



# **Membership Guidelines**

## **2017**

***Our Mission***      ***Fighting Hunger, Improving Lives, Strengthening Communities***

The purpose of the Food Bank is to reduce hunger in central Pennsylvania, with the ultimate goal of ending hunger in the area. The mission is pursued by soliciting, warehousing, processing, and distributing nutritious food and grocery products to a network of community organizations that directly serve the hungry. The Food Bank is committed to increasing public awareness and understanding of the hunger problem.

The Central Pennsylvania Food Bank distributes donated products to tax exempt [501 (c)(3)], non-profit member agencies. Food Bank member agencies serve a wide variety of clients with one common denominator- all need help putting food on their tables.

Examples of potential 501 (c)(3) and/or non-profit organizations that may be eligible to partner with the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank are:

- Churches or community organizations that distribute grocery items to needy individuals or families
- Church or community organizations that serve meals to needy individuals or families (soup kitchens)
- Non-profit child and adult day care programs
- Non-profit MH/MR programs
- Non-profit drug/alcohol rehabilitation programs
- Non-profit nursing homes
- Non-profit educational and after school programs
- Non-profit camps and summer programs for children and youth
- Red Cross chapters
- Non-profit Meals on Wheels providers
- Temporary and long term shelters for homeless, runaway teens, and victims of domestic violence

## **Types of Food Programs**

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The Central Pennsylvania Food Bank serves a variety of food programs. Programs are categorized into two types: Emergency and Supplemental. The six most predominant programs are described below:

### ***Emergency Distribution Programs:***

- 1) Food Pantries – Pantries are an emergency or supplemental food source where people can go for immediate help and receive a three to four-day supply of groceries. Pantries might also serve as an ongoing supplemental source of food for families whose resources fall short each month.
- 2) Soup Kitchens – On-site food operations where a person in need can go for a meal without eligibility guidelines or advance notice. The meal can be breakfast, lunch or dinner.
- 3) Emergency Shelters – A site that provides overnight accommodations and one or more meals for people without homes or who are escaping abusive situations.

### ***Supplemental Programs:***

- 4) Residential Programs – A site that provides long term housing and services and one or more meals (i.e. drug and alcohol rehab programs, group homes).
- 5) Senior Feeding Programs – Programs in which meals are prepared and served to senior citizens.
- 6) Child and Adult Day Care – These programs were established by the U.S. Congress and provide reimbursement for nutritious meals served to children in childcare centers and day care homes, and functionally impaired adults.

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## **Benefits of Membership**

By becoming a member agency of the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank you receive valuable savings, support and training. Any non-profit feeding program regularly serving people in need may be eligible and should consider membership. Membership benefits include:

- **Training and Technical Support:** The Food Bank has placed new emphasis on coordinating the efforts of feeding programs by geographic region. The Food Bank sponsors annual agency meetings, workshops and seminars that provide education on topics specifically selected to serve member agencies' needs.
- By becoming a member agency of the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank, you also become part of our country's largest charitable anti-hunger network, Feeding America, Inc. (FA). FA helps to coordinate inventory donations and build relationships with countless national donors, provides national hunger advocacy support, and coordinates nationwide studies on hunger.

