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Mission Statement:
“To nourish hungry people and lead the community in the fight against hunger.” The Central Texas Food Bank is at the front line of hunger relief with the help of more than 250 Partner Agencies in 21 counties across Central Texas.

Central Texas Food Bank is an affiliate of the Feeding America nationwide network of Food Banks. Feeding America secures donations from national food and grocery manufacturers, retailers, shippers, packers, growers and from government agencies and other organizations. Feeding America then moves donated food and grocery product to member food banks. The food banks distribute food and grocery items through food pantries and meal programs that serve families, children, seniors and others at risk of hunger.

Through our Feeding America affiliation, the Central Texas Food Bank is also accountable for providing the highest standards of food storage and handling, record keeping, and accurate donation tracking.

The Food Bank appreciates that our partner agencies demonstrate a commitment to serving those who are at risk of food insecurity and are additionally dedicated to adhering to all Food Bank policies and procedures explained in this policy manual.
Physical address: 6500 Metropolis Dr., Austin, TX 78744
Telephone Number: 512-282-2111
Agency Services Hotline: 512 -684-2503
Fax: 512-282-6606
Agency Services Email: agencies@centraltexasfoodbank.org
www.centraltexasfoodbank.org

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Phone Numbers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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Partner Agencies must be good stewards of the donated commodities entrusted to them from the Food Bank. Please read this section carefully to fully understand the Food Bank’s expectations of Partner Agencies.

**General Partner Agency Requirements**

- Practice the safe and proper handling of food product, which conforms to all local, state and Federal regulations
- Abide by Central Texas Food Bank & USDA policies, procedures, and record keeping requirements
- Prohibit staff and volunteers of the program from discriminating against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA
- Require that staff and volunteers of the program show respect to all clients. Inferior, degrading or otherwise disrespectful communication to clients will not be tolerated (Grievances, P.35)
- Partner Agencies must allow the Food Bank to monitor their food distributions and meals
- Partner Agencies must inform the Food Bank of any changes in contact information in a timely manner

**Annual Site Visits**

Partner Agencies will receive an annual site visit from their portfolio manager. This visit will be scheduled with you to accomplish the following:

- Conduct an on-site, required compliance monitor
- Identify challenges and opportunities of your partnership with CTFB
- Meet with you and the dedicated volunteers/staff of the agency
- Learn about the future plans of your agency – additional programs, wrap-around services, serving specific populations, changes to your organizations structure or leadership.

*Virtual annual site visits will be considered on a case by case basis. If a virtual site visit is to be conducted, a member of the Agency Services Team will be in contact with you to talk about what steps to follow.*

Central Texas Food Bank
Food Bank Food Sourcing

Feeding Texas/Feeding America

The Food Bank works with the Feeding Texas and Feeding America networks to receive donated or low cost loads of food, which typically have a cost associated to them for freight and value-added processing (VAP). These loads are typically the result of a large surplus that one food bank could not distribute alone. A large amount of produce is sourced through these networks. Items received through this channel are distributed to Partner Agencies and programs at either no cost or up to $0.19/pound handling fee.

USDA TEFAP Commodities

The Food Bank receives staple food items, such as shelf-stable milk, rice, beans, cereal, and canned goods through The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), which is a federal emergency food program administered through the USDA. Partner Agencies wishing to receive TEFAP must have a signed TEFAP Agreement on file with CTFB and abide by all program guidelines when distributing these foods. Partner Agencies operating as pantries must document client eligibility and make those documents available when monitored (See Eligibility & Application, P.23).

Distribution Priority System – USDA TEFAP Commodities

CTFB must allocate and distribute USDA Food to Priority 1 Partners. CTFB has ninety days to meet Priority 1 Partner needs before allowing access to Priority 2 Partners.

Priority 1 Partners:
Provide emergency food assistance (i.e. hunger relief agencies, soup kitchens, and like-agencies; food pantries: alternate and additional Food Banks; and shelters for families, children or battered women).

Priority 2 Partners:
Provide non-emergency, prepared meals to eligible persons (i.e. group treatment center and other group living arrangements).
Purchased Co-Op Foods

The Food Bank budgets funding for shelf-stable staple food items for Partner Agencies and programs. This money is typically used to fill the gaps on the staple items we receive through USDA-TEFAP when needed. For example, if we know we will not be receiving any canned vegetables in a given month through TEFAP, we may decide to purchase a truckload of canned vegetables. CTFB works with vendors to buy in bulk and ensure the lowest prices possible. Then, these items are made available to Partner Agencies at a Co-Op price, usually about a 10% mark-up, but still cheaper than retail.

Purchased Produce

The Food Bank purchases loads of fresh produce at discounted rates, which are distributed to Partner Agencies and programs at no cost. Often times, these loads are offered at a lower cost to us because they are imperfect, but still good to eat, such as “seconds” or loads with a small percentage of decay.

Food Rescue

The Food Bank receives donations from local grocery stores, distributors, manufacturers, farms, and other food industry companies. These donations are no longer valuable to the donor due to short dates, surplus, cosmetic damage, or other reasons, but are still good and safe for people to eat. Agency Retail Pickup (ARP) food rescue is the same concept, but with authorized Partner Agencies picking up directly from the donor and reporting pounds to the Food Bank.

Food Drives & Events

The Food Bank receives many shelf-stable, dry grocery donations through a variety of community food drives and events (ex: Souper Bowl of Caring and Stuff the Bus).

Partner Agency Food Sourcing

In order to supplement their own inventory, Partner Agencies may choose to secure food items outside of ordering from CTFB, including through donations or by participating in CTFB’s Agency Retail Pick-up program. For a comprehensive list of guidance related to the handling of this food see the ‘Food Storage and Handling’ (pg. 26) section of this manual.
Agency Retail Pick-Up

Agency Retail Pick-up (ARP) is one of the many ways the Food Bank is working to reduce food waste and ensure the families we serve have access to the fresh, healthy foods they need to thrive. This initiative saves time and resources by empowering partner agencies to pick up food donations directly from retailers near them. These pick-ups are coordinated with the food donor by CTFB Food Sourcing Team. Participation in ARP is considered a privilege, not a right, of partnership. All Partner Agencies who are ARP partners will be subject to additional monitoring, reporting, and policies & procedures for that program. Interested Partner Agencies may contact the Agency Relations department for more information.

Prepared Food Donation Guidelines

Prepared food donations should only be accepted from donors that adhere to all local and state food safety guidelines. Examples of prepared foods are items made at the donor site, such as fresh bagels, whole pizzas, and trays of catered food.

Acceptable Donations:

- Completely wrapped in approved food grade packaging.
- Proper labeling.
- Cooled quickly if previously held hot.
- At 41F or below. Fully frozen is preferred.

Unacceptable Donations:

- Previously served or put on a buffet table.
- Previously reheated items.
- Kept in the danger temperature zone for more than 2 hours.
- Not completely wrapped.
- Not in approved food grade packaging.
- Unlabeled / no ingredient statement or allergen disclaimer as required.
- Over 41F.
- Not cooled down to 41F if previously held hot.
Labels must contain the following components:

- The name and location of the Food Bank (6500 Metropolis Dr. Austin, TX 78744)
- The name and location of the donor.
- The food description.
- The date of donation.
- Allergen disclaimer statement or a list of ingredients. (Example of disclaimer: Warning! This container holds rescued food. This food may contain, have come in contact with, or have been produced in a facility which also produces milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish, wheat, soybeans, and/or sesame seeds.)

Donated Meat

Partner Agencies may not accept donated meat unless it has been processed at a state or federal certified meat processor (Ex: Hunters for the Hungry).

