crisis

- ***Where do I get the food?***

1. A local food drive: hand out flyers in your community asking for donations. Ask churches, clubs, organization, or places of employment to sponsor food drives for your center
2. Purchase food from your local grocery stores and food distribution centers
3. Partner with your local Food Bank
4. Retail partners: ask store managers for donations and or to set up a donation box in store.

- ***Things to look for:***

- Are food pantries in your community generally open at the same time? For instance, do all the pantries have hours Monday through Friday and close at or before 5:00? If that is the case, what happens to people who may need food but work the same hours the pantries are open? What about people who may need food on the weekends?
- If the pantry restricts the number of times they will serve the same family, what happens when that family needs food but have exhausted the number of times they can get help from that pantry?
- Are the pantries you visited unable to meet increasing requests for food?
- If you have identified an unmet need, move forward! However, you may be able to impact hunger in your community by joining forces with an existing pantry and helping them with volunteer workers, food drives and consistent financial support. Consider your options and what it is you really want to do.

## **2. THE STEERING COMMITTEE**

Though one person's energy and commitment usually gets the ball rolling, community efforts require broad-based community involvement and support. Not only is there a great deal of work to be done, but there are also a great number of decisions to be made. Involving several churches and/or civic clubs in sponsoring one pantry has the added advantage of greater cost effectiveness.

Including representatives from various public and private social service agencies will link your pantry with other members of the assistance network. Think, too, of the kinds of expertise the pantry may need to draw on and try to include people who will bring that knowledge or experience.

The basic functions of a steering committee are planning/policy-making and identifying/securing resources. Sometimes those tasks are best accomplished by dividing into smaller working groups. Among other things, the steering committee will need to:

1. Conduct a needs assessment to determine who is hungry
2. Recruit volunteers
3. Raise seed monies
4. Spread the word
5. Set policies and operating procedures
6. Determine the hours of operation
7. Draft a budget
8. Decide whether the pantry will operate under the sponsorship of a church or existing agency or whether it should incorporate and seek its own 501(c) (3) non-profit status.
9. Establish a Board of Directors
10. Create a mission statement and update regularly to meet the current needs: A agency must have a written, clearly defined mission statement. The statement should explain your intentions and it should support the need for a food program in your community.

### **3. CREATING A BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board of Directors - Develop a Board of Directors that includes volunteers from public and private agencies who are willing to commit time and ideas to planning, policy-making and fundraising for the new food pantry.

Creating a Board of Directors is an important task for a new non-profit organization. You will no doubt be tempted to place friends and family on your board. Though there is nothing wrong with that in a private organization, you will want to consider branching out past your inner circle to bring people with expertise who are willing to challenge you. By achieving the right mix of individuals on your board, your organization can grow exponentially. Active boards engage in oversight of the organization to ensure it is operating ethically and performing tasks for the right reasons.

#### **1. Composition of the Board:**

- a. The Chairman of the Board is responsible for overseeing board meetings and is closely involved with the management of the organization. This person can be someone independent of the CEO or Executive Director.
- b. The Vice-Chair is responsible for the Chairman's duties when the Chairman is not present.
- c. The Treasurer is responsible for board finances and overseeing the organization's finances.
- d. The Secretary keeps minutes of board meetings and the board calendar.
- e. Board Members attend meetings and perform tasks assigned by the board.

#### **2. Purpose of the Board of Directors**

- a. To select and appoint an Executive Director of the emergency food program.
- b. To account to the public for the organizations finances, products, and services.
- c. To protect donor values.
- d. To assist in creating a mission, vision and long term goals for the organization.

#### **3. Setting up your Board of Directors**

- a. Decide how many members you want on your Board of Directors.

- b. Decide if you are going to be the Chairperson or find a different Chair.
- c. Determine how much money (if any) you will pay a member of your Board.
- d. Contact potential candidates and interview them to gauge their interest and the value they will bring to your organization.
- e. Set the structure and dates of your meetings.

#### **4. IDENTIFY COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

Starting and maintaining a dependable source of emergency food in your community takes work and partnerships with churches, service organizations, businesses, schools, community foundations and even your local United Way in addition to utilizing North Texas Food Bank. Our Partner Agencies tell us that the Food Bank provides 40% to 80% of the food they distribute, so they must find 20% to 60% in other resources.