## **Membership Requirements, Responsibilities, Policies**

- **Orientation:** All agency personnel authorized to order or pick up inventory from the warehouse must attend a Member Agency Orientation session. Sessions are held on the second Monday of each month at the Food Bank. Times are altered from morning to afternoon to accommodate individuals' availability. Sessions highlight food distribution practices, introduction to inventory and placing orders, monthly reporting, and other policies and procedures. New accounts must attend orientation prior to accessing inventory. New staff and volunteers with an existing program that are authorized to access the Food Bank must attend orientation prior to coming to the warehouse, unless accompanied by an individual who has attended orientation. If need be, an orientation session may be scheduled at your agency for multiple staff/volunteers.
- **Annual Membership Fee** of \$25.00 will be billed to each account on or about July 1<sup>st</sup> and cover the term of July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup> (fiscal year). New memberships after January 1<sup>st</sup> are prorated at \$12.50 through June 30<sup>th</sup>.
- **Shared Maintenance Fee:** set by FA is based on the average handling costs for a food bank. Currently the shared maintenance fee for donated inventory ranges from 0 to 18 cents per pound of food. The fee is not for the food; rather, it covers operational costs such as solicitation, transportation and warehousing of the donated food. The Food Bank also carries wholesale items which are priced at cost plus a minimal handling fee.
- **Delivery Fees:** Effective July 1, 2013, delivery fees were waived until further notice. **A minimum 800 pound order is required for direct door delivery.** Drop site deliveries are available in several counties. Contact the Food Bank Transportation Department for additional information relative to deliveries. Delivery Schedules can be found on our website at <http://www.centralpafoodbank.org/PartnerAgencies/DownloadsandResources.aspx>
- Basic but imperative to membership is your understanding that agencies **cannot under any circumstances charge a fee or require services for the food they provide. Agencies may also only distribute food within the program for which they have been approved for membership and may not distribute to other agencies in a pass-through scenario. For recall purposes, all inventory must be traceable to the end user.**
- **Civil Rights Compliance:** Agencies will not engage in discrimination, in the provision of service, against any person because of race, color, citizenship, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation including gender identity, unfavorable discharge from the military or status as a protected veteran. In addition, recipients will not be required to be a member of any organization or to participate in any religious services as a condition for distribution or receipt of Emergency Food. Members are required to post the USDA "... and Justice for All" civil rights poster and certify annual civil rights training for all "front line" staff/volunteers who have contact with consumers.
- **Non-Profit Status:** The Food Bank may only service non-profit organizations. Proof of non-profit IRS 501(c)(3) designation is required. If applicable, documentation describing your organization as a "church" as defined by an IRS 14 point assessment survey, may qualify an agency for membership.

- **Reporting:** Record keeping is a critical component of membership. All members are required to document food distribution and maintaining auditable records. The following documents are required and will be reviewed by Agency Services Staff during site visits and must also be available if requested by government agencies including the IRS, Attorney General, Feeding America, the PA Department of Agriculture, and/or the PA Department of Community and Economic Development.

Required documents are as follows:

- All agencies are given copies of each invoice at the time of check out. All agencies must keep at least one copy on file, chronologically sequenced, for the current year and three previous years.
- All members are required to report when and to whom food is distributed. Pantries are required to register households and keep distribution records for each distribution including household names and number of individual served in that household. Shelters and Soup Kitchens are required to track the number of meals served. Supplemental programs are required to record how many individuals are served by the program per month.
- The Food Bank is required to record and report accurate data on the number of households and/or individuals receiving inventory from the Food Bank. All member agencies are required to submit a Monthly Statistics Report by the 5<sup>th</sup> day of each month. Data reported by the agency must be credible and verifiable upon review by Agency Services Department staff.
- Agencies who pick up donations from Feeding America national donors are required to report poundage receipts, by category, each month. These reports may be entered online in the PWW system.
- During a site visit, either announced or unannounced, all records must be available for review by Agency Services Department staff.
- It is the members' responsibility to report any changes to the list of staff/volunteers authorized to access Food Bank inventory. Representatives' names are verified when placing orders or accessing the warehouse. If an individuals' name is not found on the authorized list, they will not be permitted to access inventory on your agency's behalf unless verified.
- **Site Reviews:** Feeding America and the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank require that all member agencies are monitored at least once every two years. All new applicants are visited prior to final membership approval and access to inventory and will be subject to a probationary review after the first six months of membership. Site visits may be announced or unannounced. This monitoring process includes inspection of food storage and handling systems, record keeping, and general information review. To ensure that your agency passes this inspection, the Food Bank offers the following requirements:
  - Agencies must have adequate, safe food storage space
  - Storage and/or food preparation areas must be clean and in order

- Storage areas must be locked and secure in order to control the use of products for approved program(s)
- Food must be stored 6” off the floor and 6” away from the walls. Metal shelving is preferable.
- There can be no signs of rodent and insect infestation.
- All non-food items must be stored separately from food items.
- Perishable foods must be stored in properly functioning refrigeration or freezer units; temperature logs must be maintained.
- Food distribution records, household registration forms, USDA records (if applicable), meal service records (if applicable), and invoices must be kept on file and available for review (current year and three previous years).

