

Member Agency Essentials Guide

**FOOD
BANK**
OF WESTERN
MASSACHUSETTS

Updated November 2025

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The Food Bank's Organizational Structure

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts is a member of the Feeding America network, which includes over 200 food banks working to increase food security across the US. Each food bank operates independently with its own structure, adhering to common standards and goals. To learn more, go to www.feedingamerica.org. Our food bank's structure is as follows:

Programs

Working on big picture policy change and directly with food insecure people and member agencies.

Agency Relations – Member agency compliance, capacity building, training, support, recruitment, and reporting

Mobile Food Bank – Free groceries at community partner sites across WMA

SNAP – Outreach and application assistance

Nutrition – Education and food safety

Advocacy – Advocating for state and federal policies to increase food security

Brown Bag – Monthly food for low-income seniors

Food Insecurity Referral Initiative – Takes referrals from healthcare partners & connects people with needed resources in the community

Food Operations

Oversight of inventory, shopping, food quality, delivery, and Food Bank facility.

Food In – Donations, Food Bank Farm, government, purchased, buy-in

Food Out – 197 member programs, 30 mobiles, 54 Brown Bags sites = 17+ million pounds of food last year!

Facilities – Managing repairs and maintenance of the Food Bank offices and warehouse

Finance & Administration

Accounts receivable & payable, organizational management

Finance – Financial accounts, grant attribution (to programs), organizational budget

Administration – IT, HR, and home of the friendliest administrative coordinator in the entire world

Development, Communications, & Marketing

Raising \$ and getting the word out about our good work.

Development & Marketing – Creating large fundraising events like Will Bike 4 Food, volunteer coordinating, donor relations, grants

Communications – Social media, TV and radio, print media, storytelling

Food Bank Farms – Located on Amherst/Hadley border; grows food for member agencies, Springfield Public Schools;

Points of Contact

It's good to know who to contact at the Food Bank for specific questions. This page can help you find the right person. Phone/emails are listed on the last page of this guidebook.

Agency Relations

Agency Relations Manager – Michelle Geoffroy
Contracts · Oasis Insight · Compliance oversight ·
New/renewed membership · Program sizes ·
General questions

Agency Relations Coordinator – Javier Stuart
Monitoring visits · Online ordering training &
trouble shooting · USDA · Food Bank policy ·
Program changes

Agency Resource Coordinator – Naomi Desilets
Capacity grants · ACE points · Disaster plans ·
Program changes · Agency trainings · Regional
agency meetings

**Agency Recruitment and Onboarding
Coordinator - Kate Pousont Scarborough**
New agency and program applications ·
Onboarding new programs · Start Up Grants

Other Program Departments

Director of Programs – Christina Maxwell
SNAP Program Manager – Beth Ziemba
Onsite application assistance for clients · SNAP
information · Case working assistance

Direct Programs Manager – Kristina Mullin
Nutrition workshops, tastings · Food safety
training · Recipes · Mobile Food Banks · Brown
Bag for Elders

Public Policy Manager – Laura Sylvester
State & Federal policy advocacy · State budget
advocacy · MA Hunger Free Campus Coalition

**Hunger Solutions Innovation Manager – Alan
Dallmann**
Food Assistance Navigation · 413Cares ·
Referrals from healthcare partners to other basic
needs resources

Food Operations

Food Operations Coordinator – Sabrina Pretti
Order scheduling questions/concerns · Changing
an appointment

Food Distribution Supervisor – Tony Acevedo
Delivery questions/concerns

Retail Donations Coordinator – Brandie Taggart
Retail pickup/Mansfield Paper
questions/concerns

Inventory Control Manager - Jimmy Bushey
Food quality concerns · Invoice corrections

When Programs Must Contact the Food Bank:

- Cannot make scheduled shopping or delivery appointment
- Cannot make a scheduled monitoring visit
- Program changes (use form:
<https://form.jotform.com/202306482605146>)
 - Location*
 - Hours*
 - Phone number
 - Main contact
 - Food safety certification
- Agency changes (must call/email Agency Relations)
 - Executive director
 - Billing contact
 - Organization name/address
 - Change/loss of 501(c)(3) status

* To maintain membership and/or emergency program status, the Food Bank must be notified IN ADVANCE of changes in location/hours.

Agency vs. Program and Program Types

Each program must be sponsored by an agency that has 501(c)(3) status or equivalent church status (as defined by the IRS). 501(c)(3) organizations must be classified as Public Charities, NOT as Private Foundations.” Colleges and universities chartered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are also eligible to sponsor Campus Pantry programs.

An agency acts as the umbrella under which a program resides. The Food Bank identifies programs under classifications based on the following:

Agencies

Sponsoring 501(c)(3) organization;
Massachusetts-chartered college or
university; church, or other house of worship

Programs

Physical locations of food distribution

Each type of program is a separate program in the Food Bank’s system. For example, an agency that operates both a pantry and a meal program would have two listings in the Food Bank’s database—one for the pantry, and one for the meal program—even if both programs are located in the same place.

Classifications:

PUBLIC

Public programs with a primary purpose providing food assistance or short-term emergency shelter.

- Pantries
- Meal Programs
- Shelters (with a stay of 6 months or less)

SEMI-PRIVATE

Programs that aren’t open to the public broadly, but are open to any member of a large community

- Campus Pantries
- Backpack Programs
- School Pantries
- Medical Centers

PRIVATE

Programs that are only open to their own members or residents

- Residential Programs
- Substance Use Recovery Centers
- Internal Pantries
- Daycares

Food Types & Expiration Dates

The Food Bank gets food from a lot of different sources. Food is donated from large corporations/brands, government, individuals, local farms, and some of it the Food Bank buys. Because so much of what the Food Bank receives is donated, brands and products vary and the same products are not always available.

Food Types Available to ALL Programs

Buy-In – Product bought by the Food Bank, available to all programs at wholesale prices. (These are the only products that programs “buy” at the Food Bank)

Donated – Salvage, by the case, & frozen perishables

- 10¢/lb fee
- Product donated to the Food Bank from various types of food donors. Available at 10 cents/pound. This “fee” is a shared maintenance fee. This means the Food Bank and member agencies “share” the cost incurred by the Food Bank to store, transport, and distribute this product.

Fresh Produce (free) – Product either donated or bought by the Food Bank (including MEFAP produce)

Candy and some beverages (free) – product donated to the Food Bank from various types of food donors

Non-frozen Perishables (free) – Product donated to the Food Bank from various types of food donors

Food Types Available to Public (and some Semi-Private) Programs

MEFAP – Free state-funded food. Automatically available to Public programs

USDA (TEFAP) – Free federally-funded food. Additional paperwork and federal regulations. Available to new Public programs after 6 months, must sign Basic Membership Agreement with USDA addendum

Case limits for MEFAP and USDA are based on monthly service reports. See p. 41 for details.

A Note About Frozen Meat – The Food Bank is grateful to receive donated frozen meat from a number of regional partners. This is donated as a bulk item, which means it must be sorted before distribution to ensure safety. At times, sorting priorities and space constraints will reduce the amount of donated meat we’re able to sort, which means there may be less frozen meat available for agencies to order. For example, we may need to sort highly perishable fresh produce before we can sort the meat because the produce will spoil, while the meat will not, because it’s frozen. It’s a delicate balance, and our warehouse tries its very best to ensure all donated products go out to our food insecure neighbors as quickly as possible. We ask for patience when dips in availability of priority products occur.

A Note on Dates You See on Labels –The Food Bank receives donated foods that may have printed dates that are past the current calendar date. Please note that food dates are NOT for safety. Instead, they are dates put on by the manufacturer to help the seller determine how long to keep the product on display. The concern is for quality, not safety. The only exceptions are baby formula and nutritional supplements, which lose nutritional value after the date. See p. 18-19 for more information and details on how to read these dates. You can also look at the Food Storage and Shelf Life Guidelines info sheet on our website or contact our Nutrition Department.

Media Communication Guidelines

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts is honored to partner with you in our mission to feed our neighbors in need and lead the community to end hunger.

In FY2024, our member agencies and direct distribution partners served an average of more than **119,000** people each month, including hungry children, families, seniors, and disabled individuals throughout the four counties of Western Massachusetts. Together, we distributed over **17 million pounds** of food to our neighbors, the equivalent of over 14 million meals, over the course of the year. Clearly, we are inter-dependent members of our region's emergency food network.

The Message: Abundance Rather than Scarcity

We have a greater impact on preventing hunger when we work together to reinforce an accurate and unified message. People support a cause when the information they receive is clear, accurate and demonstrates our collective impact. Donors especially want to be part of a winning team and invest in the mission of non-profits with strong, enduring, and proven partnerships. Below are some communication tips when speaking with the public, media, and donors.

General Appeal: *"Western Massachusetts is a close-knit community with lush local farms and civic minded businesses. There's enough to go around. Let's work together to spread our resources and ensure that everyone has access to healthy food. Please join us to be part of the solution."*

Low Inventory:

Sometimes we encounter challenges sourcing enough food, which is a situation that you want to be able to explain. This language might help.

Good: *"Food inventory for some items is low, due to supply chain issues impacting food pantries across the U.S. The Food Bank is doing everything it can to secure the food we need. Meanwhile, we may need to ask the community to help us fill specific needs. We encourage our participants to make sure they're taking advantage of all programs available to them, including HIP, SNAP, WIC, and 413Cares. The Food Bank's Food Access Navigation team can help participants navigate assistance for food and non-food needs."*

Bad: *"We're out of food! The shelves are empty. We have to turn people away. You have to help." (This drains donor confidence in our stability and capacity to provide for those in need.)* *Importantly, by messaging accurately, you let the community know that we have a thoughtful, strategic, and competent food access network that is worth investing in. It speaks of pride and hope.*

Communicating Your Partnership With the Food Bank

The Relationship: Nutritious Food from the Food Bank

It is critical for the Food Bank and all our partner programs to communicate our relationship accurately. Specifically, it is important to note that, except for Buy-In product, the Food Bank does not sell food to individuals or member agencies. (Shared maintenance fees are levied by the pound on some products to share the cost of sourcing, storing, and distributing, but are not direct charges for the food.) Incorrect or misleading information can severely drain donor confidence at all levels.

Accurate: *“Most of our food comes from the Food Bank and is free” or, “Through our partnership with the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, your donation will help us leverage our resources to provide nutritious food for our neighbors.”*

Inaccurate: *“We buy most of our food from the Food Bank” or, “For every __ dollar donated, we can purchase __ pounds of food from the Food Bank.” (We urge you to be cautious about efficiency claims, which are not only different for each program, but can also be misleading and often incorrect.)*

It is also important that we accurately describe the food assistance network to avoid confusion about our organization and our network. **We often hear food pantries referred to by the media or the public as “food banks.”** We who work in the food assistance network know that this is incorrect, and we understand the difference between a **food PANTRY** and a **food BANK**, but the media and the public do not. It is therefore important for all of us to use these terms correctly, and not use the term “food bank” in reference to your own program.

Lastly, when expressing gratitude to your donors, we encourage you to acknowledge the collective effort of the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts and the entire food assistance network in our region. Recognizing the power of collaboration fosters a sense of unity among our supporters. And, on that note...

Sharing Success Stories: Let's celebrate the impact of our collective efforts! Share your success stories with us so that we can showcase the positive outcomes of our partnership through our website, social media channels, and community outreach.

In closing, we urge you to maintain an open dialogue with us about your communication thoughts and strategies. The Food Bank is committed to strengthening the food assistance network to operate responsibly, effectively, safely, and sustainably. Let us know your needs, ideas and hopes. Together, we are creating a Western Massachusetts where no one faces food insecurity and everyone has access to nutritious food.

Stories From People Impacted by Your Work

We encourage you to help put a human face on the reality and complexity of hunger in our region. Stories complement your statistics (number of people served, pounds of food distributed, etc.) and have a powerful, lasting impact.

When sharing stories of impacted individuals, we encourage you to abide by some basic principles of Ethical Storytelling:

- Make sure that the person who is choosing to share their story is aware of and consents to the way(s) you plan to share the story.
- Allow them to review the story before you publish it, and give their feedback.
- Be prepared to remove or amend the story if requested by the person who shared it with you.
- People are more than just a face for food insecurity - your stories should reflect the whole person, not just their experience of hunger.

Respect at the Food Bank

The Food Bank is committed to respect and equity in our organization. We believe this commitment includes our staff, board, donors, volunteers, and community partners. We have certain expectations for respectful behavior among all those involved in our shared work.

What does “respectful behavior” look like?

At a minimum, we are all legally and contractually bound (see “Basic Membership Agreement” on p. 39) to provide food to our community regardless of age, color, citizenship, immigration status, sex, gender identity, marital status, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental dis/ability, race, religion, sexual orientation, unfavorable discharge from the military, or protected veteran status. Beyond our legal and contractual obligations, we expect that each of our community partners also actively works to foster an environment among staff, volunteers, and participants that is inclusive and welcoming to all. We recognize that we are all in a learning process and that mistakes may occur. If we all approach these expectations with commitment, humility, and a willingness to learn, we can create an environment for our community to flourish and for everyone to feel valued.

However, if a member agency or program is determined to have engaged in acts of discrimination toward program participants based on the participant’s belonging to any of the protected classes outlined above, including but not limited to denial of service, different eligibility or verification requirements, or unequal access to food or other resources, the Food Bank will take corrective action, and the agency or program’s membership may be terminated.

Other types of prejudiced behavior or forms of harassment that create a hostile or uncomfortable environment for program participants, staff, volunteers, or Food Bank staff, such as denigrating jokes, race or identity-based stereotypes, or sexual/flirtatious comments and gestures, are also not acceptable. These include but are not limited to...

Jokes – We often hear people telling jokes that we find inappropriate because they denigrate, even lightly, a particular population. What one might think of as light humor, another might find devastating, and we feel there is no room for this type of humor in our interactions.

Sexual or flirtatious comments/gestures – These types of behaviors may make staff, shoppers, and volunteers uncomfortable. They are unjustifiable and will not be tolerated by staff. Please also note that compliments or comments about staff, volunteers’, or other shoppers’ perceived attractiveness are not acceptable, as they create a hostile and/or uncomfortable working environment for the people who are present.

Food Bank staff are expected to maintain high professional standards in carrying out their work. If you have a complaint about Food Bank policies or procedures, or about the conduct of a Food Bank employee or volunteer, please notify the Agency Relations Manager. If you are not comfortable speaking with the AR Manager, please notify the Director of Programs about your concern. All complaints will be investigated by appropriate Food Bank staff and corrective action will be taken if warranted.