1. First, develop a simple presentation about what you want to do and why you want to do it. Show the research you've done with existing pantries to identify an unmet need.
2. When you speak to groups or send letters, be sure it is from the heart, share stories about who is hungry and what each group you are talking to can do to help.
  - a. If there is a ministerial alliance in your community, ask to speak at their next meeting to explain what you want to do to meet the needs you've identified. Be clear about what you are asking for (i.e.: can each church in the alliance adopt a month to collect food and/or money to help you?)
  - b. Locate your local Jaycees, Kiwanis, Optimist or other types of services clubs and ask to speak at a meeting, request help with volunteers or financial support.
  - c. Talk with your local schools; get the students involved by holding food drives or collecting change from the cafeteria for you.
  - d. Identify the Human Resources Directors with local businesses, talk with them about what their company can do to help – volunteers, food drives, fund drives.
  - e. If you have a community foundation, ask if they can help you with startup costs, like shelving, refrigerators, freezers, hand carts, etc.
  - f. Talk with your local United Way; they may be able to help you identify other resources or provide ongoing resources themselves.

#### **5. STARTING UP**

##### **Budget**

You will need a budget to pay for your pantry expenses. Your budget may come from a benevolence fund, donations, grants, or other sources, but you will need a regular source of money. In addition to the costs connected with getting food—whether through handling fee or purchase fees—you can count on at least some of the following expenses:

1. What will be the cost of food per purchasing period? (In most cases, food is purchased weekly)
2. How will ongoing operational & staffing costs be covered?
3. How much will the cost be to market the announcement of your program?
4. How much will it cost to purchase items: computers, internet access, refrigeration, office supplies, pest control service & etc.

##### **Location, location, location!**

Remember, some people who need services will not be able to climb steps. Also remember that you and your volunteers will have to carry food from your trucks into the pantry. Below are our storage guidelines and requirements. Take these into consideration when deciding on the location of your food pantry:

### **Structure**

- The food storage facility should be temperature controlled, with adequate ventilation. Allowable temperature variance is 45 to 85 degrees.
- The structure should be secure, with locks in good working order and, if necessary, windows with security glass or grillwork.
- All walls and floors should be washable, in good repair and have non-toxic food service approved paint or sealer applied, with no cracked, chipped, scaling, peeling or torn areas.
- Food storage areas should be separate from interviewing areas.
- A pest control program should be performed regularly. Where evidence of infestation occurs, a commercial pest control company must be engaged.

### **Dry storage**

- All surfaces should be of a non-porous, washable material, and be washed with an USDA approved disinfectant at least quarterly, and as needed during the interim.
- No product can be stored directly on the floor. If supply exceeds shelving capacity, excess can be stored on pallets, but must be 4" from all walls.
- Thermometers must be present in all dry storage areas.
- Dry food storage should be of adequate size to allow for easy stock rotation and inventory.
- All non-food products must be stored separately from food products. At a minimum, all non-food products should be stored on lower shelves and never above food products.

### **Refrigerated & frozen storage**

- Refrigerators should maintain temperatures not exceeding 45 degrees. Freezers should maintain 0 degrees.
- Thermometers must be present in all refrigerators and freezers.
- All refrigerators and freezers should be defrosted and cleaned with an USDA approved disinfectant at least quarterly, and as needed in the interim.
- Refrigerators and freezers should be large enough to allow for easy stock rotation and inventory.

### **Things to consider**

- Consider the need for a vehicle to transport food.
- Aside from office supplies, the materials most frequently used by pantries are grocery bags and small cardboard boxes.
- Visit other successful food pantries; ask someone to mentor your program in the starting up phase. Why reinvent the wheel? By asking another agency to mentor you, they can give you ideas, tips of the trade, and other wisdom.

## **6. YOUR FOOD DISTRIBUTION POLICIES**

You should develop the guidelines and policies you will use to determine if a family is eligible for your food services. You will have to decide what information or verification you will require a person to provide. You may decide that anyone who asks for food will be given food. It is up to you. For instance, you may want the person to show a picture ID or proof of residency in your area. You may want them to show proof of their family size. You may want to ask why they need help and how long they will need the groceries you give them to last.

You need to determine hours of operation and be consistent on days and times your pantry will be open to provide food services. Please consider evening or weekend hours to help low income working families.