Handling Fees & Payments

Handling Fees

Partner Agencies pay a handling fee to help defray miscellaneous operational costs (warehouse, freight, administrative expenses). This is not a charge for food. The fee is assessed on the gross weight of products received. The Food Bank can charge a maximum of 0.19 cents/pound. The Food Bank may reduce or eliminate this fee on certain products at its discretion. The Food Bank may pass on “value-added processing” (VAP) costs related to packaging or processing certain highly desirable products.

Invoices

Partner Agencies will receive an electronic invoice each month if there is a balance due. All payments are due within 30 days of the invoice date or it will be considered past due. After 60 days, the unpaid invoice is considered delinquent. Partner Agencies may contact the Food Bank Accounts Receivable Specialist at 512-684-2103 to arrange for payments of past due invoices.
Payment Methods

Partner Agencies are encouraged to pay invoices online. Feeding America requires Partner Agencies to make product payments through an agency check or credit card. Payments are NOT accepted through personal checking accounts, personal credit cards, cash, or money orders. Partner Agencies may use agency credit cards from Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover. The Partner Agency account number and invoice number(s) must be included with payment, either by writing these numbers on the check or by enclosing a copy of the invoice. There is a $25 charge for returned checks, which will not be re-deposited. The Partner Agency must maintain good credit with the Food Bank by keeping its handling fee payments current. All Partner Agencies are given a credit limit based on size and order frequency, so keep this limit in mind when ordering and making payments.

If you prefer to pay by mail, please address payments to:
Central Texas Food Bank
c/o Partner Agency Billing
6500 Metropolis Drive
Austin, TX 78744

Please note that credit card payments can take up to 3 business days to process and post to agency accounts. Payments through PayPal or made by check take 1-2 weeks to process and post to agency accounts. If you need to request an emergency credit balance adjustment, please call our agency hotline at (512) 684-2503.

Free product / Shop-For

Partner Agencies can utilize the many free perishable items available in Agency Express and the Shop-For area in the Food Bank warehouse. These items include an assortment of fresh produce, dairy, and bread. Partner Agencies are able to take advantage of Shop-For at the Food Bank during regularly scheduled appointments, or may schedule additional appointments with CTFB Relationship Manager, anytime Monday-Friday from 3-4:30pm.

These free perishable food items offer lots of variety for your clients, as the inventory is always different depending on the donations we receive! For safety purposes, please only shop for items that are on the ground (single level). Only warehouse staff may move boxes from the cooler shelves to replenish the product that is below. We have structured our replenishing process to ensure an adequate amount of product for all partners throughout the day. If you have any questions during your pick-up, please ask a warehouse assistant for help.
Monthly Reports

All Partner Agencies are required to submit monthly reports in order to remain in good standing. Monthly reports share important service impact data and help the Food Bank plan ahead for the food sourcing needs of the network. In turn, the Food Bank provides cumulative information to the Texas Department of Agriculture, which reports consolidated statewide numbers to the United States Department of Agriculture, and Feeding America. Partner Agencies may not anticipate the number of clients that will be served. Reports submitted ahead of schedule will not be accepted. Partner Agencies that did not serve food must still report zero totals in the monthly report. Depending on the type of program, either the total number of meals or the number of households and individuals served must be provided, as follows:

- **Onsite Kitchens (OS):** On-site feeding programs (soup kitchens, residential programs, shelters, snack-only programs, etc.) must report the total number of individual meals and snacks that are served each month. If accurate numbers of meals served are recorded each day, the total of the month’s numbers should be reported. Otherwise, the number of meals served may be calculated as follows:
  - Count the number of times meal service was offered during the month.
  - Multiply that by the average number of clients participating in each meal. For example, a residential home may serve breakfast and dinner on weekdays, and breakfast, lunch and dinner on Saturdays and Sundays. In a sample month, there are 22 weekdays and 4 full weekends, or 44 weekday meals (22 days x 2 meals) and 24 weekend meals (4 Saturdays and 4 Sundays x 3 meals each day), totaling 68 times during the month that meals were served.
  - Finally, multiply that number by the average number of clients served at each meal. If an average of 11 clients is served at the Partner Agency, a total of 748 individual meals were served (68 x 11) and should be reported. Note: Snack service is considered a meal.

- **Food Pantries (PA):** Food pantries must report the total number of households that receive food each month. If a single person is served, they are considered to be a household. If a family is provided groceries more than once during the month, each visit should be counted separately. You should also include the number of individuals in the household served.
- Minimum Requirement of 25 families per month: If a Partner Agency reports less than the required minimum of 25 families per month, the Partner Agency is subject to a 3 month probation period. During this time, the Partner Agency will work with Food Bank staff to meet the minimum requirement. If the Partner Agency cannot meet the minimum after the probation period, the Food Bank reserves the right to take action in form of suspension or termination of partnership.

- Onsite Kitchens/Food Pantries (OP): Partner Agencies that are both an onsite feeding program and a food pantry are required to report both the number of meals and the number of households and individuals served.

  - Partner Agencies that participate in feeding programs such as HOPE or Fresh Food for Families will have separate program numbers and therefore should report meals or clients served by each program separately.

Monthly Report Due Dates

The Partner Agency Monthly Report is due on the 8th of each month. Agencies have until the end of the day (11:59 p.m.) on the 8th to submit their report. For example, December’s report is due on January 8th. Agencies that submit their monthly reports after the 8th will receive a reporting hold on their account (pg. 35).

The Partner Agency Monthly Report must be submitted through the online reporting form. Reports in any other form, such as emails or phone calls, will not be accepted. Contact agencies@centraltexasfoodbank.org or call the AR Hotline (512) 684-2503 if you have questions related to agency reporting.

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Civil Rights

Partner Agency staff and volunteers must not engage in discrimination against any person because of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

Sites Located at Religious Organizations

Federal civil rights laws address explicitly religious activities at religious organization sites:
1. Organizations must not engage in explicitly religious activities, including overt religious content such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization.
2. An explicitly religious activity at a site must be separated in time or location from food distribution services.
3. Organizations must not require participants or applicants to participate in explicitly religious activities to receive food assistance.

**TEFAP and Explicitly Religious Activities**

The following table provides examples to guide explicitly religious activities at TEFAP sites.

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<th>It is acceptable to . . .</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hang a cross on a wall at the TEFAP site.</td>
<td>Require participants to stand by a cross and recite a prayer prior to TEFAP distribution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place a menorah on a table at the site during the holiday season.</td>
<td>Refuse USDA Foods to participants who do not practice the Jewish faith.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display faith-based pamphlets at the front or back of the site for interested people.</td>
<td>Insert faith-based pamphlets into TEFAP bags or boxes that will be distributed to participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a religious official, such as a pastor, assist with TEFAP distribution.</td>
<td>Require or encourage participants to have a religious conversation prior to TEFAP distribution.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hold a prayer service on the second level of a church building while TEFAP distribution occurs on the lower level.</td>
<td>Hold a prayer service in the same room and at the same time as TEFAP distribution.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Invite participants or applicants to participate in a voluntary — and clearly separate — prayer before TEFAP distribution.</td>
<td>Lead participants in a prayer at the beginning of TEFAP distribution.</td>
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**Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights**

Sites located at faith-based or religious organizations must protect applicants' and participants' rights regarding participation in religious activities. (Applicants and participants are referred to here as “participants.”)