**NOTE:** If an agency is found in violation of these requirements, the Food Bank will notify the agency, in writing, offering a reasonable timeframe for corrective action or resolution of the violation. Food Bank Agency Services staff are available for assistance in remedying the situation.

### **Accounting Policies**

1. New agencies are admitted to membership under check and carry terms for the first six months of membership. Payment is required at the time of purchase and must be issued using an agency check. **Personal checks are not accepted for agency payments.** Funds may be placed on account with the Food Bank which will be drawn down as invoices are issued. 30 day credit terms may be requested, in writing, after the 6 month probationary period has expired. Account credit information is available upon requested.
2. Agencies with accounts that carry 30 day credit terms receive a monthly statement showing their account balance. Statements are issued on the last working day of each month. *Payment for past due balances is due within 10 days of receipt of monthly statements.*
3. When paying balances due to the Food Bank, it is extremely important to note both the agency account number and the invoice number(s) that the payment is covering so that it is correctly applied. These numbers may be placed on the check as follows: 10050/5030 (the agency number/ invoice number). Community donations may be directed to your agency and will be identified as Agency Funds on Account. Please be sure to give your donor your correct agency name/number so that the donation is applied appropriately.
4. **Past Due Account Policy:** 60 days past due: A delinquency notice will be mailed with the monthly statement and copies of the outstanding invoices. If payment is not received within ten days of receipt of the delinquency notice, the agency will be placed on “check & carry” terms for future purchases. If accounts transition to past due status of 90 days or more, the account is suspended until the balance is resolved. If the account becomes 120 days past due, and the agency has not made attempts to resolve the past due status, the account will risk resolution by a collection service. It is the agency’s

responsibility to contact the Accounting Manager or Accounting Assistant by calling 717.564.1700 to discuss plans for payment of past due balances.

**Deactivation of Account:** If an agency ceases to operate or wishes to deactivate its membership with the Food Bank, it must provide written notice of this decision. A deactivation form will be provided and is to be signed by the agency administrator to formally cease membership with the Food Bank. All inventory received from the Food Bank that remains in the possession of the member must be distributed to consumers according to allowable guidelines, or in the case of closure, must be returned to the Food Bank.

## **Agency Probation and Suspension Policy**

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The Central Pennsylvania Food Bank will conduct an onsite visit of each Member Agency prior to membership approval. Once approved, each new member agency will be monitored on or about its six-month anniversary. Thereafter, the agency will be monitored biennially. However, the Food Bank reserves the right to monitor any Member Agency more frequently, as deemed necessary.

If the Food Bank discovers one or more violations during a site visit (or via other means), the Member Agency may be placed on probationary status or may be terminated. Violations include, but are not limited to:

1. Exchanging donated food or other products for money, property, or services.
2. Removal of donated food or other products from an on-site program for private use.
3. Using donated food or other products in a manner that is not related to the exempt purposes of the member agency.
4. Falsifying information on Food Bank application or other Food Bank required document.
5. Delinquent reimbursement of shared maintenance contributions.
6. Donated food or other products are improperly stored, refrigerated or transported.
7. Donated food or other product is improperly stockpiled.
8. Member agency is in violation of any state or local statute, ordinance, code or regulation.
9. Member agency otherwise violated the Member Agency Agreement between itself and the Food Bank.