Whatever you decide; be sure your policies and hours of operation are posted in the area where people will be going to ask for food so they know what you want from them. Also let other providers know when you will be open for business and what your service policies are, i.e.: 2-1-1 community help line, The Welfare Department, Social Security Office, Community Action Program, United Way, etc.

## **7. RECORD KEEPING**

If you intend to apply for Partnership with the North Texas Food Bank, you will have to develop a method of keeping track of whom you are serving, by name, address and family size (number of adults and children living in the home.) We will require you to file monthly statistics with us that show the total unduplicated number of families, adults and children you served in the month. We can provide you with sample copies of record forms from other pantries, just ask!

## **8. CLIENTS AND REFERRALS**

The pantry needs only to obtain basic information about the clients and their food needs for record keeping and statistical purposes. Referring agencies should be kept up to date on the pantry's procedures and hours of operations. The best way to do this is to contact the local community help line (2-1-1). In some communities, the lack of referring agencies may necessitate a pantry accepting self-referrals, walk-in clients, and/or further screening referrals from other kinds of agencies.

In that case, the pantry must develop an intake procedure and determine who will be eligible, under what circumstances, and how frequently individuals can return for food. It also becomes essential for the pantry to seek training for its volunteers in interviewing techniques, the use of intake forms and making referrals to other assistance agencies. The issue of personal safety should also be addressed in volunteer training sessions. (Because the goal of most pantries is to provide needy families with food for a short period of time, it is important that provisions be made to refer clients to other agencies for more permanent solutions to their needs.) Pantries that are dependent on volunteer staff may want to seek assistance from other agencies or churches with help in creating initial intake forms and referral work.

However it serves its clients, every pantry should keep records of whom, why and how many it serves. These figures will document the causes and extent of the local hunger problem and will be

invaluable in gathering support. Coordinating with other pantries will minimize abuse by repeat users.

### **Screening Recipient Clients**

Ask people for the following basic information:

- Name, address, phone number
- Number and ages of people in household.
- Usual source of household income.
- Unusual circumstances (i.e. broken stove or refrigerator)
- If anyone in the household is physically challenged or disabled.
- Public assistance programs from which they receive help.
- If special dietary needs are required by any family member.
- The reason they are without food resources.
- If they have been helped previously.
- When their next financial assistance arrives.
- The source of their referral to you.

### **Permanent Client Records**

Basic permanent information can be recorded on an intake form and arranged alphabetically in a file cabinet or stored on a computer software program. Although documenting your program is important, names of people and specific information about their lives and problems should be confidential and accessible only to appropriate individuals.

### **Inventory Records**

It is also important that you keep a simple inventory record so that you can keep up with monies spent in supplying your pantry as well as pounds distributed to the needy. Documenting your history will give you a foundation and guideline for future efforts.

### **How Often a Family May be Served**

Some people will put you on their list and visit as often as possible. Helping anywhere from once every month to every quarter is a good policy. It's very unlikely for a person who receives food stamps each month to need food early in the month. Try to identify why the person is in need so you can better assist them. Not all people are getting the government assistance to which they are entitled. Sometimes you may need to refer them to a government agency. Keep a list of other agencies available for referral.

### **Identification Requirements**

A driver's license or ID card is an easy way to verify name and address. If they do not have either, a utility bill will work.

## **9. CLIENT NEEDS**

Food pantries organize their shelves much the same way grocery stores do – so you can see all the product you have to choose from when packing groceries for people in need. How much food do you give?

First, during the interview process, you should have an idea of how large the family is and how long they will need the food you give them to last. In a Client Choice method, bring the person with you to select their groceries. They can tell you what their family likes and what they probably won't eat. You may be surprised at their selections. Remember, you are giving groceries according to their need and food preferences, not yours.

At the very least, be sure you provide enough food for 3 days. The food you give should provide a breakfast, lunch and dinner meal for each person in the family in addition to snacks and non-food items if available. People who don't have enough food to feed themselves and their families, probably also need non-food items like hand soap, shampoo, toothpaste, laundry supplies and paper products. Give these items in a separate bag whenever you have them available.