Sites must display the TEFAP Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights near the “And Justice for All” poster to inform participants of the following information:

- The site must not discriminate against participants on the basis of religion or religious belief; a refusal to hold a religious belief; or a refusal to attend or participate in a religious practice.
- The site must not require participants to attend or participate in any explicitly religious activities. Participants' participation in these activities must be purely voluntary.
- The site must separate, in time or in location, any privately funded, explicitly religious activities from activities supported with USDA direct assistance.
- If the participant objects to the religious character of the site, then the site must make reasonable efforts to make a referral to an alternative provider to which the participant
has no objection, with the understanding that the site cannot guarantee that an alternate provider will be available in every instance.

- Applicants and participants may report violations of these protections (including denials of services or benefits) to TDA at www.Squaremeals.org.

Upon the request of a participant, Partner Agencies must provide a copy of the written notice.

**Beneficiary Referral Request**

When an applicant or participant objects to the religious character of a site, the site must make reasonable efforts to refer them to an alternative site. “Reasonable efforts” depend on the situation. At a minimum, the Partner Agency must 1) attempt to identify an alternative provider and 2) determine the service that the provider offers. A referral may be made to non-USDA funded providers if necessary and if the provider has the capacity to accept the beneficiary.

The TEFAP and CSFP Beneficiary Referral Request form documents the referral efforts. Copies of the form must be easily available at each site. The Partner Agency must keep the Referral Request onsite for 3 years. Upon request, referral records must be made available to TDA and CTFB.

**Disability Accommodations**

The Food Bank requires all Partner Agencies to provide reasonable accommodations to clients with disabilities during food distributions. If distribution locations are inaccessible for individuals with disabilities, all services must still be provided (deliver to car, etc.)

**Civil Rights Complaint Log**

The Food Bank requires all Partner Agencies to maintain a Civil Rights complaint log. Staff and volunteers should be instructed to document any civil rights issues during a distribution. Maintaining a complaint log will enable your agency to recall issues or incidents should there be a complaint filed with the Food Bank.

**Civil Rights Poster**

The Food Bank requires all Partner Agencies to post the provided “Justice for All” poster in an unobstructed location visible to clients. All older versions of this poster must be removed. The current poster is green. If your organization does not have a “Justice for All” posted the Food Bank will provide one at no cost to your agency.
TEFAP Participant Rights and Responsibilities Form

TEFAP applicants and participants have rights and responsibilities that are listed in the TEFAP Participant Rights and Responsibilities form. Partner Agencies must make the form available during the application and recertification process. Partner Agencies may read the form to applicants if necessary, or applicants may read it themselves. Partner Agency must provide a copy if requested by the applicant.

Recommendation: Present a laminated copy of the TEFAP Participant Rights and Responsibilities form to each applicant and instruct them to read as part of the application process.

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

This statement must be placed in a prominent location for clients to see and further explained to the client. The Food Bank intake form includes this statement, however if your agency uses a unique intake form, this statement must be printed on the form or placed where the client can see it. The nondiscrimination statement does not need to be read in its entirety; “This institution is an equal opportunity provider” is sufficient to meet the nondiscrimination requirement.

“In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

Central Texas Food Bank
Agency Operations

All products (food or otherwise) donated to the Food Bank must be considered as having been donated under the provisions of Section 170(e)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code. The Food Bank requires Partner Agencies to follow IRS Code 170(e)(3) requirements at all times and mandates donated product is intended for the ill, needy or infants.

Partner Agencies may only distribute donated products to clients, regardless of how they receive the donation (i.e. directly from Food Bank or retail pick-up program, etc.). Partner Agencies may not distribute donated products to non-Food Bank partner agencies. It is permissible, and encouraged in order to reduce waste, for one Partner Agencies to re-distribute excess product to other Food Bank Partner Agencies (see ‘Sharing Food’ below for specific guidance on this topic). In addition, Food Bank partners must follow these guidelines:

Distribution Requirements

- All Partner Agencies with an emergency food pantry must be open twice a month for a minimum of two hours each distribution. New Partner Agencies (as of 2016) must be open once a week with a minimum of two hours each distribution.

- Partner Agency hours of operation must be made public (sign on building, website, 211, etc.)

- The following posters and notices must be displayed in an unobstructed location that is visible to clients:
  - “Justice for All” Civil Rights poster
  - Central Texas Food Bank Guidelines for Perishable & Non-Perishable Food Items poster
  - The Emergency Food Assistance Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights document (if your organization is affiliated with a religious organization.)

- Food pantries are required to determine the eligibility of any client who wishes to receive USDA TEFAP foods (See Eligibility & Application, P.23)

- Partner Agencies may not solicit or accept donations from clients during a food distribution (ie: donation jar present during distribution)
• Partner Agency distributions that are open to the public may not exclude the participation of any protected class.
  ○ Example: One day serves women but discriminates against men – sex is a protected class. One day serves seniors but discriminates against everyone under a certain age – age is a protected class
  ○ Suggestion: Provide additional assistance on certain days for elderly, or make accommodations, such as providing seating, for clients if there are long lines that make it difficult for the elderly to stand

Service Animals

The Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 437, Section 437.023 requires a food establishment to allow people with disabilities to bring their service animal into all areas of the facility where customers are normally permitted. If a person’s disability is not readily apparent, for purposes of admittance to a public facility with a service animal, a staff member or manager of the facility may inquire about:

1) Whether the service animal is required because the person has a disability
2) What type of work or task the service animal is trained to perform.

U.S. Department of Justice’s regulation implementing Title III, 28 CFR Part 36, of the ADA section 36.302(c)(6) states “A public accommodation shall not require documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal.

The person with a disability cannot be asked to remove the service animal from the premises unless: the animal is out of control and the animal’s owner does not take effective action to control it; or the animal poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others.

Public Notice

Partner Agencies must give notice to the public of distributions of USDA/TEFAP Foods. Public notices must meet the following requirements:

• Target eligible households whose members are unemployed or have low incomes and households that include elderly or disabled people
• Include the locations of sites
• Provide the days and hours of distributions
• If applicable, Partner Agencies should post a public notice to explain why a distribution is canceled.

TDA encourages Partner Agencies to inform the public of all USDA/TEFAP Food distributions through their own established and customary communication methods. Suggested
methods to advertise the availability of USDA/TEFAP Foods include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The media (TV, radio, and newspaper)
- Civic and religious organizations
- City and county governments
- Social service organizations

Additionally, Partner Agencies must provide a public phone number with an up-to-date voicemail message that notifies the public about current distribution dates, times, and any other relevant information related to their food distribution when they call. This means no personal phone numbers or general organization numbers that are not monitored or prepared to assist people seeking food assistance are allowable for this purpose.

If Partner Agencies have any changes to the phone number for the public, the Food Bank must be notified immediately so that we can provide accurate and up to date information to the community and those in need.

**Alternative Distributions**

Partner Agencies may offer alternative distributions in addition to their primary distribution. All alternative distributions must adhere to the general Partner Agency requirements to ensure compliance.