Race or identity-based stereotypes – It is not uncommon to hold unconscious judgements or stereotypes about people of different cultures or identities. Even if not expressed with malicious intent, prejudiced statements can be harmful and may have serious consequences. It is everyone's responsibility to be aware of the harm caused by stereotypes and to actively work to be respectful of different races, classes, genders, and identities with our speech and actions. Additionally, we live in a culturally rich region, and welcome all languages to be spoken freely in our interactions with agencies, donors, and volunteers.

Should violations of these expectations occur, the Agency Relations Manager will be informed of the incident. The Food Bank will then engage in a collaborative process with the agency to address the behavior. This process may include:

- If possible and appropriate, a conversation in the moment between Food Bank staff and agency staff/volunteers when an offensive/inappropriate comment is made
- Referral to resources and training for agency staff and volunteers
- Conversation between the Agency Relations Manager and the party who engaged in the harmful behavior
- Follow up conversation with the agency's Executive Director, faith leader, or Board of Directors to determine a plan of action to address the behavior and prevent future incidents of prejudice.

These steps may occur in progression or simultaneously depending on the impact of the incident. If incidents of prejudice or harassment continue to occur despite the steps taken, agency membership may be terminated.

When such incidents occur, our goals are:

- Using a problem-solving approach, repair the relationship with the agency and the person who was harmed.
- Hold the individual who made the harmful comment accountable. Focus on the incident or behavior, not the person.
- Support the person who was harmed, foster and maintain trust, and make sure they feel heard.
- Avoid cutting off food access for the member agency if at all possible.

We hope that you, our agency partners, will extend this expectation to your own staff, volunteers, and participants as well, and that you will work to create an environment that respects and appreciates the full identity of all your community partners.

If you have any questions about the Food Bank's commitment to equity, you may contact the Agency Relations office at agencyrelations@foodbankwma.org, or the Agency Relations Manager directly at michelleg@foodbankwma.org.

Food Transportation, Storage, & Distribution Policies

Transportation Policies

- Food must be transported directly to the program site following pick-up at The Food Bank, Berkshire Depot Drop, or retail partner.
- Freezer blankets or coolers with ice packs are required for transport of cold-storage items, whether from our warehouse or one of our retail partners. The Food Bank will provide 1 free freezer blanket for each program. They will also be available for sale through Buy-In. The Food Bank may refuse to release cold-storage products if a program does not have necessary equipment to ensure food safety.
- Orders picked up at the Food Bank may not exceed the pick up vehicle's cargo limit.
- Vehicles must have clean food storage areas. The Food Bank may refuse to load a vehicle deemed unsuitable to transport product.
- Programs must maintain temperature logs for cold storage items at receipt and arrival at the program site. The Food Bank will inspect these logs during program Monitoring Visits.

Storage & Handling Policies

- Food must be stored a location on file at Food Bank.
- Except for unprocessed fresh produce, all food must be labeled.
- Except in limited circumstances, food may not be shared with other programs, including within your agency. Prior approval is required for any transfer of food between programs.
- Food storage area must be locked, clean, pest-free, and well-ventilated.

- Food must be stored 2" from wall and 6" above the ground.
- Cleaning products must be stored separately/below food products.
- Refrigerated products must be labeled with expiration dates and rotated.

Distribution Policies

- Programs may not discriminate against any person on the grounds of race, color, citizenship, immigration status, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, unfavorable discharge from the military, or protected veteran status.
- Except for USDA products, food from The Food Bank or our retail partners is not subject to income restrictions. Public Programs must serve everyone regardless of income.
- Except for USDA products, food from The Food Bank or our retail partners is not subject to any residency requirements. Public Programs may have a defined service area, but may not refuse service to persons residing outside that service area. For guests who reside outside the program's service area, the program may provide limited service and refer them to local resources.
- Food must be provided in a consistent manner to all program participants. Food may not be provided for staff or volunteers in exchange for service; staff and volunteers must meet same criteria and go through same process as clients to receive food.

A Note on Intake Documents

Food Bank member agencies *are not allowed* to require Photo ID or Social Security numbers (full or partial) in your intake process. For alternative required documents, please see "Recommended Intake Documents" handout (p.33).

- Food from the Food Bank or our retail partners may not be used for any purpose other than distribution to people in need of food assistance. For example, Food Bank products may not be used for fundraising events, volunteer recognition, staff meetings, or incentives for participation in other programs or activities.
- Food may not be sold, bartered, or withheld, nor may special consideration be given in exchange for contributions, volunteer service, or participation in religious ceremonies/rituals. Prayers before a meal at a meal site are permitted as long as they are quick and voluntary—clients must be allowed to abstain, and food may not be withheld/delayed for those who do.
- Distributions must take place only during hours on file at The Food Bank (home delivery to guests and/or emergency off-hours distributions are okay). The Food Bank must be notified of the time and location of any off-site distributions.
- Products from The Food Bank will be distributed within two months of receipt. MEFAP & USDA products must be distributed within 30 days of receipt. Programs with a disaster plan on file with The Food Bank may hold a small reserve of product for emergency situations. The amount of reserve is based on program size and is outlined in Article 1 of the Basic Membership Agreement. This product must be stored separately and labeled for use in disaster situations.
- Programs that provide home delivery must maintain safe food temperatures during transportation. Volunteers and staff performing home deliveries should be trained in basic food safety. We recommend CORI/SORI checks for all volunteers and staff who deliver food to people’s homes.

OTC Medications, Vitamins, Supplements, and Pet Food

- Over the Counter (OTC) medications are approved by the FDA for use without a prescription to treat, cure, or prevent specific health conditions. They have been rigorously tested for safety and efficacy. Examples include pain relievers, cold and flu medications, allergy relief medications, antacids, topical medications, and fluoride toothpaste.
 - If programs choose to accept and distribute Over the Counter (OTC) medications, they must comply with any federal, state, or local restrictions or licensing requirements. At a minimum, product must be within expiration dates, packaging must be intact and tamper-resistant, and must have an intact, readable label that includes the name of the drug, list of ingredients, net quantity of contents, potency per recommended dose, directions for use, storage requirements (if any), control number, expiration date, name and address of manufacturer, and any applicable warnings.
- Vitamins and dietary supplements are not considered drugs and are not intended to treat, cure, or prevent diseases. Examples include vitamins, herbal supplements like ginkgo or St. John’s Wort, minerals like magnesium or zinc, protein powders, probiotics, and melatonin. These products must include a Supplement Facts panel that lists ingredients, serving size, and daily value percentages. They are regulated by the FDA and therefor should be handled in accordance with safe food handling practices.
- Pet food is subject to the same food safety and handling standards as human food.
- Distribution of products containing THC, CBD, or other cannabinoids is prohibited.

Source: Feeding America, Partner Food Bank Agreement, 2023; Feeding America, Guidance on Over-the-Counter (OTC) Medications and Similar Products

Food Safety Regulations

Food Safety

To ensure the safety of the food we distribute, all member agencies must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local food safety regulations.

Food Handler Certification

Every program must have at least one staff member or regular volunteer trained in basic food safety. The Food Bank recommends the **ServSafe Food Handler for Food Banking certification**, developed by Feeding America and the National Restaurant Association. The course and exam are available online for a small fee. Contact our Nutrition Department for further information.

If a program has only one staff member with food safety training and that individual leaves the organization, another individual must obtain this certification within 60 days to avoid loss of ordering privileges. It is recommended that multiple individuals obtain this training at especially large volume programs. **This certification must be renewed once every three years.**

Food Protection Manager Certification

Programs where food is prepared to be served to participants or residents must have at least one staff member with current Food Protection Manager Certification (ServSafe Manager or equivalent). **Once obtained, the Food Protection Manager certificate is valid for 5 years.** The course and exam are available online for a fee, or the Food Bank can refer program staff/volunteers to local instructors and exam proctors. Contact our Nutrition Department for more information.

If a program has only one individual with this certification and that individual either leaves the organization or does not renew their certification before it expires, the program will have 60 days to submit a new certificate to the Food Bank. Failure to do so will result in suspension of ordering privileges until an active certificate is provided to the Food Bank.

Repacking Food

If a program chooses to repackage any food products other than fresh produce (for example bread, bakery products, rice, or beans), a staff member or volunteer who has attended the ServSafe Food Handler for Food Banking training must be present. In addition, Feeding America has strict regulations regarding the space and procedures required to repackage:

Clean Rooms

Each Member that repacks bulk product must have and utilize a Clean Room or provide isolation to ensure adequate food safety control and operating practices to prevent potential product contamination. A clean room is defined as: "a separate, enclosed room that is dedicated for bulk repacking which is designed to the highest standards of sanitation and prevents as many environmental contaminants as possible. It must be designed so that the interior surfaces are durable, non-absorbent and easily cleanable, built to commercial food service construction standards and meet local health regulations."

Repacking Meat

Meat cannot be repacked by any organization unless there is a USDA inspector onsite overseeing the process. A third party can be contracted to do the repacking if it is a USDA inspected facility with an inspector onsite during the repacking. There are critical food safety concerns with repacking meat that require the USDA inspector to be present. Agencies should not be repacking meat unless they have this oversight.

Transportation

When certain foods are kept at temperatures between 41°F and 135°F, bacteria grow quickly and easily. Foods must not be kept between these temperatures for more than four hours. This time limit applies to loading, transporting, and restoring food to a refrigerated or freezer space.

When transporting food from the Food Bank to a program site, agencies must ensure that perishable foods are kept at safe temperatures. Food that is frozen must remain frozen. Vehicles that are not refrigerated must provide a thermal blanket or cooler with ice packs to ensure food safety. Food Bank staff reserves the right to refuse to release cold-storage products to agencies that do not have proper equipment to maintain safe temperatures. Staff and volunteers picking up food from the Food Bank or from retail partners must test the temperature of food upon arrival at their site, and move perishable foods into a refrigerator or freezer immediately.

Vehicles used or transporting food must be kept clean. The Food Bank reserves the right to refuse to give out food if a vehicle is not clean.



Loading & Transporting Food Safely

Keep food at safe temperatures in unrefrigerated vehicles.



Cover cold food with thermal blankets or use coolers with ice packs



Keep drive times to 30 minutes or less



Check food temperatures after arriving at the destination

Prevent contamination:



DON'T store raw food over ready-to-eat food



DON'T store allergens over other products



DON'T store chemicals with food products

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Discard Cans With These Defects



Severe dent in seam



Deep dents in can body



Missing or unreadable labels



Swollen or bulging ends



Holes or signs of leaking



Rust that cannot be wiped off

Storing Food Safely



Store refrigerated food at 41°F (5°C) or lower



Keep frozen food frozen solid



Store food away from walls and at least six inches (15cm) off the floor



Store ready-to-eat food above raw meat, seafood, and poultry



Store food only in containers made for food



Store food only in designated storage areas

Refrigerator Storage Chart

Always store ready-to-eat foods on the top shelf! Arrange other shelves by cooking temperature (highest cooking temperature on the bottom).

Ready-to-Eat Foods (Top Shelf)

Lowest Cooking Temperature

135°F (57°C)

Any food that will be hot held that is not in other categories

145°F (63°C)

Whole seafood; beef, pork, veal, lamb (steaks and chops); roasts; eggs that will be served immediately

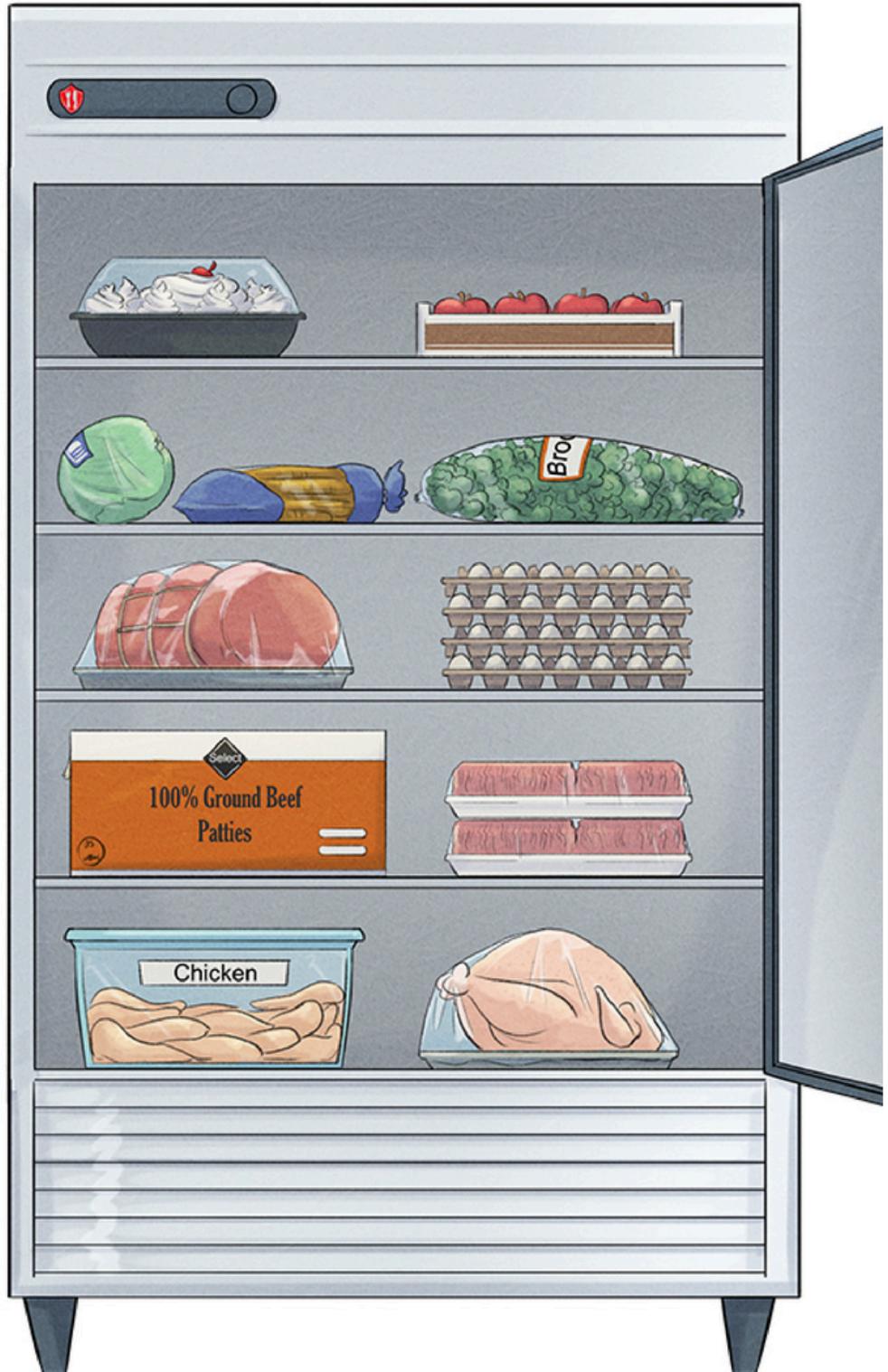
155°F (68°C)

Ground, injected, marinated, or tenderized meats; eggs that will be hot held

165°F (74°C)

All poultry (chicken, turkey, duck, fowl); stuffing made with foods that require temperature control; dishes with previously cooked foods (casseroles)

Highest Cooking Temperature



Keep or Toss? Decoding Expiration Dates

There are several types of dates on packaged and canned goods that make it hard to tell when a product is no longer safe to eat. The date itself may have nothing to do with expiration of the actual food product. Some dates are indicators for grocery stores to remove the product and restock newer product on the shelves. Consumers often misinterpret these dates, thinking the product has gone bad. This leads to lot of perfectly good food being wasted! It's not just the food that is being wasted, but money as well. Look at the following charts to see what certain dates mean and how long food lasts after opening. Most foods (besides milk and eggs) can be frozen too, so consider freezing foods to extend the shelf-life of foods and prevent food waste.