The kinds and amounts of food that you distribute will vary with your food supply. Make an effort to provide well-balanced meals. Some groups include an information sheet suggesting recipes and menus that could be made from certain food items. For instance, creamed soup, rice and tuna together with a can of green beans could make a nice casserole. Foods that are good sources of protein are important to have on hand. These include meat, eggs and fish (which generally are perishable), as well as dried beans, peas and lentils. You can get a protein value equivalent to that of meat by combining grain products with peas, beans and lentils. The best guideline is your own knowledge of meal planning and grocery shopping. Use your good common sense!

### **Develop a Pantry Model**

There are two primary models for a food pantry: Client Choice and Food Box Program.

Client Choice pantries allow clients to "choose" their own food during their visit. All pantries that use this model establish a system unique to the program's size, square footage, number of staff or volunteer support and the amount of food and storage in the facility. Client Choice pantries require pre-planning. Some programs use a "menu" set-up in which a written menu is given to each client and then the client checks off the products he or she desires. Others use a point system determined by family (household) size. For example, a family of 2 may receive 20 points where as a family of 5 would receive 50. Using the allotted points, individuals can decide which products they can take home. The point system would be determined by the type and amount of products in the pantry. The point system can allow your clients to move through your pantry (space allowing) and select certain items off the shelf. Each shelf would be stocked with items that are a certain number of points. For example, a can of soup may be 1 point, cereal may be 3 points, and frozen meat could be 4 points. As a result your clients will move through your pantry selecting items that they want in a similar fashion to a grocery store.

Client Choice pantries help reduce the waste of emergency food and empower your clients to make choices for themselves.

Food Box programs involve developing a nutritional menu for your clients and then prepacking boxes with at least a 3 day supply of food for families of different sizes. Pre-packed food boxes or bags are typically weighed out in advanced and distributed to eligible clients on the day of distribution. Food box programs are very common for programs that lack large amounts of space or volunteer help.

### **A typical menu can look like this:**

- Breakfast - Cereal, Toaster Pastry, Juice, Bread, Jelly, Granola Bars, Milk (powdered or fresh), Fresh Fruit
- Lunch - Soup, Peanut Butter, Crackers, Tuna, Lunch Meat, Fresh Produce, Bread
- Dinner - Spaghetti and Sauce, Stew and Rice, Tuna and Noodles, Macaroni and Cheese, Fresh or Canned Vegetables, Fruit
- Additional Items - Coffee, Tea, Snacks, Beverages, Fresh Fruit and Vegetables, Margarine, Condiments, Spices, Sugar, Flour, Treats, Soap and Paper Products and any other odds and ends you may have.

*\*Most importantly, be sure to check expiration dates and condition of the food – if you wouldn't serve it to your family, don't expect anyone else to either.*

### **Selecting Food for the Pantry**

Malnutrition and hunger go hand in hand. Encourage the collection of wholesome foods as opposed to highly processed foods. Also encourage the collection of foods low in sugar or salt and high in nutrients or vitamins. The following suggestions for stocking a food pantry may be useful as a guide for preparing emergency food boxes. Most pantries post this type of information for the benefit of their volunteers. Packaging sizes and styles should be specific to the client population. Would you need to stock pop-top or tab-top cans? Are most clients' single elderly persons, families, or transients with no cooking facilities? Consider, too, that some non-food items are necessary but expensive to your clients.

### **Size and composition of family**

Family size will determine the amount of food given to each family. To reach the goal of providing 4 days' worth of food per family, you will need to know the total weight of the items given. This can be done by simply placing the box of items on a scale. According to Feeding America, the average weight of a meal weighs 1.2 pounds. In order to provide 4 days' worth of food you would use the following equation:

$$3 \text{ meals per day} \times 1.2 \text{ pounds per meal} \times 4 \text{ days} = 14.4 \text{ pounds distributed per person}$$

### **Special dietary needs**

Diabetics should not have sugar-laden food. Elderly people may need some soft foods. Infants may need formula or baby food. You may have a small percentage of clients with kosher food needs.

### **Living situation of person needing help**

Is refrigeration available? Are cooking facilities working? Is the person intellectually challenged and only capable of preparing very simple meals?

### **Logistics**

Will the person be walking, traveling by bus or by car? How much can he or she carry?

## **10. SAFETY**

### **Property Safety**

1. Have a permanent sign on the pantry door indicating exact hours and days the pantry will give out food.

2. Have a wide-angle viewer installed in the door to the pantry. Before opening the door, be sure there aren't more people than you expected.
3. Have a dead bolt and chain on the main entrance of the pantry.
4. Have all windows bolted or nailed to prevent entrance by intruders.