- Partner Agency should notify CTFB of any alternative distribution(s)
- Partner Agencies may distribute food bank product free of charge for the use of helping the ill, needy, or infants through alternative distribution models. An alternative distribution model could be a mobile delivery distribution that is conducted in an area other than the approved facility.
- Must adhere to safe and proper handling of product, which conforms to all local, state and Federal regulations (this includes adhering to approved means to ensure temperature control is being practiced and monitored)
- Partner Agencies must allow the food bank to monitor the alternative distribution
- Alternative distribution service totals must be added to the monthly report
- Partner Agencies participating in off-site backpack programs (not through Food Bank or Feeding America) may not use USDA TEFAP product in backpacks if adhering to regulations set forth by USDA as found in section 3 of the TEFAP Handbook:
Sharing Food

The Food Bank may permit Partner Agencies to distribute donated product obtained from, or enabled by, the Food Bank to other approved agencies if the following conditions are met:

- The product being sub-distributed is in excess to the normal distribution, needs to be distributed to maintain quality, or be distributed while it is safe for human consumption
- Product can only be sub-distributed to other Food Bank approved Partner Agencies
- Product may only be re-distributed one time
- All sub-distributions must be tracked accurately by partner agencies to facilitate trace and recall procedures
- No fees can be charged in relation to sub-distributions (e.g. VAP, handling fees, delivery, transfer, referral or any other fees paid to the sub-distributing organization)
- USDA TEFAP product can never be shared

Bartering or Selling

Bartering or selling of donated products is strictly prohibited under Section 170(e)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Operational In-House Use of Non-Food Products

The Partner Agency may use non-food items (such as toilet paper, soap, or cleaning supplies) in moderation for its operations, as long as those operations relate to the charitable mission of the Partner Agency (not entire organization or church). Orders are screened by the Food Bank for signs of abuse.

Specific in-house regulations:

- Snack or beverage items obtained from the Food Bank may be served to volunteers in moderation during meetings or trainings at the partner’s facility. Donated product may not be ordered specifically for staff and volunteer usage
- Donated product may not be used during a meeting when fundraising is being conducted
- Donated product may not be used for the purpose of fundraising either as prepared food (ex: spaghetti dinners, bake sale) or as “prizes”
- Volunteers may not be rewarded with donated product
- Partner Agencies may permit staff/volunteers to consume donated product (in moderation) for the following reasons:
- To become more familiar with the product (to be in a better position to advise clients about uses, nutrition education)
- To test the product for safe consumption (ex: Product nearing or passed code date)

Volunteer Use of Donated Products

Partner Agencies must use extreme caution to not give the perception that volunteerism is rewarded or compensated with donated product. This would appear that you are paying for volunteers with donated product which is a direct IRS violation. The Food Bank understands that some clients volunteer and some volunteers may find themselves as clients, so partners should implement internal volunteer procedures that address these situations. Best practice: If a volunteer is food insecure, receiving food assistance should be priority over volunteering. If the only available volunteers are clients, Partner Agencies must ensure the following:

- The client/volunteer receives the same items and amount as all other clients
- The client/volunteer may not receive any preferential treatment
- The client/volunteer may not “cherry pick” product
- The client/volunteer is recorded as receiving assistance
- The client/volunteer receives food assistance after all other clients

Meals for Volunteers and Staff

Site volunteers and staff (referred to here as volunteers) may eat at the site if doing so still allows distribution to all participants. For example, closing a site for volunteers to eat a meal limits distribution to participants. Volunteers may eat under both of the following conditions: Volunteers’ meals may be claimed as an allowable cost as long as the costs meet the following criteria.

- Reasonable: Reflecting the cost of an average lunch
- Adequately documented: The site must maintain records with the following information:
  1. Each volunteer’s name
  2. Hours each volunteer worked
  3. Receipts, invoices, or other documents showing the cost of feeding volunteers
  4. Each volunteer’s signature for each meal

Partner Agency Record Keeping
Partner Agencies are required to keep the following records onsite and make them available to the Food Bank, Feeding America, USDA, and TDA staff when requested:

Order Invoices

All Partner Agency invoices must be kept onsite for 3 years. These records should be made available during monitor visits and audits. All invoices are required to be reviewed for accuracy and signed by the Partner Agency at the time of order pick-up.

Pest Control Records

Food storage areas are particularly susceptible to rodent and insect infestation. A visual inspection of the Partner Agency’s facilities should be done at least monthly, with prevention and treatment recommended quarterly or as needed.

- If the Partner Agency uses a professional pest control company, copies of service reports, including chemicals used, should be made available to the Food Bank representative during monitoring and records must be kept on-site for one year.
- If the Partner Agency performs self-pest control, copies of product and chemicals used should be made available to the Food Bank representative during monitoring and records must be kept on-site for one year.
- The exterior perimeter of the storage location must be kept free of tall grass, untended shrubbery, or debris to reduce the possibility of harboring pests.
- The Food Bank reserves the right to require an agency to use a professional pest control service if deemed necessary during a monitoring visit.

Temperature Logs

All cold storage units are required to have a thermometer that is readily accessible (Cold storage units with exterior digital thermometers must also have a physical internal thermometer present). Refrigerator temperatures should be held at 40 degrees F or below, and freezer temperatures should be held at 0 degrees F or below. Three years of temperature logs should be made available to the Food Bank representative during monitoring visits. Cooler and freezer temperatures must be checked and recorded during regular business hours, and during shut-down or vacation periods:

- a minimum of every other day
- immediately after a power loss is known or suspected
- late each Friday afternoon and early each Monday morning (if operations are suspended during weekends)
Food Safety Training

Feeding America and USDA require all Partner Agencies to be trained in Food Safety and Civil Rights. A member of your agency staff must either be a certified food manager (onsite partners) or certified food-handler (pantries) from an accredited school or the local health department while adhering to all local and state food safety guidelines.

Civil Rights Training

Feeding America and USDA require all Partner Agencies to be trained in Food Safety and Civil Rights. All staff and volunteers who ever handle clients’ personal information or who regularly interact with program participants must receive Civil Rights training, which is offered for free online through the Texas Department of Agriculture.

All other volunteers must review the limited Civil Rights training document, located in the Agencies Resource Center on the website, each time they volunteer. We recommend creating a sign-in sheet for volunteers to sign and date for verification. Partner Agencies are responsible for documenting their training records, which will be requested by the Food Bank during annual inspections.

*Please note that these trainings are available in the Agencies Resource Center online and not taught by Food Bank staff.*

Health Department Inspection & Food Manager Certificate (Onsite Kitchens)

If the Partner Agency is a meal provider or repackages food, a member of the agency must hold a certified Food Manager certificate and either a city, county, or state Health Department inspection. A current copy must be provided to Food Bank for the agency’s files.

A health inspection is required regardless if the agency’s staff or clients prepare the meals. The Food Bank requires a health inspection at all onsite feeding programs regardless of particular county regulations.

Intake Forms & Sign-In Sheets

Intake forms and sign-in sheets must be kept on-site for 3 years. Electronic data tracking systems (ex: Oasis Insight) may be used to maintain client records, however the hard copy of intake forms and sign-in sheets must be kept if client electronic signatures/initials are not being collected.
Client Eligibility & Application

Identity

At the time of the initial application and when reapplying for USDA TEFAP foods annually, clients must agree to provide the following federally required information to determine eligibility: (a) name (b) address (c) number of persons in household (d) household income if distributing USDA TEFAP (e) signature

Partner Agencies may request but must not require proof of application information, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Identification
- Address
- Income

Partner Agencies must clarify the following points to applicants and participants:

1. The inability or unwillingness to provide proof of ID, Residency, or Income is not a barrier to participation.

2. Participants will receive USDA Foods without proof of ID, Residency, or Income

Clients (households) must agree to cooperate (to the extent the household is capable) to clarify or provide information needed to establish eligibility. Clients must repay the value of USDA TEFAP foods received if an error in eligibility is found because of erroneous information provided by the household. Clients must not sell or exchange USDA TEFAP food and must report changes in circumstances, such as income or household size.

Partner Agencies may collect additional data (such as employment status) for other services – for example, clothing aid or assistance with bills. The federally required information to determine USDA TEFAP eligibility must be collected before the Partner Agency requests additional data. The collection of additional data must not be a real or perceived barrier to participation in USDA TEFAP.