Date	Examples	May Be Found On	What it Means	When to Dispose
Expiration Date	"Expires" 12/5/25 "Do Not Use After" 12/11/25	-Baby food -Baby formula -Medications -Medicine -Vitamins -Nutritional Supplements	The manufacturer cannot guarantee nutritional/medicinal value of the product after this date.	Dispose of product after specific date.
Pack Date	"Packed On" 7/25/25 Can also be a string of numbers: "22:5306412"	-Canned foods -Spices -Dried herbs -Cookies -Crackers	This is the date the food was packaged. Purpose of this date is it to assist retailers with arranging foods on shelves.	Has a very long shelf life. Food does not need to be thrown out on this date!
Use By Date	"Best if Used By" 8/11/25 "Use Before" 8/3/25	-Crackers & cookies -Soda & beverages -Cereal -Salad Mixes	This is the manufacturer's recommendation for when the food will be at peak quality.	Food does not need to be thrown out on this date!
Sell By Date	"Sell By" 7/16/25 "Pull Date" 9/8/25	-Milk -Yogurt -Cheeses -Eggs -Deli Meats	Store must sell foods before the date listed; may donate the foods when they are close to these dates.	If food has been handled properly, and quality is still good, then it is safe to eat.

Food	Fridge Life After Date	Freezer Life After Date
Cheese	-Processed (American): cheese: 30 days -Shredded: 30 days -Hard (cheddar, parmesan): 6 months -Pre-sliced: 14 days	6 months
Margarine	6 months	1 year
Yogurt	1-2 weeks	1-2 months
Butter	1-2 months	6-9 months
Raw Poultry	2 days	9-12 months
Beef & Pork	Ground: 2 days Steak/Chop: 3-5 days	3-4 months

Food	Shelf Life <u>After CODE DATE</u>
BBQ Sauce, Bottled Salad Dressings, Evaporated/Condensed Milk	1 year
Jam, Jelly, Preserves, Ketchup, Salsa, & Spaghetti Sauce	6-18 months
Canned Fruit & Tomato-Based Products	1-2 years
Canned Soups, Meat, & Vegetables	2-3 years
Canned Beans & Fish (Tuna, Salmon, & Sardines)	3 years

Food	Shelf Life <u>AFTER OPENING</u>
Bread	3-5 days
Boxed Juice	4-6 months
Dried Fruit, Toaster Pastries, & Oils	6 months
Pancake Mix	9 months
Dry Beans, Bouillon, Cold Cereal, Macaroni & Cheese, Nuts, Oatmeal (Quick or Regular) & Instant Potatoes	1 year
Peanut Butter	18 months
Rice	Brown Rice: 1 year White Rice: 2 years
Instant Coffee & Powdered Creamer	2 years
Spices	2 years
Dried Pasta	2-3 years
Cocoa Mix	3 years

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has a website [foodsafety.gov/keep/foodkeeperapp/](https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/foodkeeperapp/) that has more food categories and their expiration and freezer dates. There is also an app called Food Keeper which lists different foods' expiration dates and helps you understand food and beverages storage. It can help you maximize the freshness and quality of items and keep food fresh longer. Use these as references when trying to identify if a food has spoiled, and when in doubt, throw it out!

Other Basic Policies

Basic Membership Agreement (BMA)

The Basic Membership Agreement is the annual contract that defines the parameters of Food Bank membership for the fiscal year. It is emailed each September to the ADMIN email address we have on file, and must be signed and returned prior to accessing food in the next fiscal year. The Basic Membership Agreement must be signed by the Admin Contact (Executive Director, board chair, faith leader, etc.) of the sponsoring agency. A blank copy can be found on The Food Bank website and on p. 39-43 of this Guide.

Contact Types

As listed in *Web Windows > My Agency > Contacts* tab.

Main Contact – primary liaison with Food Bank for each distinct feeding program; will receive all Food Bank communications; only ONE main contact is allowed for each program. A program may assign an Alternative/Secondary contact, but the Food Bank cannot guarantee this person will receive all Food Bank communications. Main Contact must actively maintain and check email account.

Admin – sponsoring agency executive director, college/university president, faith leader, or similar; must have authorization to sign contracts on behalf of sponsoring agency; will receive annual contract via email; must be same person for all programs sponsored by an agency

PWW Contact – person who orders food online and receives confirmation emails

Authorized – people allowed to sign for orders in warehouse or for delivery

Food Safety – people who have been trained in food safety and have the appropriate certificate on file at the Food Bank

MSR – person who completes monthly statistics

Update - person who is allowed to make changes to program hours and add/remove people from the program's contact list

If any of the above contact information changes, programs must notify the Food Bank immediately or complete the Member Program Update Form: jotform.com/202306482605146.

Phone Message & Signage for Public Programs

Phone numbers – must be on file at the Food Bank, and calls from Food Bank staff and people seeking food assistance must be returned within 2 business days; outgoing messages must contain location, hours of operation, and there must be a way for callers to leave a message. In addition to the primary phone number, programs must provide a secondary phone number, to be used in the event that program staff cannot be reached at the primary number.

Signs – must include hours of operation, must be posted outside of building and be visible to public. All programs must display Food Bank membership sticker.

Communication

Email – email is the primary form of communication from The Food Bank. Contract materials and important Food Bank policy announcements will be sent out via email. All program Contacts must actively maintain an email account that is on file at The Food Bank. All programs must have at least one other email address on file, in case we are unable to reach someone using the primary email address.

NewsBites – weekly newsletter containing important Food Bank updates, policy changes, training opportunities, advocacy alerts, food/product recalls, food/product updates, and nutrition/recipe information (sent to all Contacts, POL Contacts, and others upon request)

Website – contains a map & list of emergency programs for clients, online ordering link, and important program documents/forms (<https://www.foodbankwma.org/resources-for-agencies-foodbank/forms-documents-links/>) **Password: F00dBANK** (the O's are zeros!)

Food Safety Certification

All programs must have at least one staff member trained in basic food safety. If a program provides prepared meals for clients, staff must have valid Food Protection Manager Certification. Certificates must be on file at the Food Bank.

If the food safety certificate-holder for your program leaves the program or fails to renew their certificate before it expires, the program will have 60 days to submit a current certificate. Failure to do so will result in suspension.

To meet these requirements, the Food Bank can refer your program to online training resources, or in-person ServSafe Manager training options.

Reporting

Monthly data is critical for our operation. We need it to analyze trends, solicit food and funds, and to tell the story of our work. Because we often need quick facts for our community, statistical reports are due by the 15th of each month.

Programs with gaps in statistics submission will be suspended until stats are complete and up to date. Programs that submit incorrect statistics will receive a warning after the first incident.

Subsequent incidents will result in suspension until corrected statistics are submitted.

In October, all guests should be considered new for their first visit during the month. In subsequent months, guests should only be considered new if they have not been to the program since October 1.

Financials

Invoices – Invoices will include products signed for, any fees/grants applied to the order, and the balance due, if any. Programs will be provided 3 copies of the invoice for each order. One copy will be signed when the food is received and will remain with the Food bank. The other two copies must be co-signed by another program staff member or volunteer. One copy must remain on-site at the program. The other copy may be sent to your program's billing office or treasurer.

All programs must retain copies of invoices at the program site for the previous fiscal year, plus the current fiscal year (Oct. 1, 2024-present). Programs that receive USDA foods must retain invoices for the last 3 fiscal years, plus the current fiscal year (Oct. 1, 2022-present).

IMPORTANT: If a change is made to an invoice (returned product, corrections, etc.), an updated invoice will be uploaded to WebWindows and the ordering contact will be notified of the change. A copy of the adjusted invoice MUST be forwarded to the fiscal department of the agency to account for discrepancies in the original invoice.)

Statements – monthly statements are available via the program’s online ordering account. Monthly statements will include a list of orders for the month, payments and grants applied to each invoice, available grants, and the overall balance of the program. Agencies should pay balances from monthly statements, which will reflect invoice corrections made during the month. Statements will only be generated if the program has a balance due at the end of the month.

Grants – grants on program accounts will be applied to eligible orders at the time of pick-up until funds are depleted.

Payment – Programs must pay full balance of monthly statement within 30 days of receipt. Payment must be in the form of a check from the agency; **electronic funds transfers, personal checks, or cash will not be accepted**, though we are able to accept checks from bill-pay services. Programs in financial arrears may be placed on “Free Food Only,” “Cash on Receipt,” or “Suspended” status:

- Free Food Only status: programs may only access food that does not have a Shared Maintenance Fee, Delivery Fee, or Buy-in charge; programs on delivery may only access MEFAP/USDA for delivery orders (non-MEFAP/USDA foods will be removed).
- Payment on Receipt status: programs must pay full balance of invoice when picking up each shopping order—program may not carry a balance.
- Suspended status: programs suspended for non-payment must pay full balance of account to resume shopping/membership privileges.

Information Security

Guests’ personal information must be kept secure and confidential, and may not be shared with any outside source without explicit written consent from the guest. External funders/auditors (such as the Food Bank, USDA, grant funders) may view client information and sign in logs onsite (for the purpose of the audit/review only), but may not remove client information from the premises of the program. Programs must adhere to MA 201 CMR 17.00, Standards for the Protection of Personal Information.

Guest Donations

Programs that receive USDA may not solicit donations from guests (including an onsite donation jar). Non-USDA programs may solicit donations as long as they are truly voluntary and confidential, and in no way affect food/services provided. Guest donations are neither recommended nor endorsed by The Food Bank.

Disaster Plans

It is recommended but not required that Public Programs should have a disaster plan on file with the Food Bank. If you do not have a disaster plan for your organization in place, contact the Food Bank's Agency Resource Coordinator for assistance in this process.

Recalls

Programs will be notified by direct phone call and email if a product that is known to have been distributed through the Food Bank has been recalled. Food that is recalled must be discarded within 24 hours of notification of recall by the Food Bank, and guests must be immediately notified of recall. Recalled food/products may not be redistributed to any group or individual. Programs must maintain records of recall incidents for at least 2 years. The Food Bank will review these records during program monitoring visits.

If there is reason to believe a recalled product may have been distributed through salvage, the Food Bank will email the primary contact at all programs who may have received the product.

Program Operation

Programs must order food at least once every 6 months to maintain Food Bank membership. Programs must distribute food during hours on file at the Food Bank. Programs may only distribute food at the location on file at the Food Bank. Changes in hours or location of operation must be reported to the Food Bank in advance.

Media Guidelines

When speaking with media, it is important to accurately portray the relationship between the Food Bank and its partner agencies. Please refer to the Member Agency Media and Public Communication document on pp. 7 - 8. This document clarifies language and provides suggestions for talking with the media. For example, if you would like to tell the community that "X dollars will buy XYZ pounds of food at the Food Bank," the accurate way to say this would be more like, "through our partnership with the Food Bank, we are able to leverage XYZ pounds of food each year."

Maintain Your Membership

Below are common reasons program memberships are suspended or not slated for annual renewal:

- Missing statistics
- Non-payment of financial statements
- Inability to schedule monitoring visit
- Loss of food safety certification
- Loss of agency 501(c)3 status
- Basic Membership Agreement not signed/returned
- Not ordering food at least every 6 months
- Ordering food without distributing it to clients

NOTE: Programs with suspended membership will not be automatically sent renewal materials, but may request them until the end of the fiscal year following their suspension. After one full fiscal year of inactivity, all programs must submit a full reapplication for membership, and are subject to the same criteria as all other applicants. Approval of application is not guaranteed.

Pick Up Process & Need-To-Knows

Arrival – Please arrive at the start of your appointment time, and park in the agency check in spaces. If a staff member doesn't greet you right away, please ring the bell next to the check in door. Inform the warehouse staff which program(s) you are picking up for. They will direct you to the appropriate loading space.

Loading – Items that can be loaded into your vehicle using a forklift will be loaded by Food Bank staff. You are responsible for loading all other items into your vehicle.

If Order Doesn't Fit into Vehicle – It is important when ordering to keep in mind the weight limit for your vehicle and the amount of space you will have in your vehicle when picking up the order. All orders must be picked up on the same day by 3pm.

Authorization and ID – Everyone who picks up must be authorized by the program to do so. Please be prepared to present ID.

Timeliness – Please do not come very early for appointments, as we have limited space for agency vehicles in our parking lot and loading area.

Hours – Regular warehouse hours are from 9am-12pm and 1pm-3pm Monday–Friday. There is no staff in the warehouse to retrieve orders between noon and 1pm.

Late Policy – If you are late for your pickup time, you may have to wait to get your order until other programs are finished with their appointments. If you arrive after 3pm you will not be able to pick up your order.

Rescheduling & Cancellation – You can cancel an order before it has been picked (prepared for pickup, usually the day before your pickup date) by emailing agencyrelations@foodbankwma.org (see contact info on p. 61). There is no penalty for cancelling an order before it has been picked.

If your order is cancelled after it has already been picked, a restocking fee may be applied. The restocking fee is \$.02/lb. for pickup orders. For delivery orders, the restocking fee is \$.03/lb. If you need to reschedule your appointment, please email

agencyrelations@foodbankwma.org.

Rescheduled orders must be picked up within two business days of the original pick up date.

Missed Pickups – If you do not call and don't show up for your pickup appointment, you will be contacted to reschedule for pickup within the next 2 business days. Failure to reschedule or pick up at the rescheduled time will result in a Missed Pickup. Your program will receive a warning for the first Missed Pickup; a second Missed Pickup will result in the program incurring a Missed Pickup fee (see p. 30).