### **Personal Safety**

1. Have one or two other people at the pantry during indicated hours the pantry gives out food. If alone, arrange the pick-up times when someone else will be with you at the pantry.
2. Never invite referrals or "walk-ins" to accompany you into the pantry. You do not want to be in an isolated place with an unknown person.
3. When speaking on the phone to those needing help, be cautious about telling them you are alone, or when you will be leaving the pantry. Give no indication of your routine arrival and departure times, or information about your home address, phone number, etc.
4. Call the police at the slightest infringement of your rights as a person. Give the police accurate information as to what is happening so that they may respond rapidly. This is another good reason to work in pairs.
5. Whether you are at work or at home always let someone know where you are going. Even if you live alone, leave a note, so that in case of an emergency, someone will know where to find you.
6. No, matter how nice or innocent a person may appear to be, never take any chances with your personal safety!

### **11. FOOD CANNOT BE SOLD**

The USDA prohibits the sale of food to food pantry recipients.

- You may not charge, solicit dues, fees or donations from recipients of food.
- You can ask your community for donations through a mail appeal or other drives.

### **12. COMMITMENT**

If you haven't realized by now that running a food pantry and offering food services to people in need is a big job, think about the responsibility it carries:

- Food Distribution – Although your organization is protected by the Good Faith Donor Act, it is still your responsibility to ensure that the food you distribute meets all food safety guidelines.
- Liability – If someone is injured on your property while there to ask for help, you are liable. That is why it is critical for you to be sure your location is easily accessible and free from hazards.
- Dependability – People will come to depend on your services, so be consistent in what you offer and how often. Food pantries are, more often than not, the first coping strategy people turn to after they have exhausted help from family and friends.
- Resources – Be sure you have lined up enough help both in volunteers and food or money to keep you open. It does more harm than good to open for a short time, and then close because it is too much work. Please be sure you are committed in mind, spirit and body to doing this kind of work. There are many rewards, many miracles, many tears, and many smiles.

### **13. FUNDS**

Even an all-volunteer pantry housed in a church will have a few bills to pay. Food is expensive, and neither telephone nor utility companies have been known to donate their services to anyone. Many

other businesses will donate their services however, and many pantries never have to buy office supplies and equipment or pay for printing. The key to both raising money and getting donated services is simple: ASK! Talk up your program. Prepare a brief presentation that describes the people involved with the program (steering committee members, volunteers and clients).

- Enthusiasm is infectious; tell people about the pantry and ask for their help. Today's "no" could be tomorrow's "yes", so don't give up.
- Special events can be good money-raisers as long as they don't take more in the planning, staffing and staging than they add to the cash box.
- Pantries have made money holding bake sales, auctions, potluck dinners and much more.
- As ongoing sources of support, however, churches have no equal. A \$6,000 annual budget breaks down to \$500 per month. Five churches taking monthly collections of \$100 each could support a pantry.

#### **14. COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

Public relations might best be described as an organized and systematic way of keeping a community informed. Before people will volunteer or give money to any program, they have to know about it. Here are a few tips:

- Use statistics and anecdotes to bring the problem of hunger to life. Print brochures. Provide supporting churches and civic clubs with brief updates for their Sunday bulletins and/or newsletters.
- Cultivate the local media. Send regular public service announcements to the radio stations and local newspapers or when a special activity is planned.
- Start a mailing list of the names of supporters, volunteers, donors and contacts.
- Publish (type and copy) a monthly newsletter - nothing fancy or lengthy, just interesting and informative.

Unless they prefer anonymity, thank everyone publicly for anything they do. This can be done in the newsletter or in some special cases, through the local press. Take pictures and put a slide show together.

#### **15. STAFF & ROLES**

Whether a pantry hires for the position or chooses to remain a totally volunteer effort, having a coordinator is essential. (See below for specific Pantry Coordinator responsibilities)

- ✓ Someone must take responsibility for day-to-day operations, scheduling, training and supervising volunteers, acting as liaison with the community, bookkeeping, compiling monthly reports, and maintaining inventory control.
- ✓ The coordinator should be comfortable dealing with people directly and with speaking before large groups. Organizing talents are invaluable, as are contacts within the local civic and church communities.