Citizenship

There are no citizenship requirements. Partner Agencies must not request nor require any applicant or participant to prove citizenship through any means whatsoever.

Residency
If a client does not live in your agency’s service area, the client must be referred to a different site in their service area. The Food Bank suggests providing emergency food assistance to individuals before referring them elsewhere.

**Income Guidelines / Eligibility**

In order for a recipient to receive USDA TEFAP foods, they must have an annual household income at or below 185% of federal poverty guidelines. This chart is indicated in the annual TEFAP Income Eligibility Guidelines. Partner Agencies may not impose their own eligibility criteria.

Clients who earn more than 185% of the federal poverty guidelines are asked to indicate that they are in an emergency need for food on the intake form. If the client indicates that they are in emergency need, they are able to receive USDA TEFAP food for a period from 1 to 6 months. This time frame can be decided by the intake counselor but cannot exceed 6 months per emergency case without TDA approval. If the client does not wish to indicate that they are in an emergency, the client cannot receive USDA TEFAP food. Partner Agencies should use recent invoices to decipher what food product is USDA TEFAP product. In general, ALL clients should receive USDA TEFAP food unless they do not wish to declare they are in emergency need for food.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of a Household Crisis</th>
<th>Unexpected Costs of a Household Crisis</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Unexpected</td>
<td>1. Necessary medical treatment of a household member</td>
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<td>2. Temporary</td>
<td>2. Burial expenses of a household member</td>
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<td>3. Beyond the household’s control</td>
<td>3. Uncontrolled loss of employment</td>
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<td>4. The repair or replacement, because of a household disaster, of the household’s</td>
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USDA annually publishes the TEFAP Income Eligibility Guidelines, which contains household qualifying income cut-offs for annual, monthly, and weekly income levels per number of household members. The eligibility guidelines cover the period from July 1 of one year through June 30 of the following year.
• Current income guidelines and intake forms must be utilized by Partner Agencies by July 1 of each year.

• All staff/volunteers must indicate the client’s certification period on all intake forms and sign the certifier section during this time.

To continue receiving USDA/TEFAP Foods after a certification period has ended, the household must be recertified by reapplying and meeting eligibility requirements again. A certification period begins the first month the household receives the USDA Foods, and may not exceed 12 months.

Categorical Eligibility

A household is automatically (or categorically) eligible for USDA Foods if it currently receives assistance from one of the following programs:

• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly Food Stamps
• Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
• Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
• National School Lunch Program (NSLP) free or reduced-price meals
• Non-institutional Medicaid

The Proxy

A proxy is a person designated by a participant to act for the participant as necessary throughout every process of TEFAP. For example, proxies can provide a signature on forms. Proxies may also act for the participant at application, certification, food package distribution, and recertification. A proxy must provide proof of identification prior to picking up a food package. CEs must collect at least the following information:

1. Participant’s name
2. Name of distribution site
3. Authorization including proxy name
4. Participant’s signature
5. Duration of proxy
The Partner Agency must maintain each written proxy designation and their address on file. Proxy identification must be reviewed at each application, certification, food package distribution, and recertification.

There are two ways to change a proxy:

1. In a written, signed statement
2. In person at the CE or site, where proxy changes are noted and maintained in the participant file.

The above eligibility and application policies apply to all Central Texas Food Bank food pantry partners, regardless if they distribute USDA TEFAP product or not.

Recommendation: Partner Agencies should provide clients with a proxy document for their records and to use at other distributions if necessary. This document can be a proxy card or a copy of their proxy form. Please contact your CTFB Relationship Manager for more guidance on how to operate a proxy system.

Written Procedure

Partner Agencies must maintain written procedures for the application process, referral process, and for reporting fraud, negligence, and misuse of foods. The procedures must be available for monitor and compliance reviews. The procedures must be available for monitor and compliance reviews at all levels of distribution. The Central Texas Food Bank has provided this procedure for all partners, but we suggest making your own to fully encompass your organization’s unique operations and to be best prepared for transition in the event of staff or volunteer turnover in the future.

Food Bank Record Keeping

The Food Bank is required to keep the following Partner Agency records and make them available to Feeding America, USDA, and TDA staff when requested:

1. Proof of nonprofit 501(c)(3) status
2. Proof of federal compliance audit
3. Board of Directors list
4. Signed TEFAP Agreement
5. Signed Partner Agency Agreement

Non-Profit 501(c)(3) Status

All Partner Agencies receiving donated products from the Food Bank must be federally exempt 501(c)(3) organizations, be affiliated with a 501(c)(3), or be a 501(c)(3) equivalent (churches). See IRS Publication 557 for an explanation of the different 501(c) statuses. The agency must adhere to all requirements under IRS Code 170(e)(3). All Partner Agencies must show clear, complete, and current documentation of their agency’s exemption under Section 501(c)(3) exemption of the Code or Church status. The following are examples of complete information:

- Current IRS determination letter where the address matches the address of the organization listed on the Partner Agency agreement, or
- Current group exemption letter with a listing of the local agency in the group exemption directory, a list of active local sites from the national/regional headquarters website, or a letter from the group exemption’s headquarters or regional office attesting that the local organization is covered under their group exemption, or
- Current listing of the organization on IRS website section under Exempt Organizations Selection Check (Publication 78 data) indicating they are a Public Charity (“PC”); or
- Faith Based Organization Eligibility Form that includes documentation of the organization’s ability to meet at least nine (9) of the fourteen (14) possible criteria established by the IRS to be considered a Church (i.e. “14-point criteria”), along with a letter from the faith based organization stating they have never been denied or revoked 501(c)(3) status and their program will serve the “ill, needy, infants”; or
- A letter from the CEO or Board Chair of a qualified agency indicating that it is the Agency sponsoring such program and assuming all responsibilities (fiscal and legal) for the sponsored organization. The Member will need both the sponsorship letter as well as clear, complete and current evidence of the sponsoring organization’s exemption or Church status following criteria listed above

Single Audit Act

Proof of federal compliance audits must be submitted if the Partner Agency receives an excess of 275,000 pounds from the Food Bank each fiscal year. Because USDA TEFAP and FEMA programs are federally funded, the Food Bank is required to comply with the Single Audit Act of 1984, 31 U.S.C., Section 7501 et seq., and OMB Circular No. 133 “Audits of Institutions of Higher Education and other Nonprofit Institutions.”
Board of Directors

All Partner Agencies must have a current list of directors, board members, or the equivalent. This list must contain current contact information for those listed.

TEFAP Agreement

The Emergency Food Assistance Program created this agreement to bound both contracting entity (Food Bank) and site (Partner Agency) to its terms and conditions.

Agency Agreement

This agreement serves as an annual confirmation that the Partner Agency adheres to all guidelines set in the Partner Agency Policies & Procedures manual and follows the basic qualifications for being a Partner Agency.

Food Storage & Handling

All Food Bank food storage and handling regulations must be followed to ensure client safety. It is imperative that Partner Agencies take the appropriate steps to ensure product quality and know the procedures for accepting donations from sources other than the Food Bank.

Facility Evaluation

- Outside is free of debris/contaminants
- There should be no holes or gaps in the pipe conduits, screens, floor, ceiling, or doors to allow insects or rodents access to the food
- Food must be prepared, stored, and distributed in a Food Bank approved facility. Food Bank food may never be stored or distributed at an alternate location temporarily without prior notice and approval

Dry Storage Area

- The food storage area should be locked when not supervised to prevent possible theft
- Food items must be stored at least four inches from the floor and walls and two feet from the ceiling
• Maintain a clean and dry storage area (climate controlled). The shelves should remain clean with no debris on the floor

• Garbage cans must be covered and emptied frequently to prevent unwanted pests

• Cleaning or toxic supplies must be stored lower than food items or in a separate storage area. Paper goods, diapers and feminine hygiene products should also be isolated from chemicals

• Any agency that repackages food must comply with applicable rules regarding prepared food within the county and city of the pantry. This includes the requirement for a current health department inspection and Food Manager’s Certificate.