**Probation:** The purpose of the probationary period is to place a Member Agency on notice that it must bring its program into compliance with Food Bank policies and/or guidelines. Official notice of probation will be sent to the Member Agency in writing within ten days from the date of the onsite visit or discovery of the violation. This correspondence will include an outline of compliance issues, corrective measures that are to be taken, and a defined timeline for corrective actions to be accomplished. A member of the Agency Services Department will schedule a follow-up site visit to the agency (may be unannounced) at which point a determination will be made whether corrective measures have been successfully completed. A member agency may be placed on probation for a period not to exceed three months if found to be in violation of items 5, 6, 7, 8 or 9. The Agency Services Department has the authority to extend the probationary period or to recommend termination of the member agency. A member agency may be reinstated when the Director of Agency & Program Services has determined that the violation has been corrected.

**Termination:** A Member Agency may be terminated, without a probationary period for violations numbered 1 through 4 above. A Member Agency may also be terminated after being placed on probationary status three or more times for violations such as those numbered 5 through 9 above (including multiple occurrences of the same violation). Only the Executive Director or Agency Services Committee has the authority to terminate agency membership. Upon termination, an agency loses all the rights and privileges of Food Bank membership. Terminated agencies may re-apply for Food Bank membership after a period of not less than 24 months.

**Appeals:** The Member Agency may appeal a probation or termination ruling by submitting a written appeal to the Executive Director of the Food Bank within 10 days of receipt of the notice of the ruling.

## **ACCESS TO INVENTORY**



## Appointments and Orders

- The Food Bank has open appointment times Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Appointment times are scheduled for 45 minutes. Agencies are expected to arrive promptly for appointment times. It will be to your advantage to have the full 45 minutes for your shopping experience.
- **Agencies must place their order by 11 a.m. three\* days prior their appointment.** (Williamsport is 5 days) Orders may be placed by phone, fax, or online through the **Primarius Web Window System (PWW)**. Agencies must be mindful of Food Bank closure dates to avoid placing orders too late for processing. The schedule for placing orders is as follows:

### **Appointment**

Monday  
Tuesday  
Wednesday  
Thursday  
Friday

### **Order Day**

Thursday by 11:00 a.m.  
Friday by 11:00 a.m.  
Monday by 11:00 a.m.  
Tuesday by 11:00 a.m.  
Wednesday by 11:00 a.m.

## Picking-Up Orders

1. No Food Bank item will be distributed to an agency until it has been properly inspected, sorted, prepared for distribution, weighed, and inventoried.
2. For the safety of both the agency and the Food Bank, only authorized agency representatives on file with the Food Bank may place and/or pick up orders. Agencies are encouraged to send two authorized representatives to pick up orders.
3. Agency representatives must always register with the customer service desk upon arrival. Plan to arrive a few minutes prior to your appointment time in order to review new inventory information or other agency related items. "Add-ons" to orders must be authorized prior to your entrance to the warehouse for your appointment time. Warehouse staff members will assist you with your add-ons.
4. Customer Service Staff will direct you to the warehouse at the appropriate time.
5. Warehouse staff will advise you when it is permissible for you to pull your vehicle to the loading door of the warehouse. Warehouse staff will be on hand to assist with loading your vehicle and answer any questions with regard to your order.
6. Please be mindful of your 45-minute appointment time and restricted areas of the warehouse.
7. Due to insurance regulations, ***no children under 16 are allowed in the warehouse.***

### ***Items of special note:***

- **Shopping Only Appointments:** Agencies may access the Shopping Area of the warehouse without a prior order being placed. Appointments for "shopping only" will be accepted no more than 24 hours in advance. If an inventoried order appointment time slot is available, shopping only appointments will be accepted. Contact the Customer Service Department at 717.564.1700 for additional information on this service.

- If the Food Bank is closed for a holiday or inventory, the Food Bank will publish information well in advance of the date of closing.
- Items in the shopping area cannot be held.
- The Food Bank must have a current list of authorized shoppers. Please notify the Food Bank in writing when authorized shoppers are added or removed. Mindful attention of this issue minimizes the chance of unauthorized use of your account.
- If you are unable to keep a scheduled appointment, notify the Food Bank immediately. Your pick-up must be rescheduled within two business days or items will be returned to inventory and a new order must be placed. If you do not attempt to reschedule or pickup your order, a restocking fee, not to exceed .02 per pound, may be charged to your account.