Returning Pallets/Trash – You may return up to 5 pallets back to The Food Bank. We reserve the right to reject pallets that are dirty or damaged. While loading your order into your vehicle, you may also break down pallets and dispose of the plastic shrink-wrap in our trash cans. However, you may NOT dispose of any other trash at the Food Bank.

Ordering Deadlines – The Food Bank needs a full business day to prepare orders; online orders must be submitted two business days prior to a scheduled pick-up or delivery. Some deadlines are adjusted for known closings (most federal holidays, end of quarter inventory, extended closings between Christmas & New Year and June inventory and July 4 holiday) - see "FY2026 Deadlines for Online Order Submission" (p.28).

Online Ordering

1. Go to: <https://foodbankwma.primarius.app/pww/Home/Login/>
2. Enter your login information and review the home page for important Food Bank announcements.
 - If you need your login information or help resetting your password, please email agencyrelations@foodbankwma.org.
3. Click on "Shop," then "Shop Online."
4. If you have not yet selected your delivery or pickup time, you must do so before selecting product.
 - Select your desired date from the calendar
 - Select the time and type of appointment from the drop down
 - Appointments are listed by time.
 - For pickup appointments at the Food Bank in Chicopee, please select "PICKUP at Food Bank 1" or "PICKUP at Food Bank 2."
 - Duplicate appointments are only for agencies picking up orders for multiple programs at the same time.
 - Delivery appointments are listed after 3pm - this is just to keep them grouped together, not the time your delivery will actually arrive. Your delivery will arrive during the window specified in your Delivery Agreement.
 - If all you see are Duplicate Appointments or delivery appointments after 3pm, that means there are no pickup appointments at the Food Bank available for that day.
5. Click "Save." You will be taken to the shopping list.
6. On the shopping list, enter the number of cases of the items you would like in the "Qty" box. The limit below the box shows how many of this item are available to your program - you may not order more than this amount. Hit "enter," and wait for system to update your cart before ordering more.

You can search, filter, sort, and change the list display by using the options in the gray bar at the top of the shopping list.

7. When done selecting your items, you can review your order by clicking the blue text next to the shopping cart icon at the top of the screen, which tells you how many items (note: items = how many different products, not how many cases) are in your cart. Be sure order weight does not exceed your delivery allotment or your vehicle's cargo capacity (including weight of driver/passengers).

You can also cancel your order from the "view cart" screen.

8. If order is correct, click "Proceed to Checkout."

- Your Shipping Method will say "AGENCY VEHICLE." We will adjust this after you submit your order, according to the type of appointment you chose and your existing delivery agreement.
- You can change the day and time of your appointment by clicking the blue clock icon next to the "Pickup Delivery Date" field.
- You can still make further changes to your order by clicking "Shop" on the blue line at the top of the page and selecting "Shop Online."
- Please don't leave messages in the "Delivery Pickup Notes" box - we don't read them.

9. When your order is correct click on "Submit Order." You should immediately be brought to the Order History page, where you can view your order by clicking the word "View" in blue next to the order number.

You can see the status of the order in the yellow bar at the top of the screen - it should say "Entered." If it says "Data Entry," your order was not submitted, and you should go back and try again.

While your order is in the "Entered" status, you can still change the day/time of your appointment by clicking "Schedule Your Pickup Date/Time." This option is no longer available if the status says "Reviewed," "Released," or "Picked."

Once your order is "Picked," it is ready for you to pick up or for us to deliver it to you.

There is no longer a "Print," button, so if you need a printed copy of your order, you should use the "print" function from your web browser.

Other Information

In addition to online ordering, you can also access current/former invoices, billing statements, and program contact information. In addition, you may use the portal to enter required monthly statistics and retail pickup receipts, as well as run reports on the volume of different categories of food your program has received, and the cost/value of that food, during a given time period.



Ordering Deadlines

FY2026 Deadlines for Online Order Submission

All orders must allow one full business day prior to pickup/delivery day for review and order preparation. Please use the following as guidance for ordering timeframes:

GENERAL WEEK (NO HOLIDAYS/CLOSINGS)		
For Pickup day:	Order can be opened on:	Order must be submitted by Midnight:
Monday	Tuesday (prior week)	Thursday (prior week)
Tuesday	Wednesday (prior week)	Friday (prior week)
Wednesday	Thursday (prior week)	Monday
Thursday	Friday (prior week)	Tuesday
Friday	Monday	Wednesday

KNOWN HOLIDAYS/CLOSINGS IN FY2026				
Closing:	Depts. Closed	Reason:	Orders for:	Submit order by Midnight:
Wed., Oct. 1 - Tue., Oct 7, 2025	Warehouse & Online Ordering	System Upgrade	Wednesday, Oct. 8 Thursday, Oct. 9	Thursday, Sept. 25 Friday, Sept. 26
Monday, Oct. 13, 2025	Warehouse & Offices	Indigenous Peoples Day	Tuesday, Oct. 14	Thursday, Oct. 9
Thursday & Friday, Nov. 27 & 28, 2025	Offices, Warehouse	Thanksgiving	Monday, Dec. 1	Tuesday, Nov. 25
Wednesday, Dec. 24 - CLOSED after 12pm Thursday, Dec. 25, 2025 – Monday, Jan. 5, 2026	Warehouse CLOSED: 12/25/24– 1/5/26 Online Ordering CLOSED: 12/30 & 12/31 Online Ordering OPEN: 1/1/2026 Offices also closed: 12/25/25 and 12/26/25 and 1/1/26 and 1/2/2026	Holidays, Cleaning, Inventory	Tuesday, Jan. 6 Wednesday, Jan. 7	Monday, Dec 22 Tuesday, Dec 23
Monday, Jan. 19, 2026	Offices, Warehouse	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Tuesday, Jan. 20 Wednesday, Jan. 21	Thursday, Jan. 15 Friday, Jan. 16
Monday, Feb. 16, 2026	Offices, Warehouse	Presidents' Day	Tuesday, Feb. 17 Wednesday, Feb. 18	Thursday, Feb. 12 Friday, Feb. 13
Mon., March 30 & Tue., March 31, 2026	Warehouse & Online Ordering System	Inventory	Wednesday, Apr. 1 Thursday, Apr. 2	Thursday, Mar. 26 Friday, Mar. 27
Monday, May 25, 2026	Offices, Warehouse	Memorial Day	Tuesday, May 26 Wednesday, May 27	Thursday, May 21 Friday, May 22
Friday, June 19, 2026	Offices, Warehouse	Juneteenth	Monday, June 22 Tuesday, June 23	Wednesday, June 17 Thursday, June 18
Mon., June 29 –Friday, Jul. 3, 2026	Warehouse CLOSED: 6/29 - 7/3 Online Ordering CLOSED: 6/29 - 6/30 Online Ordering OPEN: 7/1 Offices also closed: 7/3	Inventory, Independence Day	Monday, July 6 Tuesday, July 7	Thursday, June 25 Friday, June 26
Monday, Sept. 7, 2026	Offices, Warehouse	Labor Day	Tuesday, Sept. 8 Wednesday, Sept. 9	Thursday, Sept. 3 Friday, Sept. 4
Mon., Sept. 28 - Wed., Sept. 30, 2026	Warehouse CLOSED: 9/28-30 Online Ordering CLOSED: 9/29-30	End of Year Inventory + Audit	Thursday, Oct. 1 Friday, Oct. 2	Thursday, Sept. 24 Friday, Sept. 25

Unexpected Closures

Unexpected closures (most likely weather-related) will be noted on our website (www.foodbankwma.org) and our greeting (413-247-9738) after 8:00am. They will also be listed on the following:

- Televised listing: Channel 22 (WWLP)
- Web listings: www.wwlp.com, www.wggb.com, www.cbs3springfield.com

Unplanned closings will NOT be listed on the web windows portal. In the event of a closing, the following procedures will be in place to accommodate orders made through our online ordering system:

Pickup Appointments

For appointments originally scheduled for the day of a closing – You must call by noon the first day we are open to schedule a new pickup time or cancel your order. Your order will be held for no more than two business days. Upon inspection by Food Bank staff and/or agency pick-up personnel, perishables may be removed from your order as well.

For appointments originally scheduled for the day after a closing – Because our practice is to prepare orders the day before pickup, orders with morning appointments will not be available until after noon the day following a closing. If you had pre-scheduled a morning appointment, you must call by noon the first day we are open for business to cancel your order or schedule a new pickup time. These orders will be held until noon two days following the closing. If you are not going to pick up your order, please let us know immediately.

Please note that the warehouse will not be open for any order pick-up until NOON on the day following a full-day snow-closure.

If you choose to cancel your order, no restocking fee will be applied. If you choose to reschedule, your order will be held to the same pickup expectations as normal orders. If you reschedule an order and fail to pick it up, you may be charged a missed pickup and/or restocking fee per our order pickup policy.

Delivery Appointments

For deliveries originally scheduled for the day of a closing – Because our delivery routes are tightly scheduled and we do not have additional pallet space available on our existing routes, we are unable to reschedule deliveries. You may choose to pick up your order at the Food Bank when we are open again, or cancel your order.

For deliveries originally scheduled for the day after a closing – Because orders are prepared in advance, these deliveries may not take place as scheduled. Food Bank staff will contact you to let you know if your delivery is cancelled. If so, you may choose to pick up your order at the Food Bank, or cancel your order if you are unable to pick up.

Please know that we will try our best to accommodate all appointments and deliveries, but disruptions in service are likely. Please be prepared to wait for your order.

When placing orders, please provide a reliable phone number; this will help if we need to contact you about any changes in your order or appointment.

Fees & Financials

While approximately 86% of Food Bank food/products come to partner programs free of any charges, some fees are occasionally necessary to ensure our operation. As such, the following fees/costs are assessed at appropriate times during our operation:

Membership Fees (applied in late August/early September; MUST be paid by Oct. 1 of each year, or prior to membership for new programs):

\$150 annually for Public and Semi-Private Programs

\$250 annually for Private Programs

Shared Maintenance Fee: 10¢/lb

Fee for some donated foods to assist with costs of receipt, storage, and distribution.

Delivery Fees (applied for NON MEFAP/USDA products): 5¢/lb.

Purchase Costs (variable):

Markup for products purchased for the Buy-In program.

Some fees are applied due to the hardship created by missed orders/appointments:

Missed Delivery Fee:

Applied if a program placed an order for delivery, but was not present/able to receive it; includes failure to remove snow during winter months. \$50 for the first incident, increasing by \$25 per incident thereafter (max \$200 per incident).

Missed Pickup Fee:

Applied if a program placed an order for pickup, but did not show up to pick it up at the scheduled time and failed to call ahead to cancel/reschedule. May also be applied if a program was not able to pick up its full order at the time of its scheduled appointment. \$25 per incident, increasing by \$10 per incident thereafter (max \$100 per incident).

Restocking Fee:

Applied when orders are returned to stock due to missed pickups/deliveries. \$.02/lb. for pickup orders; \$.03/lb. for delivery orders.

Returned Check Fee:

Applied if a check for payment on a Food Bank account was returned due to insufficient funds, or because the check did not originate from the agency/program. \$25 per incident.

Missed Monitoring Visit Fee:

Applied if the main program contact or approved liaison failed to be present during a scheduled monitoring visit. \$25 per incident.

Lastly, some fees exist to ensure that guests are able to find the information they need to access food resources:

No Outgoing Message Fee:

Applied when the publicly listed phone number on file with The Food Bank for a Public program (see p.5) does not have an outgoing phone message that includes program hours and location. \$25 per quarter for each quarter or partial quarter of non-compliance.

Monthly Statements & Payments

When a program incurs a charge, available grants are automatically applied. At the end of the month, programs that have a balance on their account will have a monthly statement placed on their online ordering account, which must be paid within 30 days.

To access monthly statements:

Go to

<https://foodbankwma.primarius.app/pww/Home/Login/>

Enter your program's login information. On the Home page, click on the "My Documentss" tab.

If there is balance for your program, a monthly statement will appear in the documents list.

NOTE: Monthly statements reflect all financial activity on an account. All invoices with balances will be listed on the monthly statement. If there are no charges on the invoice, there is no financial activity and it will not be listed on the statement.

*ALSO NOTE: While most invoices are available online, occasionally an invoice may be missing from your My Documentss tab. If you see an invoice on your statement that is not available online, please contact us. **The monthly statement is the most accurate reflection of account activity, and is what agencies should use to pay balances.***

ALWAYS review your monthly statement to check for discrepancies between the statement and the invoices you received when you received your order. If you are missing items, or receive

items you did not order, please notify agencyrelations@foodbankwma.org immediately.

Please pay the amount shown in the "Total Due" box on the statement, which will reflect the sum of all outstanding invoices and credits on your program's account.

To pay the balance, print the statement and mail it with a check from your sponsoring Agency's bank account to:

Food Bank of Western Massachusetts
ATTN: Agency Accounts Receivable
25 Carew Street
Chicopee, MA 01020

Please include your 5-digit program number on the check. If paying for multiple programs, please pay each individual program with a separate check.

NOTE: Programs with accounts that are 90 days overdue will be placed on Free Food Only status; programs with accounts that are 120 days overdue will be placed on suspension.



Monitoring Visits

Monitoring visits must take place before your first distribution as a member of the Food Bank and every two years after that. We'll schedule the visit with the Main Contact for your program. For new site inspections, please ensure site is free of physical and chemical hazards (ex. use of solvents), or construction activities happening during the inspection; we reserve right to terminate visit and reschedule in the event that such hazards are present. Here's what to expect during your visit:

Review of all Food Bank invoices – These should be:

- Co-signed, if physically signed at pickup
- Kept on-file at the site of food distribution (or online, if signed electronically)
- All programs: Previous fiscal year + current fiscal year (Oct 1, 2023-present.
- USDA programs: 3 fiscal years + current fiscal year (i.e. for FY25, invoices dating back to Oct. 1, 2021 will be checked, even if checked during the last visit)

Review of your record keeping process – How you keep track of who receives food, if applicable.

Review of your policy for how food is distributed – How often, quantities of food, eligibility requirements, intake etc. if applicable.

Check of all refrigerators and freezers that are used to store Food Bank food – Each should have a thermometer and a temperature & cleaning log (Properly running freezers should be reading a temperature between 0 and -20 Fahrenheit and fridges at a temperature between 33-40 degrees Fahrenheit.) Foods not kept within safe temperature will be discarded during the visit.

Check of dry goods storage area – Should be:

- Clean and organized
- Non-food items stored separately
- All food properly labeled and stored at least 6 inches off the floor and 2 inches away from the wall.