• Please note: under no circumstances will USDA TEFAP commodities be permitted to be repackaged. The repackaging of flour and sugar is strongly discouraged due to the possibility of cross contamination

• The Partner Agency must take adequate steps to ensure that food items obtained from sources other than the Food Bank have adequate labeling and are free of serious defects that may pose a health hazard to the Partner Agency’s clients

• No severely dented/rusted cans

• Personal or volunteer food should be kept in a separate area to avoid confusion

• Baby food must be discarded after the expiration date

• The Partner Agency should rotate, label or take periodic inventory of the food items to ensure freshness. Remember, FIFO (First In First Out)

• Food items meet local & federal health standards

**Refrigerator/Freezer Areas**

• Refrigerators and freezers should either be in a locked area, or they must be lockable

• Units clean and odor free

• Items stored in walk-in unit 4 inches off floor

• There must be a thermometer in all cold storage units. Refrigerators must be kept at 40 degrees F or below, while freezers at 0 degrees F or below (Exception: Temperatures may vary for designated produce-specific cold storage)

• No sources of contamination
• Each year, USDA TEFAP flour, grain, and pasta products must be refrigerated during the months of May through September

• Personal or volunteer food should be kept in a separate area to avoid confusion

• Food must be clearly labeled with the item name, ingredients, date, and/or a food allergen statement

• The Partner Agency must take adequate steps to ensure that food items obtained from sources other than the Food Bank have adequate labeling and are free of serious defects that may pose a health hazard to the Partner Agency’s clients. All protein products must be frozen before the sell by date. Only properly refrigerated or frozen items may be accepted

• The Partner Agency should rotate, label or take periodic inventory of the food items to ensure freshness. Remember, FEFO (First In First Out)

• Food items meet local & federal health standards

• Food items obtained from another source must maintain the same health standards as product obtained from the Food Bank

Perishable Foods

Perishable foods are defined as any food that requires refrigeration or that is frozen. If a Partner Agency wishes to receive perishable foods from the Food Bank, the Partner Agency must meet the following criteria:

• The Partner Agency must have an adequate number of appropriately insulated containers to transport refrigerated or frozen products from the Food Bank or regional distribution site

• Refrigerated products must be stored at 40°F or below and 0°F or below for frozen products

• Thawed perishables must be cooked or eaten immediately after thawing and never refrozen unless cooked first

• Eggs should be stored on the bottom shelf in the refrigerator to avoid cross contamination in case of breakage
Prepared Foods

Partner Agencies must meet the following criteria when preparing and distributing food products:

- Onsite kitchens must meet all state and local health department regulations and hold all applicable licenses. The Partner Agency must provide an up-to-date copy of the most recent health inspection report to the Food Bank. The Partner Agency must immediately notify the Food Bank of any changes in its status.

- There must be a designated hand washing sink for all staff and volunteers handling food. This sink cannot be a food preparation sink and must be clearly labeled with a sign instructing staff and volunteers to wash their hands.

- Prepared foods must be cooked, reheated and held for serving at safe temperatures: 160°F or higher for cooking, 140°F for holding, and 165°F when re-heating. A probing thermometer should be used to accurately monitor the temperature of the food.

- All frozen foods must be thawed in the refrigerator at temperatures between 35 and 40°F and cannot be re-frozen unless cooked at the appropriate temperatures. Food should be placed in a pan to catch drips while thawing.

- Repackaged or opened food must be stored in rodent and insect proof containers. All non-produce food must be labeled with the name of the item and the date the package was opened or prepared.

- Any agency that repackages food must comply with applicable rules regarding prepared food within the county and city of the pantry. This includes the requirement for a current health department inspection and Food Manager Certificate. Please note: under no circumstances will USDA TEFAP be permitted to be repackaged. The repackaging of flour and sugar is strongly discouraged due to the possibility of cross contamination.

Ordering & Pick-Up Procedures

Ordering Procedures

All Partner Agencies are assigned a specific day and time for food pick-ups and/or deliveries. Appointment times remain the same until your agency requests a change in advance. If a
Partner Agency is unable to pick up at its appointed time, an agency representative must contact their CTFB Relationship Manager if you wish to reserve another pick up time.

Partner Agencies are required to routinely order food from the Food Bank. Partners with a six month ordering absence will forfeit partnership with the Food Bank. To regain access to food and other Food Bank resources, the organization will need to reapply as a new Partner Agency. The Food Bank will not notify agencies with a pre-warning; it is up to each agency to ensure compliance with this policy (refer to p.38 for termination policies).

Agency Express

Agency Express is a web-based tool sponsored by Feeding America that allows Partner Agencies to process and manage Food Bank food orders online. Agencies can search for food items, view item details, submit orders and review the status of orders through this system. Items are available on the shopping list on a first-come first-served basis. Occasionally, the quantity of an item agencies are allowed to order will be limited.

Deadlines for placing orders

The below chart refers to all Partner Agency ordering, whether the food is received via pickup at the Food Bank, pickup at a regional delivery site, or through direct delivery.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pick-up day</th>
<th>Ordering Window Opens</th>
<th>Ordering Window Closes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Wednesday 10:00 a.m. (the week prior)</td>
<td>Thursday 9:00 a.m. (the week prior)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
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SWAP (Supporting Wellness at Pantries)

Supporting Wellness at Pantries (SWAP) is a Stoplight Nutrition Ranking System that places foods into green, yellow and red categories based on nutrition guidelines. The SWAP system was designed specifically for use by food banks and food pantries who serve low-income families struggling with food insecurity. Research shows that households who go to food pantries are at high risk for chronic diseases such as type II diabetes, high blood pressure and
obesity. These diseases are largely related to the foods we eat, specifically foods high in saturated fat, sodium and added sugar. Yet these diseases are preventable.

The goal of the SWAP system is to provide a practical way to implement nutrition standards, using clear and appropriately tailored nutrition guidance for the food bank and food pantry audience. SWAP provides detailed guidelines for eight food groups with specific levels for saturated fat, sodium and sugar so they can be classified as green, yellow or red as follows:

- Green = Choose often; low in saturated fat, sodium and sugar; builds health
- Yellow = Choose sometimes; can contribute to health
- Red = Choose rarely; high in saturated fat, sodium or sugar; view as treats

To view the SWAP ranking, please click on the item detail to view the ranking in the extra info section of your shopping list.