#### **Job Description for Pantry Coordinators**

Responsibilities:

- Strategically plan for the organizations future, including setting goals and strategies, reviewing existing programs and creating new programs to fulfill the organization’s mission
- Open and operate the Food Pantry during business hours
- Work with other volunteers to distribute food to Food Pantry Clients
- Place & pick up orders weekly at the Food Bank to stock the Food Pantry either by using the organization’s transportation, renting a vehicle or driving a loaner vehicle
- On as-needed basis conduct shopping at local stores to stock Food Pantry
- Coordinate and help with food drives to collect and distribute food items donated by the community to the Food Pantry clients
- Keep records of Food Pantry Clients
- Complete paperwork as required including but not limited to report generation and submission to Food Bank
- Gather and supervise volunteers the performance of a variety of duties
- Maintain expense logs, donation logs, budgets, and volunteer logs
- Project food needs and maintain monthly list of critical needed items for contributors
- Process client intakes, assessments, and referrals according to pantry guidelines
- Continually seek new funding sources and other methods of gathering donation or resources
- Serve as a spokesperson for assigned programs through personal contacts, educational materials, web sites, media, and the community

Requirements, Skills, and Abilities:

- Work with a team at the Food Pantry, be a team player and exhibit flexibility; ability to deal with a wide range of volunteers with little or no experience and challenging clients at times
- A strong sense of commitment and fulfilling responsibilities in a timely fashion is a must
- Ability to lift up to 35 pounds using proper technique
- Computer skills are necessary for maintaining records: Excel, Microsoft Word and basic Internet

**16. OTHER DECISIONS YOU WILL NEED TO MAKE**

1. The number of families you will help monthly: What is realistic in terms of your resources?
2. How much time do committee members have to volunteer?
3. Your referral policy:
  - a. Can you accept referrals from other hunger related groups?
  - b. How many each month?
  - c. What are other referral sources?
  - d. Will you have enough food?
4. The criteria that will be used to determine whom you serve:
5. The method of distributing food:
  - a. Will you distribute as the need occurs or have regular distribution days?
  - b. Will you deliver to everyone or only to those without transportation?
6. Your hours of operations:
  - a. Will there be certain times (for example, three mornings each week, or every afternoon) that someone in your group can be reached with requests to relay to those who distribute food?
  - b. Will you have a designated distribution day?
7. The types of food you will provide:
  - a. Will you only distribute dry and canned goods or can you include fresh and/or frozen items or non-foods?

- a. What does your facility and budget allow?
- 8. If other local organizations will be encouraged to participate in your work:
  - b. Can you benefit from more hands, more resources?
  - c. Can you establish workable channels of communication?
  - d. Can you focus on the work and not on differences?
- 9. By what means will the pantry be maintained:
  - a. Are food drives enough?
  - e. Is there an existing fund or will one be established?

## **17. THE GOOD FAITH DONOR ACT - TEXAS LAW**

On June 10, 1981 the Texas State Legislature passed legislation, commonly referred to as the Good Faith Donor Act to address liability for damages resulting from the condition of donated items. The state law reads as follows:

*A person who donates apparently wholesome food to a nonprofit organization for distribution to the needy is not subject to civil or criminal liability that arises from the condition of the food, unless an injury or death results from an act or omission of the person that constitutes gross negligence, recklessness, or intentional misconduct.*

*A nonprofit organization that distributes apparently wholesome food to the needy at no charge and that substantially complies with the applicable local, county, state and federal laws and rules regarding the storage and handling of food for distribution to the public is not subject to civil or criminal liability that arises from the condition of the food, unless an injury or death results from an act or omission of the organization that constitutes gross negligence, recklessness, or intentional misconduct.*

## **THE EMERSON GOOD SAMARITAN FOOD ACT - FEDERAL LAW**

On October 1, 1996 the Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act (Emerson Act) was enacted. The Emerson Act is a federal law that provides national standards regarding food donations so that donors have consistent liability information for interstate donations. The law addresses the liability concerns of donors who contribute food in good faith and states the following:

*To encourage the donation of food and grocery products to nonprofit organizations for distribution to needy individuals by giving the Model Good Samaritan Food Donation Act the full force and effect of law.*