Additional checks for programs receiving USDA

- USDA products must be stored separately from other food and labeled separately from other food
- Review display of USDA Income Eligibility Guidelines, Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights, and the "And Justice for All" poster
- Review of completed USDA pantry sign-in sheets or eligibility declaration forms (for pantries). Sheets must have initial signature the first time a client receives food. Sheets must track who receives USDA food on any given day.
- Review of completed Annual/Monthly Reconciliation forms (for past 3 years + current)

Retail Pickup

- Enabled Agency Agreement
- Review of current stores and pickup times
- Review of pickup temp logs

Review of current program contacts

If the main contact as listed with the Food Bank cannot make the scheduled appointment they must call ahead to cancel and reschedule, or designate another person to complete the visit. If no one shows up on the day of the visit, the program will incur a \$25 fee to cover travel and staff time.

Verification Options for Client Intake/Eligibility

Like you, our goal is to ensure equitable access to healthy food to all people regardless of their circumstance. Unnecessary verification creates barriers to access, and the practice of verification is discouraged. **Note that programs that receive MEFAP and USDA foods may request, but must not require verification of any kind.**

At the same time, we recognize programs may need to request proof of identity, income, address, etc. for various reasons—other funders, board requirements, etc. Below is a list of options that can help with these verifications. Allowing guests to choose which option works best for them provides greater flexibility and ensures food access at the same time.

When considering what you ask of guests, please think critically about the impact on the guest in terms of food access, civil rights, and personal dignity. For each item you ask for verification of, consider why you need this information and why you need verification of it.

If you determine that you do need verification of income, residency, veteran status, etc., **you MUST let guests know that they will not be turned away or denied food for failure to provide this information.** Be aware that the more information you collect, the more you are at risk for client information data breaches. Massachusetts has laws about how particular types of information must be secured. It is important to be aware of this law: <http://www.mass.gov/ocabr/docs/idtheft/201cmr1700reg.pdf>.

Identification Verification	Income Verification
Mass Health or other Insurance Card	Self-declaration (via signature) of income eligibility
EBT Card (non photo EBT)	Mass Health Card
Local supermarket card	EBT Card
Bank/Debit Card	Any governmental aid benefit statement
Library Card	Last year's tax return
Public Transit Card	Pay Stub
Referral from other social service agency (not recommended if referring agency mandates a photo ID for any client who may receive USDA or MEFAP foods)	
Voluntary photo ID (can be an OPTION if it is convenient for the client, NOT MANDATED by the program)	
Student ID	
Proof of Household Size	Proof of Residency/Address
Mass Health card or other insurance card	Utility Bill
Childcare payments	Mail with postage mark
School registration for children	Bank statement
Landlord Verification/Affidavit of number listed on lease/rental agreement	Signed lease/rental agreement
Marriage License	Property tax bill
Tax Return	
Birth Certificate	
Self-declaration (via signature) of household size	

- The Food Bank does NOT require verification of any participant information for our member agencies.
- It is prohibited for programs that receive state-funded (MEFAP) food to deny access to patrons who are unable or unwilling to provide requested verifications.
- Programs that provide USDA or MEFAP are prohibited from requiring Photo IDs (EBT cards included) or Social Security numbers.
- We encourage your site to be consistent with these requirement options on all agency messaging and literature for participants.

Monthly Reporting / Online Statistics Entry

Statistics are required by all programs by the 15th of the following month. For example, statistics for August are due by September 15. Please answer all required questions completely. You may edit your statistics on the calendar day that they were submitted, after which you will need to contact the Agency Relations team so we can reset the statistics for the month or enter the corrections for you.

To access the statistics entry screen, click on the "Statistics" tab from the home screen in your online ordering session, and then click the green "Add New Agency Statistics" button on the right of the page.

Select the **Month** for which you would like to submit your report, then click "**Save.**"

Comments – If no Food Bank food was distributed for the month, please enter month/year above, and then "NO SERVICE" in the comment box next to "Total Individuals," with a brief explanation of the reason you did not have service (ex. "closed for repairs"). You may submit your report for the month with all 0s.

Required By All Programs

01 Total Individuals – Enter the number of people you served this month. Count each person only once.

- Pantries & Internal Pantries: Please include all family members in total
- All other programs: Please only include individuals served directly

02 New Individuals – Of the individuals above (01 Total Individuals), how many were there for the first time since October 1 of this fiscal year (Oct. – Sept.)?

03a New Individuals 0-17 Years – Of these new individuals, how many were age 0-17?

03b New Individuals 18-64 Years – Of these new individuals, how many were age 18-64?

03c New Individuals 65+ Years – Of these new individuals, how many were age 65+?

Required By Public and Semi-Private Programs

Pantries, Meal Sites, Shelters, and Campus Pantries

04 EMER ONLY Total Households – How many HOUSEHOLDS did you provide food for this month? (A household is described as a group of people living together, often a family, who share food expenses.)

05 EMER ONLY New Households - Of the HOUSEHOLDS reported above, how many were there for the first time since October 1 of this fiscal year (Oct. – Sept.)?

06 EMER ONLY Service Visits – Enter the number of people served multiplied by the number of times they were served by your program.

- PANTRIES: Please count each INDIVIDUAL in a FAMILY each time he/she received food from your program
- MEAL SITES/SHELTERS: Please count each meal served as one service visit

09 (MEALSITES, SHELTERS, & REHABS ONLY) Total Meals Served - How many MEALS did you serve this month? (A typical sit-down meal is a meal, even if prepared by clients themselves at your location or is taken off site. Please count 3 snacks as 1 meal.)

When finished, click on the "Save" button at the top of the Statistics page.

Monthly Service Report

Email:
agencyrelations@foodbankwma.org
 Mailing address:
 Food Bank of Western Massachusetts
 ATTN: Agency Relations
 25 Carew Street
 Chicopee, MA 01020

Month		Agency	
Program Number		Program	

All Programs

TOTAL INDIVIDUALS			Pantries & Internal Pantries: please include all family members in total; All other programs: please only include individuals served directly.
NEW INDIVIDUALS	Total		Of the INDIVIDUALS reported above, how many were there for the first time since October 1st of this fiscal year (Oct. – Sept.)? (should = sum of age breakdowns)
	0-17		Of these new individuals, how many were children (age 0-17)?
	18-64		Of these new individuals, how many were age 18-64?
	65+		Of these new individuals, how many were age 65+?

Emergency Programs Only (Pantries, Meal sites, Shelters)

TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS		How many HOUSEHOLDS did you provide food for this month?
NEW HOUSEHOLDS		Of the HOUSEHOLDS reported above, how many were there for the first time since October 1st of this fiscal year (Oct. – Sept.)?
SERVICE VISITS		PANTRIES: Please count each INDIVIDUAL in a FAMILY each time he/she received food from your program. MEAL SITES/ SHELTERS/ REHABS: Please count each meal served as one service visit.
Total MEALS SERVED (MEAL SITES, SHELTERS, and REHABS ONLY)		How many MEALS did you serve this month? (A typical sit-down meal is a meal, even if prepared by clients themselves at your location or is taken off site. Please count 3 snacks as 1 meal.)

Informe de Servicio Mensual

Email:
agencyrelations@foodbankwma.org
 Mailing address:
 Food Bank of Western Massachusetts
 ATTN: Agency Relations
 25 Carew Street
 Chicopee, MA 01020

Mes		Agencia	
Numero del Programa		Programa	

Todos Los Programas:

TOTAL DE INDIVIDUOS		Despensas y Despensas Internas: favor de incluir a todos los miembros de la familia en total Los demás programas: favor solamente incluya individuos servido directamente
NUEVOS INDIVIDUOS	Total	De los INDIVIDUOS reportados arriba, cuantos fueron por primera vez desde el 1 de Octubre del año fiscal (Oct. – Sept.)? (debe ser igual a la suma de los rangos de edad)
	0-17	De estos nuevos individuos, cuantos fueron niños (edades 0-17)?
	18-64	De estos nuevos individuos, cuantos fueron adultos (edades 18-64)?
	65+	De estos nuevos individuos, cuantos fueron ancianos (edades 65+)?

Programas (Despensas, Comedores or Sitios de Comidas, Refugios:

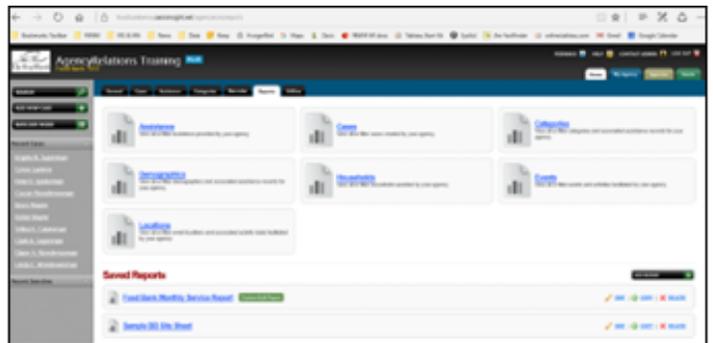
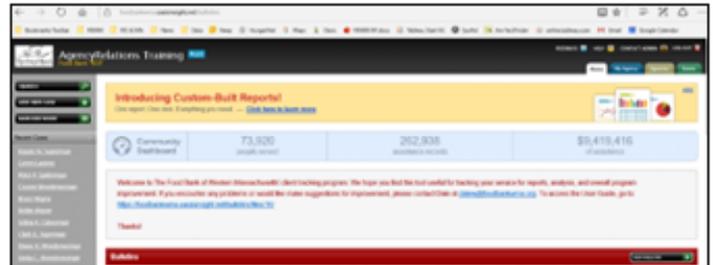
HOGARES TOTALES		Cuantos HOGARES recibieron alimentos este mes?
HOGARES NUEVOS		De los HOGARES reportados anteriormente, ¿cuántos estaban visitaron por primera vez desde el 1 de Octubre del año fiscal (Oct. – Sept.)?
VISITAS DE SERVICIO		DSPENSAS: Favor de contar cada INDIVIDUO en una FAMILIA cada vez que recibió alimentos de su programa. COMEDORES/REFUGIOS/rehabilitaciones: Favor de contar cada comida servida como una visita de servicio
COMIDAS SERVIDAS en Total (COMEDORES/ REFUGIOS/ rehabilitaciones)		¿Cuántas comidas sirvió este mes? (Una comida sentada es considerada una comida, incluso si los clientes preparan su propia comida o se lleva fuera del comedor. Cuento 3 meriendas como 1 comida)

Oasis Insight

Looking for a better way to manage your client & distribution records? The Food Bank is glad to offer our member agencies the option to use Oasis Insight, a secure, online database network specifically designed to meet food banking needs.

Benefits:

- No software to download – computer or tablet with internet access is all that is needed
- Designed especially for food banking, and specifically for our food bank network
- Quickly generate monthly report for The Food Bank
- Customizable – track the client data you want to track, including household demographic and income status, USDA eligibility, holiday baskets, clothing distributions, etc.
- Application forms, eligibility confirmation, etc., can all be uploaded to the client’s record so you can go completely paperless
- Data from spreadsheets and other data sources can be migrated into Oasis Insight for data continuity and integrity
- Data can be exported to spreadsheets for offline analysis
- Generate client lists
- Generate reports for other funders, such as CDBG, Project Bread, and EFSP grants
- Barcode scanning is available for quick distribution processing (extra equipment required)
- Secure record-keeping – all data is private, encrypted, and securely stored and protected



 Monthly Service Report			
Month/Year of Service	9/2015	Agency	Food Bank TEST
Program Number	TEST	Program	
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	9	Please include all family members in total – each person in the household counted one time (unduplicated)	
NEW INDIVIDUALS	4	Of the INDIVIDUALS reported above, how many were there for the first time since October 1 of reporting fiscal year?	
NEW INDIVIDUALS AGE BREAKDOWN	0 - 17	3	Of these 300% individuals, how many were children (age 0-17) ?
	18 - 64	1	Of these 200% individuals, how many were age 18-64 ?
	65+	0	Of these 000% individuals, how many were age 65+ ?
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	3	How many HOUSEHOLDS did you provide food for this month?	
NEW HOUSEHOLDS	1	Of the HOUSEHOLDS reported above, how many were there for the first time since October 1 of reporting fiscal year?	
SERVICE VISITS	9	Please count each INDIVIDUAL in a FAMILY each time he/she received food from your program (duplicated)	
TOTAL POUNDS DISTRIBUTED	140.00	Combine Pantry food/products from usda and non-usda categories.	

To learn more about Oasis Insight, contact Agency Relations at agencyrelations@foodbankwma.org

FOOD BANK OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

MEMBER PROGRAM UPDATE FORM (updates can also be made at <https://tinyurl.com/FBWMupdate>)

This form **MUST** be signed by your program's Main Contact, Admin Contact, or another contact who is authorized to make changes to the contact list for your program.

Submit form to: Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, 25 Carew Street, Chicopee MA 01020
Or submit by email to: agencyrelations@foodbankwma.org

AGENCY	
NAME OF PROGRAM(S) to which you would like these changes applied	
PROGRAM NUMBER(S)** to which you would like these changes applied	
NEW PROGRAM ADDRESS*	
NEW PROGRAM HOURS	
NEW PROGRAM PHONE***	

*Inspection required prior to approval):

**If applying changes to more than one program, this form must be signed by the ADMIN Contact for the AGENCY

***Public programs must have an outgoing phone message with hours of operation and a way to leave a message; calls from people seeking assistance must be returned within 2 business days

NAME	PHONE	EMAIL	MAIN CONTACT (Only one allowed per program)	OK TO SIGN FOR ORDERS	BILLING CONTACT (Must be the same for all agency programs - requires Admin Approval)	PWW LOGIN	REMOVE
NAME of Person Signing This Form: (Must be MAIN, ADMIN, or other contact authorized to make contact changes)							
SIGNATURE:							
DATE:							

Basic Membership Agreement

Note: the following membership agreement applies to nonprofit and religious organizations only. A separate, modified agreement exists for campus pantries.

A. MEMBERSHIP

1. Each member agency will pay an annual membership fee before accessing the Food Bank's services. The fee is due by October 1, 2025 (or prior to membership for new program applicants), accompanied by a signed copy of this Basic Membership Agreement. The membership fee is \$150.00 for each emergency food program site (pantry, meal site, shelter) and \$250.00 for each non-emergency program site. After January 1, 2026 fees for new programs will be pro-rated by quarter. See Article 61 for full schedule of Food Bank fees. Membership fees are non-transferrable and non-refundable.

2. The member agency must be a private, non-profit, tax-exempt organization recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization or meet the majority of requirements to be considered a Church by the IRS. (For clarity, the IRS treatment of an organization as a Church is not limited in terms of denomination, faith tradition, or religious practice.) The member agency may not be a private foundation, and its sponsored programs may not be private foundations. The member agency must be incorporated for or operate programs for the purpose of serving the ill, needy, or infants (minor children).