**CTFB Pick-Up Procedures**

- Partner Agencies must sign in at the CTFB Agency Dock check-in desk prior to all order and shop-for pickups.
  - All agency staff and volunteers will need to be knowledgeable of the account name and account number
  - Food Bank staff reserve the right to contact any agency director to solicit permission on suspect representatives
- Partner Agencies may back up their vehicle to an empty dock. Only two vehicles may be backed up to the dock at a time
- Partner Agencies must adhere to all instructions given by Food Bank warehouse staff and regional drivers and treat them with respect
- Partner Agencies that are more than 20 minutes late may not be allowed to add Shop-For items to their order. Agencies more than 20 minutes late without prior notification may be asked to reschedule the pick-up day and time at the discretion of Food Bank warehouse staff
- Partner Agencies have a maximum of 30 minutes to load and Shop-For
- The Food Bank schedules two pick-up appointments every 30 minutes, so it is important that each Partner Agency loads its vehicle(s) in a timely manner
• Partner Agencies that do not arrive at the designated pick-up time without contacting the Food Bank may be subject to a $35 restocking fee. If a Partner Agency is unable to pick up at its appointed time, an agency representative must call the Agency Relations Hotline at 512-684-2503

• Agencies are permitted to order for pick up at the warehouse during the weeks not scheduled for delivery, as scheduling allows

• Partner Agencies are responsible for ensuring orders are correct. It is recommended that each case or box be checked by an agency representative as it is loaded into the vehicle. When an agency representative signs the order invoice, they accept it as correct and will pay the handling fee for all items

• Shortages on orders need to be reported to dock staff prior to leaving or no more than 24 hours after picking up the order in order to receive a product credit

• Partner Agencies are required to return all CTFB banana boxes either to regional delivery sites or to the receiving docks at the food bank

• Partner Agencies are responsible for loading orders. Only individuals loading the vehicle should be on the dock; all others should wait outside of the loading area

• The Partner Agency should provide a vehicle(s) large enough to transport orders. The agency may be charged a $35 re-stocking fee if it cannot pick up the entire order

• Food Bank personnel reserve the right to limit the amount of product leaving the Food Bank dock if the product load appears to exceed the safety limitations of the vehicles capacity

• Partner Agencies without refrigerated vehicles or coolers with ice/cold packs must utilize insulated freezer blankets for transporting perishable food to comply with safe food handling policies

• After all food is loaded, the Partner Agency representative must bring the signed copy of the invoice to the warehouse staff

• Agency staff/volunteers are required to sign out before leaving

Regional Delivery

The Food Bank provides free delivery of food orders to Partner Agencies outside the greater Austin area through regional food delivery (RFD). The procedures for pickups at a regional food delivery are as follows:
• Each Partner Agency must arrive at the designated RFD drop site on or before the scheduled time and must be knowledgeable of their account name and number. The Food Bank driver is not obligated to wait for a late arrival. Late arrivals will be served last. If the driver has to bring the order back to the Food Bank, that agency will be charged a $35 re-stocking fee.

• Children under the age of 12 are prohibited at a RFD site.

• Agency staff/volunteers should never enter the Food Bank truck. Only Food Bank staff are authorized to operate Food Bank equipment.

• It is the Partner Agency’s responsibility to provide a vehicle large enough to accommodate the order. The Agency should provide enough help to load its order in a quick and timely manner. Agencies are encouraged to help each other.

• Trash should be put in containers and boxes and pallets neatly stacked.

• Partner Agencies receiving dairy and/or frozen items must bring coolers and/or insulated freezer blankets to transport these items. Agencies will not receive these items without the appropriate insulated containers or freezer blankets.

• Partner Agencies must check orders against the ordering invoice as the order is loaded into the vehicle. Any discrepancy must be brought to the attention of the Food Bank driver at the time of delivery or reported to CTFB within 24 hours of receiving your order in order to receive a product credit.

• Pick up procedures are subject to change by the Food Bank driver. Agencies will be notified in writing before new policies take effect.

• RFD Partner Agencies are permitted to schedule an order for pick up at the Food Bank warehouse on the weeks where no delivery service is available.

  o Example: If an agency receives an order in Marble Falls on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month, the agency is able to schedule a pick up at the Food Bank on the 2nd and 4th week of the month.

Food Bank delivery drivers bring pallets of the product and unload them at a pre-determined location. Partner Agencies are responsible for breaking down the pallets and moving the product to the distribution area. The recipient Agency agrees to provide necessary training to their staff and volunteers for distribution and delivery of product.
Warehouse Procedures

Warehouse & Dock Regulations

- Sign in before picking up your order, and sign out after receiving your order
- Arrive no earlier than 20 minutes before your scheduled pick-up
- Only 2 people per Partner Agency permitted inside of the CTFB dock/warehouse area
- Smoking and chewing tobacco is prohibited
- Food and drinks are prohibited
- Electronic devices (cell phones) are prohibited
- Only individuals 18 or older are permitted
- Jumping on/off dock is prohibited. Use side ramp or stairs to get on dock
- Partner Agencies operating warehouse equipment is prohibited
- Acknowledge special notices posted in and around the warehouse
- Notify the warehouse staff of any irregularities or potentially hazardous conditions (spills, etc.)
- Warehouse hours are subject to change at the discretion of the Food Bank
- Closed-toe shoes required (no sandals or flip flops allowed)

Shop-For

- The above warehouse & dock regulations also apply to the Shop-For area.
- The Shop-for area of the food bank includes fresh produce, dairy, and bread and is limited to 30 minutes.
- Partner Agencies are able to utilize Shop-for at the Food Bank during regularly scheduled appointments, or may schedule additional appointments with the Agency Relations Team, as scheduling permits
- Shop-for items must be boxed separately by category and weighed by Food Bank warehouse staff.
• If your agency is located near Bell or Burnet County, check out the Fresh Produce Containers page of the CTFB website to gain similar access to free produce in your area.

Return Policies / Credits

Food products that carry a handling fee charged to the Partner Agency may be returned for credit if its conditions are unsafe for consumption or if it is damaged. Such condition includes excessive rust, dents or infestation. Partner Agencies may also receive a credit if product is missing from an order. Shortages or damaged product on orders need to be reported to dock staff prior to leaving or to the Agency Relations Team no more than 24 hours after picking up the order.

• To report damages or missing product on your orders, please contact agencies@centraltexasfoodbank.org or 512-684-2503. If warranted, credit will be issued on the agency’s next monthly statement.

Recommendation: Photos are very helpful for making determinations about product credits. If product is damaged or unsafe for consumption, please take a photo to include in your request for credit.

Grievances

Grievances against Partner Agencies

• The Food Bank Agency Services Department must respond to all public Partner Agency complaints

• Agency Services may notify the Partner Agency and/or board of directors about the complaint, and if action is required, will initiate investigation protocols

• Agency Services reserves the right to visit any Partner Agency unannounced to investigate complaints made by the public

• Investigation results will be documented in the Partner Agency’s file, and the Partner Agency will be notified in writing if any action needs to be taken

Grievances against the Food Bank

• Partner Agencies may submit a written grievance statement to the Director of Agency Services. The statement must include the reasons for the grievance, pertinent facts, and what the Partner Agency believes would be an acceptable solution to the problem.
• The Director of Agency Services will develop a plan of action in writing within seven working days of receiving the grievance notice

• The Partner Agency may appeal this decision to the Food Bank CEO within ten working days. The decision on appeal will be given to the Partner Agency in writing within seven working days of receiving the appeal. The Food Bank CEO’s decision is final

• A Partner Agency will not be discriminated against or suffer any reprisals by the Food Bank as a result of filing a grievance

## Holds, Suspension, Termination, & Appeal Processes

If Partner Agencies violate Food Bank policies and procedures, there are three possible actions: Account Hold, Suspension, or Termination.

### Holds

Partner Agency accounts may be placed on a “Hold” status for the following reasons:

• **Credit Hold** – Agency has exceeded the credit limit and/or has not paid bill.
• **Document Hold** – Agency has been prompted to submit documentation (Training certificates, board of directors list, 501(c)(3) / IRS documents, etc.) and is not responding to or communicating with the Agency Relations team in a timely manner.
• **Monitor Hold** – Agency is due for annual monitor and is not responding to or communicating with the Agency Relations team in a timely manner.
• **USDA Hold** – Agency has violated USDA policies and must implement a corrective action plan.
• **Report Hold** – Monthly reports must be submitted through the online reporting system on the 8th of the following month that is being reported (Example: November’s report due on December 8th).