*A person or gleaner shall not be subject to civil or criminal liability arising from the nature, age, packaging, or condition of apparently wholesome food or an apparently fit grocery product that the person or gleaner donates in good faith to a nonprofit organization for ultimate distribution to needy individuals, except that this paragraph shall not apply to an injury to or death of an ultimate user or recipient of the food or grocery product that results from an act or omission of the donor constituting gross negligence or intentional misconduct.*

*The term "apparently wholesome food" means food that meets all quality and labeling standards imposed by Federal, State, and local laws and regulations even though the food may not be readily marketable due to appearance, age, freshness, grade, size, surplus, or other conditions.*





**(Agency Name)**  
**Food Pantry Guidelines**

1. Each person coming to the (Agency Name) Food Pantry for the first time is required to complete an application and show proof of residency in the area served by (Agency Name). Some of the information requested on the application is applicant's name, home address, employment, income and fixed expenditures.
2. Once the application has been recorded the applicant is interviewed. The interviewer asks about personal, financial and family needs which affect their ability to provide food for their family. The interviewer assess the current need, and determines if assistance is appropriate and how often. Normally a person is eligible for assistance once a month.
3. Eligibility for assistance is based on income guidelines from the Texas Department of Human Services and the current situation.
4. (Agency Name) does not provide money to an applicant. Referrals to other agencies are made when applicable.
5. The area's serviced by the (Agency Name) are local zip codes 75040, 75041, 75042, and 75043

(Director's Name)

Director, (Agency Name) Food Pantry

(Agency Name) in accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**SUGGESTED FOODS TO STOCK IN FOOD PANTRIES:**

- Baby foods & infant formula
- Canned meats or stews
- Cereals, oats or grits
- Milk (dry or evaporated)
- Coffee & tea
- Pancake mix
- Cooking oils or solid shortening
- Pasta (macaroni, spaghetti, etc.)
- Cornmeal or cornbread mix
- Peanut butter
- Crackers
- Potatoes (fresh or instant)
- Diet foods (low in sugar or salt)
- Dried beans, peas or lentils
- Rice
- Flour, Salt & sugar
- Fruits (fresh, frozen, or canned)
- Soups (canned or dehydrated)
- Honey, syrup or jelly
- Spaghetti sauce or tomato sauce
- Juices (canned or dehydrated)
- Tuna or canned chicken
- Mayonnaise, mustard or catsup
- Vegetables (fresh, frozen, or canned)

If refrigeration or freezer space is available, you can add:

- Bread
- Fresh fruits
- Cheese
- Eggs
- Frozen juices
- Margarine
- Meats, poultry or fish

**SUGGESTED NON-FOODS TO STOCK IN FOOD PANTRIES:**

- Soap & Shampoo
- Diapers & sanitary napkins
- Toothpaste & denture cleanser
- Detergent & cleaning supplies
- Toilet paper
- Foil or film wrap

\*Have plenty of grocery bags on hand and some boxes. Bags with handles are better for people who will need to carry them for a distance.

## PREPARING EMERGENCY FOOD BOXES

According to Feeding America, the average weight of a meal weighs 1.2 pounds.

To provide the minimum goal of 3 days' worth of food, you would use the following equation:  
 $3 \text{ meals per day} \times 1.2 \text{ pounds per meal} \times 4 \text{ days} = 10.8 \text{ pounds distributed per person}$

To provide the standard goal of 4 days' worth of food, you would use the following equation:  
 $3 \text{ meals per day} \times 1.2 \text{ pounds per meal} \times 4 \text{ days} = 14.4 \text{ pounds distributed per person}$

To provide the exceptional goal of 7 days' worth of food, you would use the following equation:  
 $3 \text{ meals per day} \times 1.2 \text{ pounds per meal} \times 4 \text{ days} = 25.2 \text{ pounds distributed per person}$

The following is a suggested guideline for the amount of food to distribute from one person up to four people for a need of 3 days, using different food choices to show the variety of foods it is possible to use. Also, you should consider each family's specific needs such as baby foods, diapers, special diet foods, etc.

