



# GUIDANCE FOR ALTERNATIVE DISTRIBUTION MODELS



CTFB Partner Agencies have many options for serving clients outside of their typical distribution models. This document provides guidance on steps you should take when shifting, or considering shifting, your distribution model in order to limit the spread of infection and practice social distancing. It is not possible to completely eliminate risk, but it is our duty to do our best to minimize it as much as possible. Regardless of which model you chose, please remember to advertise new distribution models to your community – share on your website, via social media, and/or by using flyers.

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If you have additional questions after reading this document, please reach out to the Agency Relations Team by emailing [agencies@centraltexasfoodbank.org](mailto:agencies@centraltexasfoodbank.org) or calling the agency hotline at (512) 684-2503.

# Drive-Thru Distribution

*The drive-thru model minimizes time on site, maximizes the number of clients served, and limits points of contact for clients, volunteers, and staff.*

1. Ahead of shifting your model, use a satellite view of your space to outline the flow of your distribution. Indicate on your map where staff and volunteers will stand, where signs will be placed, and use arrows to show the direction cars will be traveling. You should share this with staff and volunteers to ensure everyone is informed of the planned flow of the distribution. Additionally, if possible, share this with clients ahead of the distribution so they know what to expect.
2. At the entrance of your drive-thru distribution, ensure the area is well marked, telling clients where to go and what to do. You can designate volunteers or staff to be at the entrance of your drive-thru to:
  - o Explain the process to clients and ensure they have made space in their trunk for food items. You can do this by speaking directly to clients or pointing to instructional signage that shares the information clients need to know. Making signage available in English and Spanish is a good best practice to follow.
  - o Use Post-it notes, bar soap, or chalk markers on the windshield to indicate the number of households in each vehicle or a car's place in line. This is helpful for volunteers or staff to know how many bags to put in the vehicle once they reach the distribution area.
3. The intake process can occur at the start of the line or throughout. Ensure you are capturing information while maintaining social distance. Have clipboards and gloves on hand for people conducting intake. Remember there is a temporary intake sign-in sheet that you can use, and regardless of income guidelines, anyone expressing a declaration of need is eligible to receive food.
4. Try to have more than one loading zone, or use multiple lanes for loading. This can help expedite the amount of time it takes to move clients through the process.
5. On average, it takes 3 times as long to do intake as it does to load the vehicle, plan for this when assigning roles for your staff and volunteers and ensure you have the right mix of people helping where they are needed most.
6. You should always load food boxes/bags directly into the trunks of client vehicles, and ensure clients remain in their vehicle at all times, in order to maintain social distance throughout the process. If the client's trunk isn't functioning properly, doesn't have room for food, or cannot be opened without a key instruct staff/volunteers to place the product on the hood of the car and step away while the client retrieves the product to put inside their vehicle.

## Other Considerations

- Operating a drive-thru model is best for partners with ample open space who are trying to serve a large number of households in a short amount of time.
- When promoting your drive-thru distribution request that participants only bring one member per household to pick up food in order to reduce the overall number of people at your distribution.

- You may want to coordinate with local authorities to manage traffic and safety, especially for larger distributions or if you believe that lines will overflow onto public roads.
  - It is helpful to use sidewalk chalk, masking tape, traffic cones, or a 6 ft pole to identify the appropriate distance between volunteers/staff and client vehicles. Safety vests, stop signs, and/or traffic wands also keep your team safe and help drivers know who to look out for and when to stop and go.
  - Walkie-talkies can also be a helpful tool for communicating between drive-thru entrance, intake, and folks inside your pantry or managing inventory.
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## Curbside Pick-Up

*Similar to grocery stores, your organization can offer scheduled curbside pickup appointments for clients.*

1. Curbside is most successful if you can take appointments ahead of time, or plan to mostly communicate with clients over the phone.
2. At the entrance of your parking lot, ensure there is a designated area that is well marked, telling clients where to go and what to do. You can assign volunteers or staff to be at the entrance of your parking lot to direct traffic and/or explain the process to clients.
3. Consider using parking space numbers and signage that directs clients to stay in their vehicles and call you to let you know they have arrived for their scheduled appointment. It is a best-practice to have signage available in both English and Spanish.
4. Because the signature has been temporarily waived for TEFAP forms, the intake process can occur over the phone at the time the appointment is scheduled limiting the need for much person to person interaction when the client arrives to pick-up their food.
5. Volunteers or staff should load food boxes/bags into the trunks of client vehicles while clients remain in their vehicles, maintaining social distance throughout the process. If the client's trunk isn't functioning properly, doesn't have room for food, or cannot be opened without a key instruct staff/volunteers to place the product on the hood of the car and step away while the client retrieves the product to put inside their vehicle.

### **Other Considerations**

- This model works best if you do not have the space to implement a drive-thru model.
- This model also allows the opportunity to offer client choice and/or dietary restrictions if you can talk clients through their food package options over the phone ahead of their appointment and customize their food box or bag.

