



FOODBANK
FOR THE HEARTLAND

Network Partner Manual

A Member Of
FEEDING
AMERICA

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Extra copies of required documents (*including USDA/TEFAP forms*) may be found on our website: <http://foodbankheartland.org/agencies/current.aspx>

Questions? We're here to help!

Please contact us via our Network Partner Resource line or our Network Partner Resource Email at 1-888-382-3491 or NetworkRelations@foodbankheartland.org

About the Food Bank for the Heartland

Vision:

To eliminate hunger in our community.

Mission:

To provide emergency and supplemental food to people in need in Nebraska and western Iowa.

Values:

In everything we do, we serve with respect, integrity and urgency,

Accountability:

Food Bank for the Heartland is a member of Feeding America - a network of food banks across the country. For more information on Feeding America and their standards and expectations, please visit www.feedingamerica.org.

What we do:

Food Bank for the Heartland exists to equitably serve partners who distribute food to the area’s men, women and children facing hunger in our communities. We are a distribution organization helping to move food from donors to network partners. Additionally, the Food Bank purchases product at a reduced cost that is made available to partners in order to provide additional healthy and robust options to clients. We serve a variety of network partners including pantries and meal providers.



The Big Picture:

To the right is the structure of how Feeding America, Food Bank for the Heartland, and our network partners all fit into the big picture with the ultimate goal of serving clients in need.

Types of network partners/organizations we serve:

Pantries: A pantry is where individuals visit the program site and receive groceries to prepare at home. The groceries could also be delivered to the clients.

Meal Provider: A meal provider is any network partner that prepares or serves prepared meals or snacks to individuals in need.

Criteria for Membership

Our network partners are non-profit organizations or churches that do not redistribute product to other non-profit entities. They are organizations that provide direct service to the hungry. The following items are the minimum requirements to become and remain a partner of Food Bank for the Heartland.

- Provide food for an underprivileged or underserved population
- Have a current 501(c)3 not-for-profit status or qualify under the IRS Church Qualifier, that provides direct service to hungry, low income, or underserved populations
- Located in the state of Nebraska or western Iowa
- Designated responsible personnel who are accountable for record keeping and inventory control, online ordering and reporting
- Must agree not to sell, transfer, barter, or offer for sale the items supplied by FBFH in exchange for money, property or services
- Update FBFH with changes in address, phone numbers, delivery/storage locations, and designated personnel
- Must not require person's served to attend religious services or activities in order to receive product
- Must agree to distribute directly to individuals and not to another organization
- Must agree that the network partner will meet the IRS eligibility requirements for receipt, storage, transfer, and use of donated food under section 107(c)(3)
- Must not use product from FBFH for personal use of network partner staff or volunteers
- Have proper and adequate physical storage space
- Operate regularly scheduled hours that are posted and visible to the public
- Establish criteria for individuals you serve; any requirements must be consistent and be posted at your pantry/feeding site
- Must not store, prepare, or distribute product out of a personal residence
- Site must pass a site inspection upon approval and at minimum every other year for the length of the partnership

- Must agree to safely and properly handle the donated goods which confirms to all Local, State, and Federal regulations
- Must have the ability and willingness to access and submit information via the internet
- Must be willing to pay shared maintenance handling fees and delivery fees at prevailing rates
- Utilize use sign-in sheets or another tracking system to keep track of the individuals served and report those statistics to Food Bank for the Heartland on a monthly basis
- Required to complete food safety training and adhere to food safety guidelines
- Maintain temperature logs for every freezer and refrigeration unit utilized by the pantry/feeding site
- Must order and distribute a minimum of 4,000 pounds per calendar year, unless otherwise designated by FBFH
- Must agree that it will not engage in discrimination, in the provision of service against any person because of race, color, citizenship, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation including gender identity, unfavorable discharge from the military or status as a protected veteran

There are additional requirements for USDA/TEFAP participating Network Partners. These requirements will be outlined in the USDA/TEFAP contract and manual

What You Need to Know About Our Policies

Do:

- Consistently provide direct service to hungry, low income, or underserved populations
- Distribute food for use by the needy, ill, children and seniors
- Serve all individuals as respected guests
- Distribute food to individuals free of charge with absolutely no indication of exchange of goods and services
- Refer individuals to other programs or United Way (211) when they have a need you cannot meet
- Submit monthly reports of the number of households and individuals served

Don't:

- Redistribute product to other organizations, including pantries or meal providers
- Sell or use product from the Food Bank in exchange for money, property, or services
- Use product from the Food Bank for fundraising or events unrelated to your regular food distribution
- Require person's served to attend religious services or activities in order to receive food distributions

- Solicit donations of any kind from the individuals served by your pantry/meal provider
- Discriminate against, obstruct, or embarrass individuals who are seeking help

Facility Requirements and Site Visits

Food safety and security is of the utmost important at the Food Bank for the Heartland. Food Bank for the Heartland and Feeding America require that before a network partner can be approved for partnership, it must pass a site inspection to ensure food can be stored and distributed safely. Below are the facility requirements to become a Food Bank for the Heartland network partner.

- All food must be stored 6 inches off of the ground/below the ceiling
- All food must be stored at least 4 inches away from the wall
- The facility is clean and well kept
- All food must be stored in a clean and sanitary condition
- Access to the food must be controlled (i.e. locked pantry door when the pantry isn't open/staffed)
- All food must be stored away from cleaning materials and toxic chemicals
- All equipment is clean and in good repair
- The facility must completed internal pest inspections and conduct regular inspections
 - Food Bank for the Heartland encourages partners to work with outside pest control vendors
- All refrigerators must be kept between 36-40 degrees
- All freezers must be kept at 0 (zero) degrees or below
 - Temperature logs must be used on all refrigerators and freezers, thermometers are available by contacting the Food Bank for the Heartland
 - Temperature logs must be completed every time that the pantry is open
- Hours of operation are posted and visible to the public
- Requirements to access food from network partner are posted, written so that they are clearly understood and visible to the public

After you have been approved to become a partner with the Food Bank for the Heartland, the above items will be checked every time you have a Food Bank for the Heartland site visit. Network partners will be reviewed during a site visit by Food Bank for the Heartland staff at least once every two years. If any issues arise, the Food Bank for the Heartland staff will work with your organization to remedy any concerns. This includes - but is not limited to - food being stored improperly, exposure to chemicals, client accessibility issues, and cleanliness. Food Bank

for the Heartland Network Education and Compliance team members will work with you extensively and provide support, education, and resources to strengthen your organization. If you have questions about facility requirements or the site visit process and follow up, please contact the Network Compliance and Education Manager at 402-905-4829.

Partners who receive USDA product will be inspected annually and are held to additional requirements/standards for distribution. These requirements are outlined in the USDA/TEFAP contract and manual

Reporting

Food Bank for the Heartland utilizes online reporting through the Network Partner ordering portal. In order to report the number of clients that you've served each month, simply log in to the site you use to place orders

(<https://orders.foodbankheartland.org/primariusww/login.aspx>), click the "Statistics" tab.

Use the drop down boxes to enter the month and year the report is for.

- If you serve meals on site to your clients, enter the number of meals and snacks you served during the month.
- If you are a pantry, enter the number of households and individuals you served during the month.
- *If you are a pantry that has access to USDA/TEFAP product*, enter the number of households and individuals you served entirely, then enter the number of USDA households and individuals you served.
 - Example – if you served a total of 300 households and 500 individuals, you would enter that into the first households/individuals area. If out of those 300 individuals and 500 individuals, 300 individuals and 100 households received USDA product, you would enter that data into the USDA households/individuals area.
 - If all of your clients received USDA food(s), you would enter the totals in all boxes
 - Example – If you served 100 households and 50 individuals and all received USDA, you would enter 100 in households **AND** USDA households and 50 in individuals **AND** USDA individuals.

Then simply click "Submit Statistics" in the bottom, right-hand corner, and you're finished!

Reports will be due monthly on the 5th of the following month. **Because of the importance of data tracking, especially in regards to USDA, you will not be able to place a future order until we receive your report for the previous month so please make sure that you are submitting these reports in a timely manner.**

Due to the extensive data entry time on Food Bank for the Heartland staff members, we will no longer accept reports that have been mailed, scanned, or faxed in. Please complete all reporting online. If you did not serve any clients during a particular month, simply enter zero for that month and submit. If you did not order food from the Food Bank for the Heartland, monthly number still need to be reported.