NOTE: Agencies that are not churches must actively maintain their 501(c)(3) status with the IRS. The IRS requires all non-church 501(c)(3) organizations to file an annual return or notice. Those that fail to do so for three consecutive years will have their 501(c)(3) status automatically revoked by the IRS and must reapply (an expensive and lengthy process). Food Bank staff periodically review the IRS list of Non-Profit Organizations (Publication 78) and the Automatic Revocation of Exemption List. If an agency has had its 501(c)(3) status revoked, their membership with the Food Bank will be suspended until evidence of IRS reinstatement is provided. Suspension due to revocation of IRS status will not merit a refund of any or all paid membership fees. For more information about IRS Charitable Organization regulations, see: www.irs.gov/charities.

3. The member agency assumes programmatic, financial, and legal responsibility for all sponsored programs' obligations with the Food Bank.

4. Programs must comply with the policies, procedures, and recordkeeping requirements of the Food Bank as outlined in this agreement and the Essentials Guide member handbook.

5. The member agency will not engage in discrimination against any person on the grounds of race, color, citizenship, immigration status, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, unfavorable discharge from the military, protected veteran status, or as otherwise prohibited under the current USDA nondiscrimination statement. The member agency agrees to comply with the following laws and regulations:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.)
 - Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.)
 - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794)
 - Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.)
 - Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987
 - Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
 - Executive Order 13166 "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency" (August 2000)
 - Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008
 - Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended
 - Department of Justice Enforcement Guidelines, 28 CFR Parts 35 and 42
 - Regulations of the Department of Agriculture
 - Food and Nutrition Services directives and guidelines
- Further, discriminatory comments based on any of the above protected classes will not be tolerated. See FY25 Essentials Guide member agency handbook for further details regarding consequences of such comments, which may include informing the agency's Executive Director, board, or, in the case of repeated incidents, termination of membership.

B. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

A program site is defined as the physical location where a member agency stores and distributes Food Bank foods and products. If there are multiple programs operating at the same site, each is considered a separate program within the Food Bank's records. The Food Bank assigns each program site a unique five-digit account number which is used in reference to the program's account. Program memberships are non-transferable. The term "Products from the Food Bank" includes food and other items either received directly from the Food Bank or enabled by the Food Bank, such as through the Enabled Agency (Retail Pickup) program. The Member Agency agrees to the following:

Receipt of Food

6. Programs agree to receive, store, transfer, use, and handle product safely and properly in accordance with applicable law.
7. Each member program must place an order with the Food Bank at least once every 6 months. Programs that do not do so will not automatically receive annual membership renewal materials (unless a noted seasonal program). Programs on suspension or inactivation for one full fiscal year must reapply for membership. Renewal of membership is not guaranteed for programs with lapsed memberships.
8. Each member agency will contribute to the “shared maintenance” of the Food Bank. This Shared Maintenance Fee (SMF) is assessed for every pound of donated food received by member programs. This fee does not apply to MEFAP, USDA foods, and some perishable products. The SMF is set by the Food Bank but shall be no greater than 10 cents per pound. The SMF is subject to change and may be waived or reduced for any portion of the Food Bank’s service area if deemed appropriate by the Food Bank.
9. Programs will accept Food Bank food “as is” and will store it safely and securely at the program site, stored separately from other food and labeled, if necessary. Access to stored Food Bank food should be limited only to staff or volunteers of the program.
10. The Food Bank reserves the right to limit the amount of product available to each program and to change the method and policies for food distribution to member programs. Such changes will not warrant a refund of membership fees.
11. The Food Bank will generate a product receipt for each order. These receipts must be signed by the authorized shopper who received the food and cosigned by another person upon arrival at the program site to indicate that all products were received. The member agency will keep copies of all physically signed invoices on file at the program site for the prior fiscal year plus the current fiscal year; programs that receive USDA foods will keep invoices for 3 fiscal years plus the current fiscal year. Electronic copies of signed invoices are acceptable.
12. All products from the Food Bank must be transported directly to the program site, adhering to food safety time and temperature regulations in transit.
 - a. Vehicles used to transport product must have clean food storage areas and be maintained to prevent contamination of product. The Food Bank reserves the right to not load product into a vehicle that is deemed not suitable to transport product.
 - b. Unless the program has a refrigerated vehicle, the program must use freezer blankets or coolers to transport refrigerated and frozen product. The Food Bank reserves the right to refuse release of cold-storage items if the program does not have a freezer blanket, cooler, or refrigerated vehicle to receive the food.

c. Program must maintain temperature logs for refrigerated and frozen items at receipt and arrival at the program site. The Food Bank will inspect these logs during program Monitoring Visits.

13. The member agency releases Feeding America, the Food Bank, and original donors of donated products from any liability resulting from the donated product.
14. The member agency agrees to adhere to donor requirements about all donated product.
15. The member agency agrees to hold harmless and indemnify the original Donor, the Food Bank and Feeding America from any claims or obligations in regard to the agency or the donated Product, member agency conduct, or conditions or activities at agency locations.
16. The original Donor, the Food Bank, and Feeding America offer no express warranties in relation to the Product.

Distribution of Food

17. Products from the Food Bank will only be used to feed people who meet the IRS definitions of ill, needy, or infants. Programs must maintain a procedure to determine that people receiving food meet this definition (self-declaration of need at intake is sufficient). At least 51% of the people served by the food program must meet these criteria. See Membership Criteria for further details.
18. Products from the Food Bank will be distributed within two months of receipt. MEFAP and USDA products from the Food Bank must be distributed within 30 days of receipt. Failure to do so may result in the program being suspended until the situation is rectified.
19. Programs with a disaster plan on file with the Food Bank may hold a small reserve of non-perishable product for use in emergency situations including but not limited to disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, fires, or pandemics. The amount of reserve shall be no more than 3 pallets (4,200 lbs.) for programs that are classified as size Medium or smaller, and no more than 6 pallets (8,400 lbs.) for programs classified as size Large or larger. This product must be stored separately and labeled for use in disaster situations. All food safety protocols must be maintained, as outlined in the Essentials Guide agency handbook.
20. Products from the Food Bank will only be distributed to participants, not to staff or volunteers unless they go through the same qualifying and distribution process as other participants. Staff and/or volunteers who do qualify to access food will not be given preferential or priority treatment.
21. Program volunteers and staff will not consume any donated products from the Food Bank, including consumption of beverages by volunteers when carrying out assigned duties. Donated products will not be used for operations or upkeep, business meetings, fundraisers, or events, and will not be used to compensate or provide incentives to staff or volunteers.

22. Products from the Food Bank will not be exchanged for money, property, or participation in religious or other services (including volunteer service). The member agency agrees to provide all items from the Food Bank to its participants free of any direct or indirect charges.

23. Religious materials and activities (such as worship, proselytization, and/or religious instruction) must be separate from food distributions in time or location.

24. Programs that access USDA food will not solicit donations from participants (including a donation jar). Programs that do not access USDA may solicit donations from participants, as long as it is done in a completely voluntary and confidential manner, and the provision of food/service is completely unrelated to the donation.

25. Food Bank products obtained for one food program will not be shared with or redistributed to other programs within the agency, nor shared with other agencies or organizations. Certain exceptions may apply and must be approved in writing by the Food Bank in advance.

26. Programs that distribute USDA and/or MEFAP food are strictly prohibited from requiring a photo ID or proof of eligibility from participants in order to access food.

27. Emergency Feeding Programs (pantries, meal sites, and shelters) must serve all participants regardless of income. All participants are eligible to receive MEFAP, donated, and Buy-In food. There are no income limits on any of these products, and programs may not set income restrictions for receipt of these types of food.

28. Emergency Feeding Programs may not turn participants away who reside outside the program's service area. All participants presenting at the program must be served. In the event that a participant presents at the program who resides outside the program's service area, the program must serve them and may refer them to resources in the participant's own community for future assistance.

29. Programs will not distribute products containing CBD, THC, or other cannabinoid-infused products.

Location, Communication and Hours of Operation

30. Emergency Feeding Programs (pantries, meal sites, and shelters) must be available to participants by telephone at the phone number on file with the Food Bank. The Food Bank will share this number with the general public.

Program hours and distribution location must be listed on the outgoing message and messages from participants or from the Food Bank must be returned within 2 business days. Repeated failed attempts to reach a program may result in suspension until the situation is rectified.

Additionally, programs without an outgoing phone message may be charged a \$25 fee for each quarter that the program is out of compliance.

31. In addition to the primary phone number, all programs must provide the Food Bank with at least one other phone number for our records, to be used in the event that we are unable to reach a program representative using the primary phone number.

32. Emergency Feeding Programs (pantries, meal sites, and shelters) must be open during the hours they have on file at the Food Bank and must inform the Food Bank in writing/email of any changes. Failure to do so may result in suspension until the situation is rectified.

33. Products from the Food Bank may only be distributed during posted hours at the location on file at the Food Bank. The Food Bank must be notified in advance of the days and hours of any off-site distributions. Home delivery to guests outside of these hours is acceptable.

34. Emergency Feeding Programs (pantries and meal sites) must post their hours of operation on an external part of their program's site, so it can be seen by someone outside the building. Shelters must post their intake hours in a similar way.

35. The Food Bank must be informed in advance of any changes to location or days/hours of operation of emergency pantries or meal programs. Programs that change the location of their food storage, preparation, or distribution must first have that space inspected and approved by the Food Bank.

36. Programs will attach a window-cling or sticker indicating that the program is a member of the Food Bank to an external part of their program site so that it can be seen by someone outside the building. The window-cling/sticker will be supplied by the Food Bank. When food distribution is conducted at another site, a sign indicating that the program is a member of the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts will be displayed at that site. The Food Bank can provide such a sign. Appropriate USDA signs must also be posted, if applicable.

Primary Contacts and Authorized Shoppers

37. Agencies will name one individual at each program site as that program's representative and primary contact with the Food Bank.

38. The primary contact may designate and terminate authorized pick-up personnel and online ordering contacts and must do so in writing or email from the authorized email address. The Food Bank reserves the right to approve or withdraw the privileges of any individual shopper.

39. All primary contacts will maintain and use a valid email account, as email is the primary form of communication with the Food Bank. At least one other email address must be on file for each program, to be used in the event that the primary contact is unable to be reached at the primary email address.

40. Newly designated primary contact persons will be required to complete an “Online Ordering” training, an “Essential Info for Agencies” training, “Statistics” training, and a “USDA” training (if applicable) within 30 days of their first day as Primary Contact. Failure to complete required trainings may result in program suspension until the training requirements are complete.

Reporting

Programs will submit accurate and timely statistical reports about participants served and the distribution of Food Bank products. Aggregate data reported to the Food Bank may be shared with community partners.

41. Programs must submit statistical reports monthly. Reports are due on the 15th of the next month.

42. Programs that have not submitted complete and accurate statistical reports by the stated deadline will receive a warning. Subsequent incidents will result in suspension until their reports are brought up to date.

43. Programs participating in USDA/TEFAP, Retail Pickup, or Delivery may have additional reporting requirements.

Site Monitoring

The Food Bank is required by Feeding America to conduct a site monitoring visit of each program at least once every two years.

44. Programs will participate in a scheduled site-monitoring visit at least once every two years. Food Bank staff will interview program staff, review program records and receipts, inspect the program’s food storage site(s) to ensure food safety, and will provide on-site food safety guidance. (Please note that Food Bank products stored in a hazardous manner will be discarded during the site visit.)

45. Programs that are not compliant with this requirement will be suspended until a site visit can be conducted.

46. The program’s assigned primary contact with the Food Bank must be present and available during the site monitoring visit. An alternate liaison with knowledge and authority for the program may be present during the visit if the primary contact makes prior arrangements with the Food Bank. In the event that the visit is conducted with an individual other than the primary program contact, the primary contact will be emailed a copy of the visit form after the visit is complete.

47. If a Food Bank staff member arrives at a program site for a pre-scheduled site monitoring visit and the primary contact (or agreed upon alternate liaison) for the program is unavailable, the program may be assessed a \$25 fee to help defray the cost of mileage and time of Food Bank staff.

48. Programs will keep a copy of all Service Records (participant sign-in sheets) on file for a period of three fiscal years (October – September). (For FY2026, service records dating back to October 1, 2022 should be kept on file.) Electronic copies are acceptable.

49. Programs that are suspended more than three times in a fiscal quarter due to repeated compliance issues will have their membership privileges suspended until the Admin Contact or Board President contacts the Agency Relations Manager.

Food Safety

50. Every program must have at least one staff member trained in basic food safety, the equivalent of the ServSafe Food Handler certification, to be renewed every three years. If the program provides prepared food to participants, or if participants prepare food to be served to others at the program beyond their own immediate family members, the program must have at least one staff member with Food Manager certification, to be renewed every five years.

51. If a program’s food safety certificate holder leaves the program, the program will have 60 days to submit a new certificate. Failure to submit a new certificate within 60 days will result in suspension of ordering privileges until a certificate is received.

52. Programs will adhere to all federal, state, and local regulations relating to food safety, including State Sanitary Code Chapter X – Minimum Sanitation Standards for Food Establishments (105 CMR 590.000) and the US Food and Drug Administration Food Code.

53. Programs will adhere to the Food Bank’s “Food Safety Regulations for Food Bank of Western MA Member Agencies,” as well as regulations regarding handling of over-the-counter medications and pet food (detailed in the Essentials Guide).

54. The Food Bank will notify programs of recalled products distributed through our warehouse (exclusive of salvage items) via email, signs in the warehouse, or our weekly newsletter (NewsBites) within 24 hours of the recall.

Member programs are responsible for monitoring recalls from other food sources, including items received through the Food Bank’s salvage program. Member programs will remove all recalled products from their inventory, dispose of recalled products, notify their participants of product recalls, and maintain records of removal and disposal of recalled products for at least 2 years.

55. Critical violations of food safety regulations may result in suspension or termination of the program’s membership with the Food Bank.