- This model requires volunteer support to take calls from the community and track appointments. The following free online tools may be helpful:
    - [www.calendly.com](http://www.calendly.com) – Free scheduling site.
    - <https://www.remind.com/> - Free txt or email system for teachers. Set up a “classroom” per time slot or per distribution. Some food banks have used this to text residents about mobile pantry stops.
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## Limiting Persons in Pantry

*This model prioritizes minimizing the number of people in your pantry space at any given time.*

1. Require that just one individual from each household line up for food to minimize the number of overall people at your distribution and reduce the chances of client interactions in line. Other family members should wait in their cars or outside in the parking lot away from others.
2. Use tape, chalk, cones, or some other visual marker to identify 6ft spaces in between clients who will be waiting in line. Use signage, in English and Spanish, to remind everyone to keep their distance in order to keep themselves and others around them safe from the spread of infection. Ensure you have a volunteer outside encouraging social distancing and tracking the number of people in and out of the building.
3. Inside your pantry, limit the number of people who can shop at a time and don't allow clients to touch any items that they aren't going to take. Designate a volunteer or staff member to clean commonly touched surfaces like door handles and counter tops frequently - preferably after each client, if possible. This is especially true if you are using shopping carts to assist clients through the pantry or to their vehicles.
4. Keep intake staff supplied with the proper personal protective equipment like gloves, facial coverings, and hand sanitizer.

### Other Considerations

- This is not an ideal model due to the challenge with practicing social distancing inside of building with an underdetermined amount of people but works best if your parking lot space is limited or you don't have enough volunteers to try and support a drive-thru or curbside model.
- Consider scheduling appointments so there is not a line and you can better control the flow of people in and out of your pantry.
- You'll need signage throughout the pantry to help clients know what their shopping options or quantity restrictions are.
- If possible, use a 'menu' to let clients shop from a distance and prepare their food package while they wait onsite or in their car rather than allowing them to walk through the pantry space themselves.

# Direct Delivery

*This model is an especially helpful for serving seniors, homebound clients, vulnerable populations, and quarantined households.*

1. To offer delivery your organization must have a written process in place that:
  - a. Explains the circumstances under which your organization will offer delivery, outlines how you will fulfill delivery and how you will ensure you will apply it fairly and consistently to all participants.
  - b. Acknowledges that food will only be distributed directly to the client or the client's proxy. (For example, you cannot leave food on a doorstep if the client isn't home or in a community room.)
2. Training: The individuals fulfilling the deliveries must have the same training required of your regular pantry staff and volunteers that interact with clients, including either the full or limited Civil Rights training.
3. Because the signature has been temporarily waived for TEFAP forms, the intake process can occur over the phone at the time the delivery is scheduled limiting the need for much person-to-person interaction when the client arrives to pick-up their food.
4. When arriving to drop-off the food package the person delivering the food should place the items on the ground before they knock on the door or ring the doorbell. They should then step back, wait for the participant to answer the door and verify that the person at the door is in fact the client before leaving.

## Other Considerations

- Delivery takes time and requires lots of staff and volunteer support depending on the scope of your delivery program. Consider scheduling multiple deliveries in the same area or at a single residential complex at a time so you can best use your resources to serve as many people as possible.
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## Other Guidance and Considerations

**Handling Walk-Ups** – even if you're advertising a drive-thru, curbside, or delivery only model it's wise to be prepared for what to do in the event a client walks-up requesting food assistance.

- Market your changed distribution model widely to discourage clients from trying to walk-up and receive food assistance.
  - Assign a specific staff member or volunteer to be 'on call' and prepared for serving walk-up clients.
  - It is a good practice to have a table that physically blocks walk-up clients from easily accessing the pantry entrance or space where volunteers are entering and exiting working with your drive-thru or curbside clients to avoid confusion and over-crowding. You can use signage, or sidewalk markings, to designate areas where clients can wait outside the pantry while staff or volunteers access food packages for walk-up clients.
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- Have walk-up food packages prepared and available if what you are offering drive-thru and curbside clients isn't a good fit for someone with limited transportation options.
- Don't hand food directly to the participant. Consider using the table mentioned above as a place to set the product and allow the client to pick it up themselves.
- It is important to have a staff member or volunteer assigned to clean and disinfect high touch places often throughout your distribution.
- Coordinate with other organizations in your area that may be specializing in serving walk-up clients, such as those experiencing homelessness, so that you have somewhere to refer people if you're unable to accommodate walk-up service.

**Social Distancing** – there are several tips available online for practicing social distancing and taking measures to limit the spread of viruses. Here are some of the ones to focus on when operating your food distribution.

- Do not allow anyone who has been sick, or has been exposed to someone who has been sick, to work or volunteer at your organization.
- Limit the number of people you allow to work or volunteer at a time or in a particular space, especially if the space is small or not very open or well ventilated.
- Require your staff and/or volunteers to wear personal protective equipment like gloves and facial coverings.
- Ensure people, including staff and volunteers, are staying 6 feet apart from one another.
- Provide opportunities to take hand-washing breaks and make hand sanitizer readily available for staff and volunteers.
- Disinfect high touch surfaces often, including before, after, and during distribution times.
- Display the CTFB Distribution Safety Practices flyer in a highly visible area for volunteers, on a sandwich board, and/or on your website.

### **General TEFAP Distribution Information**

- The TEFAP eligibility process remains the same. The only modification to the intake process is the allowance to skip the signature and ability to use the modified intake form. Intake can be done over the phone. Intake cannot be done retroactively after a participant has received TEFAP food.
- Remember that all new clients need to receive the Participant Rights & Responsibilities form at the time of intake. You can either read the form to the client, ask them to read it themselves, or make a copy available for them to take with them. A copy of the latest version of the TEFAP Participant Rights & Responsibilities form can be found on the Resource Center page of [centraltexasfoodbank.org/agencies](https://centraltexasfoodbank.org/agencies).
- Oasis & link2feed Users should collect required TEFAP eligibility data for new clients and enter this information into the client data tracking system later. It is a best practice to always use gloves when handling intake paperwork.