If you have any questions or issues about any aspect of reporting, please contact the Assistant Director of Network Education and Compliance at 402-905-4817.

Getting Product

Ordering Food

The Food Bank for the Heartland strives to offer a wide variety of quality food to our network partners. There are three categories of food available to you.

- Donated - Items donated from food drives and food manufacturers, offered at a small shared maintenance/handling fee
- Purchased – Items purchased directly from wholesalers, offered to you at cost plus shared maintenance fees
- USDA (Iowa & Nebraska) – This includes product received from The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), offered at no cost to qualifying network partners. We distribute Iowa and Nebraska commodities. For more information regarding this product, please call our Network Education and Compliance Manager at 402-955-4829.

- Eligible network partners also have access to perishable items from Food Bank for the Heartland. If you are interested in receiving produce and bakery items, those items can be added to your order by contacting a Network Relations Specialist at 1-888-382-3491 option 1.
 - Please note that these items are free of charge and subject to availability, which could be limited

Food Bank for the Heartland limits the quantity of certain products that network partners are able to order. Placing limits on these products increases variety and promotes equitability for Network Partners.

Placing Your Order

Orders can be placed online at: <http://foodbankheartland.org/agency-partners/>.

A step by step online ordering guide can be located at: <http://foodbankheartland.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Online-Ordering-Instructions11-19.pdf>

If you need assistance with online ordering, please contact a Network Relations Specialist by dialing 1-888-382-3491, select option 1 or by email at networkrelations@foodbankheartland.org

Delivery Information

Non-Local Deliveries

- Food Bank for the Heartland offers weekly deliveries to partners outside a 30-mile radius from FBFH.
- The cutoff time for placing any non-local delivery order is **2:00pm CST** on the Tuesday of the week prior to the desired delivery week.
- Routing is based on the volume of orders placed for the week. In order for the routing to be completed and notifications made in a timely manner to each network partner that is expecting a delivery, it is important that the cut off time is firm and non-negotiable.
- The week before delivery, partners will receive an e-mail containing the date and time estimate for their delivery the following week.
- This email serves as confirmation of date and time of delivery so partners can plan accordingly if volunteer assistance is needed.

Please Note:

- When placing an order for any given week, your order will be routed and delivered based on the most efficient route for our truck. This may result in receiving a different delivery date than what was selected.
- *Delivery appointment times listed on the online ordering site (Primarius Web Window) are default delivery times only and **do not** reflect the actual delivery time for the partner.*

Selected dates are place holders only.

Please do not hesitate to contact a Network Relations team member for any questions or concerns that you may have about deliveries at 1-888-382-3491 option 1 or by email at networkrelations@foodbankheartland.org

Local Deliveries

- The cutoff for local delivery orders is **2:00pm CST, 2 business days prior to the date of delivery.**
- When scheduling your order you will pick the date and the two hour time slot preference. If they system does not show your desired date and time, it is because that date or time slot is already full.
- Once the order is reviewed you will receive an automated email from the ordering system confirming the order.

- The minimum weight for a local delivery is 350 pounds. If an order is under this weight it will be rescheduled to a pick up and an email will be sent with this notification.

Delivery Fee Breakdown

Local = within 30 miles of Food Bank; Greater Nebraska & Iowa = 30+ miles from Food Bank

Delivery	Minimum Weight	Cost
Local	Under 350 pounds	<i>Will be rescheduled to a pick up</i>
Local	350 pounds to 449 pounds	\$.10 per pound
Local	450 pounds and over	\$45.00
Greater NE & IA	over 350 pounds	\$0.00
Greater NE & IA	Under 350 pounds	\$.10 per pound

Delivery/Pick Up Expectations

Food Bank Driver Delivery Expectations:

- FBFH drivers are required to call the network partner 30 minutes prior to deliveries.
- FBFH drivers are responsible for communicating with network partners when deliver time estimates will not be met.
- FBFH drivers will ensure all products are brought over the network partners building’s threshold (as close and as safely as possible) to a single destination drop.
- Drivers are required to accept any USDA product that may be past or near expiration from a partner. The product will then be returned to FBFH and dealt with per USDA/TEFAP rules and regulations.
- When delivery situations arise that may result in potential damage to individuals, property, or equipment, the driver will contact their supervisor to receive guidance on proceeding.