Billing and Payment

- 56. Shared Maintenance Fees and other fees will be charged to the program’s account. Only authorized personnel may put a charge on a program’s account.
- 57. Programs with financial balances will have monthly statements placed on their online ordering account. This statement must be downloaded and submitted with full payment within 30 days of the statement date in order to keep the program’s financial accounts with the Food Bank in good standing.
- 58. The member agency agrees to make all payments in the form of a check from the sponsoring agency or bank check from the agency’s account. The Food Bank cannot accept cash, money orders, personal checks, credit cards, or payments from third parties, with the exception of bill payment services. The Food Bank will charge a \$25.00 fee for each returned check.
- 59. The Food Bank reserves the right to limit services, restrict access to certain foods, and/or suspend the membership of agencies (and all of their sponsored programs) with overdue accounts and to place overdue accounts into collection. Programs with a 90-day or more overdue balance will be placed on “Free Food Only” status. Programs with a 120-day or more overdue balance may have membership privileges suspended until the overdue portion of the balance is paid.
- 60. Termination of agency or program membership does not eliminate outstanding financial accounts with the Food Bank.
- 61. The Food Bank reserves the right to levy the following fees for service or violation of agreements:

- Shared Maintenance Fees: \$0.10/lb.
- Delivery Fee for Non-MEFAP/USDA Products: \$0.05/lb.
- Missed Delivery Fee: \$50.00 first incident, increasing by \$25 per incident thereafter (\$200 maximum for a single incident)
- Missed Pickup Fee: \$25.00 first incident, increasing by \$10 per incident thereafter (\$100 maximum for a single incident)
- Returned Check Fee: \$25.00 per incident
- Restocking Fee: \$.02/lb (pickup orders); \$.03/lb (delivery orders)
- Missed Monitoring Visit Fee: \$25.00 per incident
- Oasis Insight Fee: no more than \$20 per month
- No Outgoing Phone Message Fee: \$25 per quarter

Miscellaneous

- 62. Programs must ensure the security and confidentiality of participants’ personal information that is contained in both paper and electronic records, and must adhere to 201 CMR 7.00, Standards for the protection of personal information of residents of the Commonwealth.
- 63. In order to protect the privacy of the people visiting program sites, programs will not provide personal identifying information to anyone outside of the emergency food network without the express written permission of the participant. Staff from the Food Bank, as well as officials from USDA, Feeding America, and other organizations with a direct oversight role of the program (such as grant funders), may inspect records such as sign-in logs at the program site, but may not remove those logs from the program’s location.

Membership Fee:

Members joining between...	Emergency Feeding Programs	Non-Emergency Feeding Programs
October 1-December 31, 2024	\$150	\$250
Jan. 1, 2025-March 31, 2025	\$112.50	\$187.50
April. 1, 2025-June 30, 2025	\$75	\$125
July. 1, 2025-September 30, 2025	\$37.50	\$62.50

Communicating with the Media

- 64. When communicating with the media, it is important that member agencies and the Food Bank refer to each other and our partnership accurately.
- 60. Member programs will adhere to the Media Communications Guidelines outlined in the Essentials Guide.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Opportunities for Growth & Engagement

Best Practices

To learn more about any of these best practices, ask your Agency Relations representative.

- Client Choice
- Nutritional Nudges
- SWAP nutrition ranking system
- Oasis Insight software

Advocacy

The Food Bank takes an active role in advocating for improved food security in our region. Current policy priorities include MEFAP funding, TEFAP (USDA) funding, universal school meals, and college hunger. Advocacy efforts have made significant gains in our region, and we need your help in this process. To find out how you can be involved, ask The Food Bank's Public Policy Manager (see p. 62 for contact info).

Trainings

The Food Bank offers frequent training opportunities to learn about best practices among the emergency food network. Topics include:

- Disaster Planning
- Volunteer Management
- SMART Goals
- BMA for Board Members
- And LOTS more!

For more information, or to request a training, please ask the Agency Resource Coordinator (see p. 62 for contact info).

ACE Points & Program Goals

The Food Bank regularly offers "ACE points." These are credits on a program's account for activities that build a program's capacity.

This could mean moving more food, serving more people, developing a succession plan, or writing a volunteer handbook. Awards are based on programs' annual Program Goals, which are written step-by-step plans that programs can submit to The Food Bank each year. For more information, ask the Agency Resource Coordinator.

Capacity Grants

The Food Bank offers annual capacity grants of up to \$5,000 for emergency program sustainability efforts and infrastructure improvements. In this competitive process, grants are typically awarded for refrigerators, freezers, computers, shelving, and donor/client outreach materials. For more information, please ask the Agency Resource Coordinator.

SNAP Assistance

The Food Bank offers support for programs' efforts to improve clients' healthy choices. SNAP outreach workers can do onsite SNAP enrollment and/or train volunteers to do so. Our SNAP coordinators can assist clients by phone, and can provide written resources for programs to hand out to clients. For more information, please contact our SNAP team (see p. 62 for contact info).

Nutrition Programming

Our nutrition department offers a menu of workshops and provides food safety training, as well as recipes and written nutrition resources that programs can hand out to clients. For more information, please talk to our Nutrition Coordinators (see p. 62 for contact info).

MEFAP/USDA FY26 Distribution Policies

- ALL MEFAP/USDA products will be available to Public programs on a monthly case limit basis. The case limit for EACH PRODUCT will be determined by program size. Program sizes will be reviewed and adjusted by The Food Bank on a monthly basis.
- MEFAP/USDA product will only be available (per a program's case limit) if it is in stock, and will be offered on a first come, first served basis through our online ordering system. Programs are not guaranteed access to particular products.
- USDA product case limits will vary based on agency size, current inventory, and regional service gaps.
- Products will not be held or reserved and unused limits cannot be carried over into the next month.
- As funding, pricing, and service numbers change, The Food Bank reserves the right to change limits for any product/category.
- MEFAP/USDA must be distributed free of any charges, service, or prayer requirements.
- Programs that receive MEFAP or USDA products are prohibited from requiring photo ID or Social Security numbers (full or partial) in order for clients to access food. It is prohibited to deny food to TEFAP or MEFAP participants if they refuse to reveal any information that is not a requirement of TEFAP or MEFAP.
- While TEFAP recipients must meet certain eligibility requirements (see p. 52-53), there are no eligibility restrictions for MEFAP food. All guests are therefore eligible for MEFAP food, and MEFAP food may not be denied on the basis on income or residency. Guests residing outside a program's service area must be provided food, though they may also be referred to food access resources in their own community.

Meal Program, Shelter Size	Service Visits Monthly Average	HAMPDEN Case Limit for each MEFAP CARBS item	HAMPDEN Case Limit for each MEFAP DAIRY MEFAP PROTEIN MEFAP FRUVEG item	NON-HAMPDEN	
				Case limit for each MEFAP CARBS item	Case limit for each MEFAP DAIRY MEFAP PROTEIN MEFAP FRUVEG item
XSMALL	0 - 99	3	4	3	4
SMALL	100 - 249	3	5	3	4
MEDIUM	250 - 749	6	13	4	9
LARGE	750 - 2,499	8	18	7	13
XLARGE	2,500 - 4,999	12	18	10	17
XX LARGE	5,000+	17	37	11	20
Pantry Size	Total Individuals Monthly Average	HAMPDEN Case Limit for each MEFAP CARBS item	HAMPDEN Case Limit for each MEFAP DAIRY MEFAP PROTEIN MEFAP FRUVEG item	NON-HAMPDEN	
				Case limit for each MEFAP CARBS item	Case limit for each MEFAP DAIRY MEFAP PROTEIN MEFAP FRUVEG item
XSMALL	0 - 49	4	8	3	4
SMALL	50 - 149	5	12	4	6
MEDIUM	150 - 399	8	18	6	11
LARGE	400 - 799	12	27	11	19
XLARGE	800 - 1,499	15	33	12	22
XXLARGE	1,500 - 2,999	20	44	16	28
XXX LARGE	3,000+	29	62	22	40

USDA/TEFAP Policies

Contract

- All USDA participating programs must check the “Renew USDA” box on the Basic Membership Agreement (BMA) for each program that is enrolled to receive USDA food.
- If an agency receives \$1,000,000 or more in federal funds (including the value of USDA food), it must check the single audit box on the BMA and forward its annual single audit to the Food Bank within 6 months of completion.

Annual Agreement

Programs that receive USDA foods must sign an annual TEFAP Agreement to adhere to relevant federal regulations.

Signage

Must be displayed during all food distribution activities

- “And Justice for All” poster
- Sign saying “USDA food may not be sold or exchanged”
- “TEFAP Income Guidelines” (for pantries. P. 50-51)
- USDA Non-Discrimination statement must be present on website and program materials: “In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the state or local agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete a , USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027

found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide 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:

mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
email: Program.Intake@usda.gov

Newsletters, flyers, and pamphlets may have the shortened version: “[Member Agency Name] is an Equal Opportunity provider. [Member Agency Name] es un proveedor que ofrece igualdad de oportunidades.”

Storage

USDA products for each of an agency’s programs must be labeled and stored separately, including perishable items.

Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights

Programs must provide participants with a written notice of beneficiary rights (p. 48) prior to TEFAP enrollment. Written notice may be part of the intake form, posted in a location visible to participants, or handed out during distribution.

Inventory

USDA products must be inventoried using the Monthly OR Annual USDA Reconciliation Form (p. 56-59; Annual Reconciliation Form should only be used if a program receives 2 or fewer USDA products each month). Programs that receive excess TEFAP from FBWM Brown Bag distributions must account for these items in their monthly inventory.

USDA/TEFAP Policies (Continued)

Distribution

Meal sites and shelters may use USDA food as needed for meal preparation. Pantries may use the following suggested guidelines, which apply to USDA food **only** – they do **not** apply to other food received from the Food Bank: 1-4 household members—1 of each item; 5-10 members—2 of each item; 11 or more members—3 of each item. There is no limit to the number of times a month a family may receive USDA food.

Participant Eligibility (Pantries ONLY)

Participants must declare eligibility by signing the USDA/TEFAP Pantry Sign-In Sheet (p. 54-55) OR completing an Eligibility Declaration Form (p. 52-53) the first time they receive USDA food, and annually thereafter. Participants are eligible if they meet either income guidelines or receive certain federal benefits. If using the Sign In Sheet, names of previous signers must be covered for privacy. Verification of eligibility is not required; self-declaration must be accepted. Requesting photo ID and Social Security is prohibited by USDA and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. After initial distribution, the program is required to track each time the participant receives USDA, but the participant is not required to sign again until annual recertification.

TEFAP food should only be distributed to guests who live in Massachusetts, or the towns of Whitingham, Halifax, Vernon, Guilford, Pownal, Readsboro, or Stamford in Vermont. Vermont residents must meet income eligibility requirements in their home state - contact Agency Relations for copies of Vermont TEFAP eligibility forms. Programs that distribute TEFAP foods to Vermont residents must track how many cases of TEFAP food are distributed to Vermont residents each month.

Programs must allow participants to designate an individual as a “proxy,” which allows that individual permission to pick up food on their behalf.

Civil Rights

Primary Contacts at all programs that receive USDA foods must complete annual civil rights training. Volunteers and staff who interact with program participants, and those who supervise these staff and volunteers, must annually complete the USDA Civil Rights Training for Agency Frontline Staff and Volunteers Signoff Sheet (p. 49).

Written Notice of Beneficiary Rights

Name of Organization: _____

Name of Applicable Program:

- The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)
- Commodity Supplemental Program (CSFP)

Because the Program(s) indicated above are supported in whole or in part by financial assistance from the Federal Government, we are required to let you know that:

- We may not discriminate against you 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;
- We may not require you to attend or participate in any explicitly religious activities (including activities that involve overt religious content such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization) that are offered by our organization, and any participation by you in such activities must be purely voluntary;
- We must separate in time or location any privately funded explicitly religious activities (including activities that involve overt religious content such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization) from activities supported with direct Federal financial assistance; and
- You may report violations of these protections, including denials of services or benefits, by an organization, by contacting or filing a written complaint with the

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights Executive Director
Center for Civil Rights Enforcement
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250-9410, or by email to program.intake@usda.gov

- If you would like to seek information about whether there are any other federally funded organizations that provide these kinds of services in your area, please contact the USDA Hunger Hotline:

By Phone: 1-866-3-HUNGRY or 1-877-8-HAMBRE to speak with a representative from
7:00 AM – 10:00 PM Eastern Time.

By Text: 914-342-7744 with a question that may contain a keyword such as “food,”
“summer,” “meals,” etc. to receive an automated response to resources located near an
address and/or zip code.

This written notice must be given to you before you enroll in the program or receive services from the program, unless the nature of the service provided or exigent circumstances make it impracticable to provide such notice before we provide the actual service. In such an instance, this notice must be given to you at the earliest available opportunity.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

USDA Civil Rights Training for Member Agency Frontline Staff and Volunteers

Protected Classes

USDA regulations prohibit discrimination on the basis of any of the following.

Race, Color, National Origin, Age, Disability, Sex

Individuals may not be segregated, excluded from, denied benefits of, or receive unequal treatment in priority, quality, or quantity of services based on any of the above-listed protected classes.

Types of Discrimination

Disparate Treatment – Treating someone differently because they belong to a protected class; usually intentional, overt

Disparate Impact – Practices which result in unfair impact to persons belonging to a protected class; usually unintentional or due to neglect

Reprisal/Retaliation – Negative treatment of an individual due to prior civil rights activity or for cooperating with an investigation

Complaints

Participants have a Right of Complaint in cases where they feel discrimination has occurred. Notify your supervisor immediately if a participant wishes to file a complaint. USDA Civil Rights complaints must be kept confidential and should not be discussed with anyone not involved in the complaint process.

Complaint forms can be found online – your supervisor can direct participants where to find them and should have printed copies on file. They must be submitted within 180 days, and may be sent to:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
Fax: (833) 256-1665; or (202) 690-7442
Email: Program.Intake@usda.gov

Program Staff/Volunteer Signature: _____

Program Staff/Volunteer Printed Name: _____

Date: _____



Food Bank of Western Massachusetts
25 Carew Street, Chicopee, MA | 413-247-9738
foodbankwma.org



In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the state or local agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete a , USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027 found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide 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: mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or email: Program.Intake@usda.gov

USDA/TEFAP Income Guidelines

The Emergency Food Assistance Program—Income Eligibility Guidelines

(July 1, 2025 thru June 30, 2026)

These guidelines must be visibly posted during every USDA/TEFAP pantry distribution.

Please use the following figures when determining if recipients are eligible to receive USDA/TEFAP commodity foods under The Emergency Food Assistance Program. A household is eligible to receive food from a USDA TEFAP program when:

- The household meets federal TEFAP Income Guidelines; or
- The household participates in a federal or state means-tested program including, but not limited to: SNAP, TAFDC/TANF, EAEDC, WIC, Medicaid (MassHealth), SSI, Head Start, Fuel Assistance, Veteran’s Aid; Free or Reduced Price Lunch, or
- The household makes a self-declaration of financial need on their first visit. Income or means-tested eligibility must be declared on subsequent visits.

Recipients are NOT required to provide photo ID, social security number, or verification of eligibility to receive USDA/TEFAP foods.

