



Date: October 7, 2016

To: Central PA Food Bank Member Agency Partners

From: Jorja Barton
Director of Agency Relations

RE: Update on Guidelines Associated with the Distribution of USDA Commodities and Religious Activities

This notice is being provided in follow up to an earlier correspondence relative to the distribution of USDA Commodities (TEFAP/Bonus TEFAP/CSFP) and religious activities. Many questions have been submitted to both the Central PA Food Bank and the PA Department of Agriculture Bureau of Food Distribution as a result of that correspondence. To further clarify this information, we've been asked to forward the following statement to all of our partners who might have received the previous correspondence.

"Federal regulations at 7 CFR Part 16 and Part 251 are not intended to impact the activities and services conducted by religious organizations outside of the provision of TEFAP/CSFP services. Similarly, these regulations are not intended to infringe on an individual's right to participate in explicitly religious activity. Rather, these regulations are intended to ensure that TEFAP beneficiaries are not required to participate in explicitly religious activities in order to receive federal benefits. An individual, whether volunteer or beneficiary, can choose to participate in an explicitly religious activity at their own discretion."

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this information, please do not hesitate to contact me via email at jbarton@centralpafoodbank.org or by phone at 717.564.1700.

Thank you.

The official registration and financial information of the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.
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