### ONE PERSON/TWO PEOPLE

- 1 Loaf of bread
- 1 Jar peanut butter
- 1 Jar jelly
- 1 Can tuna or chicken
- 4 Cans soup
- 1 Can pork & beans
- 4 Cans vegetables
- 1 Can stew
- 2 Cans meat or stew
- 1 Can ravioli
- 1 Can chicken & dumplings
- 1 Box macaroni & cheese
- 1 Lb. spaghetti
- 1 Box cereal
- 1 Jar spaghetti sauce
- 1 Can juice
- 4 Cans fruit
- 1 Box cereal or oats
- 1 Lb. cheese
- 1 Can evaporated milk

### THREE PEOPLE/FOUR PEOPLE

- 2 Loaves bread
- 1 Jar peanut butter
- 1 Jar jelly
- 6 Cans soup
- 6 Cans fruit
- 1 Can juice
- 2 Boxes cereal or oats
- 6 Cans vegetables
- 1 Lb. pasta or rice
- 1 Lb. pasta (macaroni or spaghetti)
- 1 Box crackers
- 1 Lb. cheese
- 1 Box crackers
- 1 Box tea
- 2 Cans pork & beans
- 1 Lb. margarine
- 1 Lb. dry milk
- 1 Can stewed tomatoes
- 1 Jar spaghetti sauce
- 4 Cans meat, chicken or stew
- 1 Box pancake mix
- 1 Bottle cooking oil
- 1 Bottle of pancake syrup
- 5 Lbs. potatoes

## **MENU SUGGESTIONS**

The USDA recommends the following guidelines for a well-balanced meal:

**MEAT OR MEAT ALTERNATE** - Two servings per day of one of the following or a combination of any of these items to give an equivalent in quantity to:

2 oz. lean meat, poultry or fish, 2 oz. cheese  
2 large eggs 8 oz., cooked dry beans or peas  
4 tablespoons peanut butter

**VEGETABLE AND/OR FRUIT** - Four servings per day of vegetables or fruits or both equal to a serving total of: 4 oz. vegetables, fruits or fruit juices.

**BREAD OR BREAD ALTERNATE** - Four servings per day of bread or bread alternate, or four servings of each of the following:

1 slice whole grain or enriched bread  
½ hamburger bun, hot dog bun or English muffin  
4 oz. cooked rice  
4 oz. cooked macaroni, spaghetti or noodles  
4 oz. breakfast cereal, oats or grits

**MILK** - Four servings per day of milk or milk alternate:

8 oz. milk  
8 oz. pudding or custard  
16 oz. cottage cheese  
8 oz. yogurt

## **BASIC SUGGESTED MENUS USING THIS GUIDELINE ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

### **BREAKFAST**

2 eggs, pancakes w/syrup, cereal w/milk  
Fruit juice, sliced fruit or  
2 slices toast w/milk

### **LUNCH**

1 can vegetable soup, 1 Apple, 1 orange  
Peanut butter sandwich, milk  
Tuna salad sandwich, crackers  
2 slices cheese

### **DINNER**

1 canned stew or spaghetti w/meat sauce, cooked beans w/rice Mixed Fruit  
Tossed salad, cooked carrots or green beans Tea or Coffee  
1 slice bread or toast

## RESOURCE PAGE

### **North Texas Food Bank**

4500 S. Cockrell Hill Rd  
Dallas, TX 75236  
214.330.1396  
[www.ntfb.org](http://www.ntfb.org)

### **Internal Revenue Service**

1100 Commerce  
Dallas, TX 75242  
214.413.6010  
[www.irs.gov/eo](http://www.irs.gov/eo)

### **Center for Nonprofit Management**

2900 Live Oak Street  
Dallas, TX 75204  
214.826.3470  
[www.cnmdallas.org](http://www.cnmdallas.org)

### **Ample Harvest**

Register for local gardeners to receive fresh produce  
[www.ampleharvest.org](http://www.ampleharvest.org)

### **Community Council of Greater Dallas (211 Help line)**

400 North St. Paul, Suite 200  
Dallas, TX 75201  
214.871.5065  
[www.ccgd.org](http://www.ccgd.org)

### **Volunteer Center of Dallas**

2800 Live Oak Street  
Dallas, Texas 75204  
214.826.6767  
[www.volunteernorthtexas.org](http://www.volunteernorthtexas.org)

### **Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services**

1200 E. Copeland Road  
Arlington, Texas 76011  
817.792.5264  
[www.tdprs.state.tx.us/default.asp](http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us/default.asp)

### **Feeding America**

35 E. Wacker Dr., #2000  
Chicago, IL 60601  
1-(800) 771-2303  
[www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org)