# of Household Members	Annual	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$39,125	\$3,260	\$752
2	\$52,875	\$4,406	\$1,017
3	\$66,625	\$5,552	\$1,281
4	\$80,375	\$6,698	\$1,546
5	\$94,125	\$7,844	\$1,810
6	\$107,875	\$8,989	\$2,075
7	\$121,625	\$10,135	\$2,339
8	\$135,375	\$11,281	\$2,603
For each additional household member, add:	+13,750	+1,146	+264

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the state or local agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete a , USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027 found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide 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: mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or email: Program.Intake@usda.gov

USDA/TEFAP Directrices de Ingresos

El Programa de Asistencia Alimentaria de Emergencia—Pautas de Elegibilidad de Ingresos (1 de Julio de 2025 al 30 de Junio de 2026)

Estas pautas deben publicarse de manera visible durante cada distribución de despensa de USDA/TEFAP.

Utilice las siguientes cifras para determinar si los beneficiarios son elegibles para recibir alimentos básicos del USDA/TEFAP bajo el Programa de Asistencia Alimentaria de Emergencia. Un hogar es elegible para recibir alimentos de un programa TEFAP USDA cuando:

- El hogar cumple con las pautas federales de ingresos de TEFAP; o
- El hogar participa en un programa federal o estatal con verificación de recursos incluyendo, pero no limitado a: SNAP, TAFDC/TANF, EAEDC, WIC, Medicaid (MassHealth), SSI, Head Start, Asistencia de calefacción, Ayuda para Veteranos; Almuerzo gratis o a precio reducido, o
- El hogar hace una autodeclaración de necesidad económica en su primera visita. Se debe declarar la elegibilidad basada en ingresos o recursos en visitas posteriores.

Participantes NO están obligados a proporcionar una identificación con foto, número de seguro social o verificación de elegibilidad para recibir alimentos USDA/TEFAP.

# de Miembros del Hogar	Anual	Mensual	Semanal
1	\$39,125	\$3,260	\$752
2	\$52,875	\$4,406	\$1,017
3	\$66,625	\$5,552	\$1,281
4	\$80,375	\$6,698	\$1,546
5	\$94,125	\$7,844	\$1,810
6	\$107,875	\$8,989	\$2,075
7	\$121,625	\$10,135	\$2,339
8	\$135,375	\$11,281	\$2,603
Por cada miembro del hogar, agregue:	+13,750	+1,146	+264

De acuerdo con la ley federal de derechos civiles y las regulaciones y políticas de derechos civiles del Departamento de Agricultura de los Estados Unidos (USDA, por sus siglas en inglés), esta institución tiene prohibido discriminar por motivos de raza, color, origen de nacional, religión, sexo, discapacidad, edad, estado civil, estado familiar/padre, ingresos derivados de un programa de asistencia pública, creencias políticas o represarias por actividades previas de derechos civiles. Las personas con discapacidades que requieran medios de comunicación alternativos para obtener información del programa (por ejemplo, Braille, letra grande, cinta de audio, lenguaje de señas americano) deben ponerse en contacto con la agencia estatal o local que administra el programa o ponerse en contacto con el USDA a través del Servicio de Retransmisión de Telecomunicaciones al 711 (voz y TTY). Además, la información del programa puede estar disponible en idiomas alternativos al inglés. Para presentar una queja de discriminación en el programa, complete un Formulario de Queja de Discriminación en el Programa del USDA, AD-3027 que se encuentra en línea en [Cómo presentar una queja de discriminación en el Programa](#) y en cualquier oficina del USDA, o escriba una carta dirigida al USDA y proporcione toda la información solicitada en el formulario. Para solicitar una copia del formulario de queja, llame al (866) 632-9992. Envíe su formulario o carta al USDA por correo: Departamento de Agricultura de EE.UU., Oficina del Secretario Adjunto de Derechos Civiles, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; o fax: (833) 256-1665 o (202) 690-7442; o correo electrónico: Programa.Intake@usda.gov

USDA/TEFAP Declaration of Eligibility

Declaration of financial need is sufficient to receive USDA/TEFAP foods on a guest's first visit. Subsequent visits require declaration of eligibility according to the guidelines below. Guests must be allowed to self-declare eligibility. Verification of residence, income, or receipt of benefits is not required. Photo ID and Social Security numbers are not required, and requesting this information is prohibited by USDA and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Declaration of Eligibility must be kept on file for each guest for the current fiscal year plus three previous years. Programs must track each time guests receive USDA, but the guest is not required to sign or recertify eligibility after initial declaration. Participants are required to recertify eligibility annually.

Name: _____

Zip Code: _____

Number of people in household: _____

Do you receive any of the following types of assistance?
Please check all that apply:

WIC:____ TANF:____ SSI:____

Fuel Assistance:____ SNAP:____

Veteran's Aid:____ Head Start:____ AFDC:____

Medicaid (MassHealth):____ EAEDC:____

Free/Reduced-Price School Lunch_____

If you do **NOT** receive any of these benefits, is your household income at or below the following income guidelines*? Please circle: YES NO

Optional: I wish to allow (print name)_____ to pick up food for my household. Date: _____

# of Household Members	Annual	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$39,125	\$3,260	\$752
2	\$52,875	\$4,406	\$1,017
3	\$66,625	\$5,552	\$1,281
4	\$80,375	\$6,698	\$1,546
5	\$94,125	\$7,844	\$1,810
6	\$107,875	\$8,989	\$2,075
7	\$121,625	\$10,135	\$2,339
8	\$135,375	\$11,281	\$2,603
For each additional household member, add:	+13,750	+1,146	+264

TEFAP Income Guidelines 2025-2026

If guest does NOT receive any of the above benefits OR meet income guidelines, the guest may declare financial need to receive USDA/TEFAP foods on their first visit ONLY. Eligibility according to above requirements must be certified at subsequent visits. Check HERE to declare financial need:

Office Use Only:

Last Name:_____

Form must be renewed on (date):_____

Declaración de Elegibilidad USDA/TEFAP

Declaración de necesidad económica es suficiente para recibir alimentos USDA/TEFAP en la primera visita de un huésped. Las visitas posteriores requieren una declaración de elegibilidad de acuerdo con las pautas a continuación. Los huéspedes deben poder auto declarar su elegibilidad. No se requiere verificación de residencia, ingresos o recibo de beneficios. No se requiere identificación con fotografía ni números de seguro social, y el USDA y el Estado de Massachusetts prohíben solicitar esta información. La declaración de elegibilidad debe mantenerse en el archivo de cada invitado para el año fiscal en curso más tres años anteriores. Los programas deben realizar un seguimiento cada vez que los invitados reciben USDA, pero no se requiere que el invitado firme o vuelva a certificar la elegibilidad después de la declaración inicial. Los participantes deben recertificar su elegibilidad anualmente.

Nombre: _____

Código Postal: _____

Numero de Personas en el Hogar: _____

¿Recibes alguno de los siguientes tipos de asistencia? Por favor marque todos los que apliquen:

WIC:____ TANF:____ SSI:____ Asistencia de Calefacción

:____ SNAP:____ Ayuda de Veteranos:____ Head

Start:____ AFDC:____ Medicaid (MassHealth):____

Almuerzo de Escuela Gratis/Precio Reducido____

EAEDC:____

Si NO recibes ninguno de los beneficios enumerados anteriormente, ¿los ingresos de su hogar cumplen con las siguientes pautas de ingresos*?

Por favor marque: SI NO

Opcional: Deseo permitir que _____ recoja comida para mi hogar. Fecha: _____

# de Miembros del Hogar	Anual	Mensual	Semanal
1	\$39,125	\$3,260	\$752
2	\$52,875	\$4,406	\$1,017
3	\$66,625	\$5,552	\$1,281
4	\$80,375	\$6,698	\$1,546
5	\$94,125	\$7,844	\$1,810
6	\$107,875	\$8,989	\$2,075
7	\$121,625	\$10,135	\$2,339
8	\$135,375	\$11,281	\$2,603
Por cada miembro del hogar, agregue:	+13,750	+1,146	+264

TEFAP Pautas de Ingreso 2025-2026

Si el invitado NO recibe ninguno de los beneficios anteriores O cumple con las pautas de ingresos, el invitado puede declarar la necesidad financiera de recibir alimentos USDA/TEFAP SOLAMENTE en su primera visita. La elegibilidad de acuerdo con los requisitos anteriores debe certificarse en visitas posteriores. Marque AQUÍ para declarar necesidad económica:

Firma: _____ Fecha: _____

Office Use Only:

Last Name: _____

Form must be renewed on (date): _____

Food Bank Delivery Application for PuPrograms

The Food Bank offers limited delivery to programs who qualify and can regularly order large quantities. While we cannot deliver to all our partners, we do want agencies to have the opportunity to apply for this service. Please read the Delivery Criteria below before completing this application.

Delivery Criteria: Agencies Receiving Delivery Must...

... have been a member with FBWMA for at least 6 months;

... be a Public Program (Pantry, Mealsite, or Shelter) with a program size of Medium or larger, and be in good programmatic and financial standing with The Food Bank;

... understand that delivery orders must fall within the minimum caseload/pallet requirement (40 cases or one full pallet) and the maximum pallet limit and weight limit (1,400 lbs./pallet for most deliveries; 1,800 lbs. for agencies that receive deliveries from the Big Y truck at the Berkshire Depot Drop) established by The Food Bank;

... understand that missed deliveries can result in removal from the delivery program and/or missed delivery fees. The following may result in removal from the delivery program and/or a missed delivery fee:

- Failing to place an order by the stated deadline;
- Failing to meet order caseload/pallet minimums;
- Repeated cancelations of orders;
- Failing of authorized delivery contact to meet the delivery truck; and
- Failing to remove snow or other obstructions for safe product delivery

... understand that, in addition to fees and prices associated with products, programs may pay an additional delivery fee (up to 5 cents per pound) for all product except MEFAP and USDA items;

... be able to transport products into the program facility from the delivery drop-off location (delivery drivers will not help unload product from pallets or bring pallets into the building); and...

... understand that due to traffic and weather conditions, The Food Bank cannot provide an exact time for delivery, and program volunteers must be available one hour prior to and one hour following the time provided by The Food Bank; and

... agree to store empty pallet(s) until the next delivery or dispose of them.

To be considered for future delivery opportunities, please complete the application on the following page. If an opportunity arises where we can accommodate your request, we will contact you to determine next steps. Please note that we are not able to offer delivery on demand—by completing this application, you are expressing interest in receiving *regularly scheduled* deliveries from The Food Bank.

Applications are not ranked by submission date, and acceptance is not guaranteed. Our goal is to maximize truck space and efficiency, so that we may distribute as much food as possible to our food insecure neighbors. Acceptance in the delivery program is dependent solely on truck space and route efficiency—meaning, we must have space available on an existing delivery route near your program's desired delivery location. In addition, programs in financial arrears are not eligible for delivery.

Please return this form to: The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, Attn: Agency Relations
25 Carew Street, Chicopee, MA 01020 | Email: agencyrelations@foodbankwma.org

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Application

Agency Name		5-Digit Program Number	
Program Name		Program Contact Name	
Program Contact Phone		Program Contact Email	

Do you already receive delivery from the Food Bank?

<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, Other (describe) _____
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If you already receive delivery, are you requesting an increase in delivery frequency ?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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If yes, what is your desired delivery frequency? _____

If you do NOT currently receive delivery, what kind of vehicle do you currently use for pickup from The Food Bank?

If you do NOT currently receive delivery, would you prefer a weekly or a monthly delivery for your program?

How many full pallets would you expect to order per delivery? *(Please specify truck or van delivery. Each pallet on our truck weighs approximately 1,400 lbs. Each pallet on our van weighs about 800 lbs. Please choose one option ONLY.)* _____

Do you have a safe paved or concrete delivery area with sufficient space for the truck to unload a pallet with the lift gate and a pallet jack? _____

Program Contact Signature

Date

Office Use Only:

Date Application Received:	
Program Size:	
Site Assessment Date: <small>(To be conducted by Food Bank Staff)</small>	
Site Assessment Result:	

Application Status

	Y	N	
Accepted:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Delivery Date/Time: _____ Start Date: _____
Waitlist:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reason: _____
Rejected:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reason: _____

Agency Notification & Contract

(To be completed by Agency Relations staff)

Agency Notification Completed by:	Name: _____	Date: _____
Contract Sent by:	Name: _____	Date: _____
Signed Contract Received by:	Name: _____	Date: _____

Contact Information & Useful Links

Programs Division

Christina Maxwell, Director of Programs:
christinam@foodbankwma.org, (413) 247-9738, x119

Agency Relations

Michelle Geoffroy, Agency Relations Manager:
michelleg@foodbankwma.org, (413) 247-9738, x148

Naomi Desilets, Agency Resource Coordinator:
naomid@foodbankwma.org, (413) 247-9738 x142

Kate Pousont Scarborough, Agency Recruitment and Onboarding Coordinator: katep@foodbankwma.org, (413) 247-9738 x151

Javier Stuart, Agency Relations Coordinator,
javiers@foodbankwma.org, (413)247-9738 x152

Legislative Advocacy

Laura Sylvester, Public Policy Manager:
lauras@foodbankwma.org, (413) 247-9738, x111

Nutrition, Food Safety, and SNAP

Kristina Mullin, Direct Programs Manager:
kristinam@foodbankwma.org, (413) 247-9738 x131

Beth Ziemba, SNAP Program Manager:
bethz@foodbankwma.org, (413) 247-9738, x150

Ordering Changes/Problems

Alex Rivera, Warehouse Supervisor:
alexisr@foodbankwma.org, (413) 247-9738, x113

Mike Sharry, Manager of Warehouse Operations:
mikes@foodbankwma.org, (413) 247-9738 x132

Retail Pickup Issues

Brandie Taggart, Retail Donations Coordinator:
brandiet@foodbankwma.org, (413) 247-9738, x106

Finance

Jacob Hough, Director of Finance & Administration:
jacobh@foodbankwma.org, (413) 247-9738, x118

Useful Links

Web Windows Ordering Page:

<https://foodbankwma.primarius.app/pww/Home/Login/>

Member Program Update Form:

tinyurl.com/FBWMupdate

Food Finder (includes printable lists of programs by county, which are listed at the bottom of the page):

<https://www.foodbankwma.org/get-help/food-finder/>

Member Resources Page (password: F00dBank):

<https://www.foodbankwma.org/member-portal/resources/>

Training Resources Page (password F00dBank):

<https://www.foodbankwma.org/member-portal/trainings/>

Oasis Insight: foodbankwma.oasisinsight.net

Food Bank of Western Massachusetts
25 Carew Street, Chicopee, MA

Phone: (413) 247-9738

Fax: (413) 247-9577

Email: agencyrelations@foodbankwma.org

Website: [foodbankwma.org](https://www.foodbankwma.org)

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