### Suspension

The purpose of a suspension is to discontinue a Partner Agency’s Food Bank use for a specific amount of time due to a major violation. A suspended agency loses all the rights and privileges of a Partner Agency as well as its status as such.
• A Partner Agency may be suspended without first being placed on Hold for serious violations

• A suspension shall not last more than six months

• The suspension and corrective action plan must be communicated in writing to the Partner Agency

• A suspended Partner Agency may regain its Partner Agency status if the Agency Relations Manager approves and if the Agency has completed its corrective action plan

• Example of a suspension violation (but not limited to): Moving Food Bank resources to a new location without previous approval

Suspension: Excessive Monthly Report Holds

• Once an Agency has accrued 4 report holds in a calendar year, the account will automatically be suspended until the 1st of the following month. The suspension will not be removed until the 1st of the following month, even after the late report is received.

• Every late monthly report received after an Agency has accrued 4 report holds in a calendar year will automatically be suspended until the 1st of the following month. The suspension will not be removed until the 1st of the following month, even after the late report is received.

• Excessive holds in a calendar year may lead to termination

Termination

The purpose of termination is to discontinue a Partner Agency’s access to the Food Bank due to a violation or partner/food bank request. Termination means that an agency loses all rights and privileges of a Partner Agency as well as its status as such.

• A Partner Agency may be terminated without having first been put on hold or suspension for serious violations

• The termination notification must be communicated in writing to the Partner Agency

• A terminated Partner Agency may reapply to become a Food Bank Partner Agency no sooner than one year after termination

• Example of a termination violation (but not limited to): Partner Agency selling food that it has received from the Food Bank
Appeals Process

- A Partner Agency may appeal a suspension or termination, but not a hold

- A Partner Agency must submit a written appeal to the Agency Services Director within ten working days of their suspension/termination notice. If the appeal is not received within 10 working days, an appeal hearing will be denied

- An appeal hearing of the Food Bank CEO, CPO, and Agency Services Director will convene to address the appeal. The Food Bank membership privileges of the Partner Agency may be suspended pending the decision of the hearing

- A notification of the appeal decision will be sent to the Partner Agency within seven working days

- If a terminated Partner Agency is reactivated as a Food Bank Partner Agency, it will be placed on a 90 day evaluation period. At the end of the 90 days the partnership will be assessed by the Agency Services Director to ensure that all minimum requirements are being met. If the Agency has failed to meet these standards the partnership will be terminated with no appeals process

Programs & Resources

Produce Hubs

To date the Central Texas Food Bank has identified two priority regions in need of additional access to fresh produce to meet the needs of clients in the area – Bell County and Burnet County. In order to meet this need, CTFB has established ‘Produce Hubs’ in these areas. CTFB directly provides weekly/bi-weekly deliveries of fresh produce to a partner in the area with the purpose of it being redistributed to other nearby Partner Agencies. Partner Agencies are encouraged to source fresh, healthy produce through the produce hubs. This food is separate from regular Food Bank orders and is coordinated directly with the host site. All produce hubs currently require no handling fees, mixed loads of a variety of produce, and flexible pick-up times. To participate, Partners must sign the Produce Container Agency Agreement online and submit a pick-up request form to the site of their choosing.

Fresh Food for Families-FFFF

Fresh Food for Families provides free monthly distributions of fruits, vegetables and other fresh foods to low-income families. These distributions supplement existing grocery budgets with much-needed nutritious foods.

Central Texas Food Bank
HOPE (Healthy Options Program for the Elderly)

The mission of the Healthy Options Program for the Elderly (HOPE) is to reduce hunger among low-income seniors age 55 or older by providing them with free monthly distributions of healthy, shelf-stable foods. Each month, HOPE clients receive a 15- to 20-pound bag of non-perishable groceries as nutritious additions to their existing diets. Items include canned fruits and vegetables, canned protein, cereal and pasta.

Kids Café

Kids Cafe serves as a direct partnership between the Food Bank and existing after-school programs to provide nutritious meals to low-income children who may not otherwise have access to healthy and balanced nutrition outside of school. Kids Cafes are safe, nurturing places where neighborhood children can go after school to receive a free meal and participate in programs such as homework assistance, physical activities and more.

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provides nutritious lunches and snacks to children of low-income families who lack a dependable source of nutritious meals during summer breaks. SFSP is a program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Backpack

The Backpack program is designed to meet weekend meal needs for children in low-income families. At the end of each week, participating children receive bags of healthy, nutritious, non-perishable meals that they take home with them and eat during the weekend. Each Backpack contains approximately four meals.

Mobile Pantry

By taking the food directly to clients, our mobile food pantries fill geographic and service gaps in emergency food assistance by providing Central Texans in need with basic staples, fruits and vegetables, and frozen foods where local food assistance services cannot keep up with demand.

CHOICES Nutrition Education

CHOICES is a nutrition education program that helps individuals and families make smart choices at mealtime. The classes help people eligible for SNAP (food stamps) make healthy food choices within a limited budget and choose active lifestyles. All classes are free and open to qualified individuals.
Disaster Relief

When the unthinkable happens, the Food Bank is prepared to respond. We work with Feeding America, the American Red Cross, federal and state agencies and other partners to provide direct food and water assistance, transportation of emergency supplies to affected areas and more.

Breast Feeding

In an effort to meet the health needs of our youngest community members, the Food Bank has expanded services to include Breastfeeding Education to encourage, educate and support families in their breastfeeding efforts. The Breastfeeding Education program provides services through a trained breastfeeding peer counselor, a mother who has personal breastfeeding experience, a passion for helping other families achieve their breastfeeding goals and education and training to provide core support during both prenatal and postpartum periods. Services provided to SNAP-eligible families include prenatal classes and counseling, early postpartum support, home visits and referral to other agencies. Contact the Food Bank’s Nutrition Education department to host a class, to refer a client or to receive more information.

Social Services

Social Services outreach and education provides one-on-one application assistance to families and individuals qualifying for SNAP (food stamp) benefits to help them move out of the hunger line.

The Food Bank’s Social Services Outreach (SSO) coordinators provide phone and in-person consultations for families and individuals in need of social services assistance. In partnership with Texas Health and Human Services, SSO coordinators educate community members and Partner Agencies on state-administered and federally-funded social services and health care programs:

- SNAP (food stamps)
- Children’s Medicaid
- Medicaid for adults
- CHIP (Children’s Health Insurance Program)
- CHIP Perinatal Program
• TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families)

• Women’s Health Program (family planning and health screenings)

SSO workers help in several ways:

• explaining social services programs

• filling out applications completely and correctly

• delivering completed applications to HHSC

• following up on applications

• advocating on behalf of applicants

Notify your portfolio manager if you are interested in having an SSO coordinator offer the above assistance to your clients!

Advocacy

The Food Bank realizes hunger is a symptom of other societal problems such as economic conditions, poverty and unemployment. Other issues including drought, food and gas prices, healthcare costs and limited social service support also affect the demand on services provided by Food Banks and our Partner Agency networks. The Food Bank continues to be a leader in public policy issues affecting hunger – from City Hall to the U.S. Capitol. We work in partnership with other Texas Food Banks as well as many other organizations on behalf of the hungry, to ensure that access to healthy food is available for all Central Texans. As a Food Bank Partner Agency, we ask that you not only stay informed about our advocacy & public policy efforts, but get involved and participate in them. Advocate for hunger relief – sign up for our action alerts at https://www.centraltexasfoodbank.org/get-involved/advocate.
Central Texas Food Bank – 21 County Service Territory