### **Deliveries**

Deliveries are generally made in the late morning and early afternoon. A representative from the Food Bank will notify the agency one business day prior with the expected time of delivery. A reliable contact name and phone number must be available to accept this call. Agencies receiving deliveries must have an adequate number of volunteers and/or staff to accept the delivery and to load their vehicle(s). If an agency does not meet the truck to pick up their order within a reasonable amount of time, the driver reserves the right to return the product to the Food Bank which may result in a restocking fee.

### **Fresh Produce**

In keeping with our *Foods to Encourage* initiative, the Food Bank receives and distributes large quantities of fresh produce. Produce only pick-ups do not require appointments, however as with any normal inventory pick-up, agency representatives must sign-in at the reception desk. Produce pick-ups are permitted between the hours of 9:00 am and 2:30 PM. Produce must be weighed, recorded, and invoiced by warehouse staff. You may contact the Food Bank to confirm produce availability or selections prior to coming to the warehouse.

### **How and When to Make Referrals**

Each emergency food program provides services according to resources available to it. Our network is vast, and serves many, many programs, making it possible to refer individuals to programs within their geographic region thereby minimizing the need for individuals to travel outside of their immediate area.

As a referral resource tool, a listing of our emergency food distribution partners is available from the Food Bank and is printed in zip code order. This list is available to members and community social service programs and is not to be copied or distributed to consumers. Agencies are asked to refer individuals to the program nearest their home. Prior to sending individuals to another pantry or meal program, always recommend that they call the program to confirm pantry and/or meal hours, or what documentation they must bring with them in order to receive food.

### **Government Food Distribution Programs**

The United States Government operates several food assistance programs for low-income individuals. These are WIC, Food Stamps, TEFAP, Child & Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, Farmer's Market Nutrition Program, and the Commodities

Supplemental Food Program for the Elderly. Information on these government programs may be found online. If you are outside of Dauphin County, you can obtain the name of the lead agency in your county by calling The Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Government Donated Food 717.787.2940.

## **FOOD SAFETY GUIDELINES**

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Safe food handling is certainly a very important component of food distribution. Effective August 1, 2009 Feeding America required all member agencies to participate in a food safety instruction course. Agencies that provide meals to consumers for consumption on premises must be certified in a food safety course such as ServSafe™, Cooking For Crowds offered by the County Extension Services, or Food Safety for Non-Profit Organizations offered by the PA Department of Agriculture. All other programs must participate in the Basic Food Safety Course for Pantries or another recognized food safety curriculum. At least one agency representative must participate in one of these sessions in order meet the minimum Feeding America requirements. The Food Bank offers classroom style food safety sessions throughout the year and will inform the membership of the session schedules.

The Food Bank also offers a free online Food Pantry Food Safety Course. This course can be accessed on our website at <http://www.centralpafoodbank.org/PartnerAgencies/FoodSafetyNutrition.aspx>. Those who satisfactorily complete the course and brief quiz will receive a certificate of participation in the course. Copies of participation in any certified class must be provided to the Food Bank along with a new membership application and will be kept within the agencies' file. Contact the Agency Services staff for more information on this requirement.

Feeding America recommends food safety and shelf life guidelines available from the internet at [foodsafety.gov](http://foodsafety.gov). Other food safety resources are available by contacting the Agency Services Department.

## **Cold Food Storage and Handling**

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To insure longer shelf life and reduce the risk of bacterial growth on refrigerated foods, please note the following points.

- Bacterial growth occurs most rapidly when food is stored at temperatures between 41 and 135 degrees. It only takes three to four hours in this temperature range for food to spoil.
- Low-acid foods such as meat, cooked vegetables and egg dishes are particularly risky
- Moisture makes bacteria grow even more quickly

To stop bacterial growth, utilize these suggestions:

- Don't handle food carelessly
- Keep hands, utensils and cutting boards well scrubbed since these can easily contaminate cooked food
- Cook or serve food as soon as possible after removing from storage
- **Serve hot foods *hot* and cold foods *cold***
- Refrigerate food immediately after the meal

Also note:

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- Refrigerator temperature can be checked with a refrigerator thermometer or an outdoor thermometer
  - Use food quickly. Don't depend on maximum storage time
  - Use foil, plastic wrap or bags, or airtight containers to package food
  - Clean refrigerator regularly to cut down food odors. Remove spoiled foods immediately so decay isn't passed to other foods.

### **Dry Goods Storage and Handling**

Store dry goods in cool cabinets away from heat producing appliances.

Store bread in a cool, dry place. Refrigeration makes bread stale more quickly but in hot, humid weather bread will keep longer if refrigerated. Brown and serve bread items should be refrigerated. Hard crust breads can be kept at room temperature one to two days. For longer storage, freeze fresh bread.

Flour should be stored in an airtight container. In hot, humid weather flour can be refrigerated or frozen to prevent insect infestation. Whole wheat flour should be refrigerated year-round. Do not store flour near items with strong odors, as these smells will be absorbed by flour. *Brown sugar* should be stored in a plastic bag or jar with a tight lid.

### **Canned Goods Storage and Handling**

As with dry goods, canned items should be stored in cool, dry cabinets. Try to use canned goods within the year and canned juices within nine months. Shelf life decreases in temperatures above 70 degrees.

### **Fresh Fruit and Vegetables**

*Hard produce, i.e. onions, apples, potatoes, rutabagas and winter squash* should be kept in cool, dark places. Onions and white potatoes sprout in the spring so buy a week's worth at a time rather than large quantities. Do not refrigerate sweet potatoes.

*Tomatoes* should be ripened at room temperature then refrigerated.

*Apples* should be stored below 60 degrees during the fall. Refrigerate during other seasons.

**NOTE: Fruit and vegetables must be washed and/or peeled prior to consumption to prevent contamination from chemicals. Agencies must advise consumers served of this food safety practice.**

### **Meat**

Proper handling, storage and cooking procedures for beef and beef products will continue to assure beef safety. If product is to be refrigerated, use within two days of purchase or sell by date on the package label. Defrost frozen products in the refrigerator, not on the kitchen counter. Never refreeze defrosted meats, chicken or fish. Cook ground beef burgers to an internal temperature of 160 degrees Fahrenheit or until the middle is light grey and the juices run clear. Always rotate stored meat on a first in, first out basis. Cover beef between cutting and wrapping. Always clean and sanitize grinder heads between uses. Refrigerate all unused beef at the end of the day.

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### **“Sell by/Use by” Codes**

“Sell by” means how long the product should be on the grocery store shelf. “Use by” means how long the product will retain top eating quality.

Food codes can be very confusing and also misleading. The Food Bank offers a wealth of resources on these dates, so be sure to contact us for resources and share this information with your staff/volunteers and clients that you serve. Additional resources are available online by searching “food code dates”.

For most foods these dates are very conservative and often the shelf life of a product is longer than the code dates indicate, especially for dry goods. Many products donated to the Food Bank are either close to code or out of code. However, before Food Bank staff accepts donations of products that are close to or out of code, it is confirmed with the manufacturer that the true shelf life of the product is beyond the dates actually printed on the product therefore enabling us to give you access to products that would otherwise be wasted.

**STORAGE NOTE:** Food items, paper products, personal care items and food storage items should be stored and packed separately from cleaning products to avoid cross contamination.

Additional food storage guidelines are available from the Food Bank and on our website at <http://www.centralpafoodbank.org/PartnerAgencies/FoodSafetyNutrition>.

Contact the Agency Services Department at 717-564-1700 for information.