Network Partner Delivery Expectations:

- All network partners are required to ensure FBFH has a current contact person and contact number on file for use by our drivers.
- When a pallet jack or pallet walker cannot be used to move product past the threshold, FBFH requires volunteers to actively assist the driver with the movement of the product into the facility
 - FBFH recommends that for every 500 pounds of product ordered that there is one volunteer capable of assisting.

- A clear, manageable path is required for movement of product into the facility during deliveries. Potential issues that could prevent a delivery past the threshold would include: snow removal, stairs, single door, order size, product in bins, no concrete leading to an entrance, inclement weather, or a narrow pathways to the final food destination.
- Any food items delivered to a network partner facility are required to be stored in accordance with food safety requirements within 60 minutes of receipt.

Pick Ups

- Pick up order times are Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 11:30am CST.
- The cut off for pick up orders is **2:00pm CST, 2 business days prior to the date of pick up.**
- When scheduling your order, you will pick the date and time slot preference. If they system is not allowing you to select your desired date and time it is because that date and time slot is already full. Once you have submitted an order and it has been reviewed, an automated confirmation email will be sent to the main email listed on the account.
- When arriving at the Food Bank to pick up your order at the scheduled time, you will find a call box located by delivery door 1. Press the call button, once the staff responds you will tell them which partner you are with and will be directed to back the vehicle up to a dock door (typically, dock door 1, 2 or 6). Food Bank for the Heartland staff will hand you a copy of the order to review as your vehicle is loaded, *please review this as the vehicle is being loaded to ensure order accuracy.*
- Please note, your safety is important to us and for this reason we ask that you do not enter our warehouse and allow our staff to load all vehicles.
- If for any reason you cannot make the scheduled pick up time, please contact our Network Relations Specialist at 1-888-382-3491 option 1 or at networkrelations@foodbankheartland.org

Inclement Weather

In cases of extreme weather, we may close our facility. If you have a pick-up or delivery scheduled and question whether or not we are open, please call 1-888-382-3491 option 1 or sent email to, networkrelations@foodbankheartland.org

Handling Fees and Billing Information

As a network partner of Food Bank for the Heartland, we ask that you use our services to the best of your ability and resources.

- Only order food that you are able to distribute, within 90 days of receipt. No food should be housed over 6 months.
- Each partner is asked to distribute a minimum of 4,000 pounds per calendar year, unless otherwise designated by FBFH, to maintain active membership.
- Food Bank for the Heartland operates on a handling fee system. *The handling fee is not the cost of the food. It is a shared maintenance cost associated with acquiring and storing product. This cost helps offset a very small portion of FBFH's overall food sourcing and warehousing costs.*
- There are product categories in which there are food costs in addition to shared maintenance, as described on page 8.

Billing/Accounting Procedures

When you receive product from Food Bank for the Heartland, you will be shown and asked to sign a copy of the order. This signed invoice will be retained by FBFH and uploaded to your online ordering account under the “My Documents” tab.

At the beginning of each month, a detailed monthly statement for the previous month is sent to the billing address on file. Payments should be made based on the monthly statement received.

Any account that has an aged balance of 90+ days will receive a separate notification letter informing of the balance due. Accounts with balances over 120 days past due could be subject to a hold placed on the account preventing further orders.

Account balances may be paid by using a check or credit card. Cash payments will not be accepted. *Checks returned for insufficient funds will be charged \$25 per check to the partner account.* Please include both your account number and the invoice number when submitting your payments. Payments can be mailed in to FBFH at 10525 J St, Omaha, NE 68127. In addition, credit card payments can also be made over the phone at 1-888-382-3491 option 5. If you have a question regarding billing or accounting, you can also email the Accounting and Finance department at accounting@foodbankheartland.org

Food Safety

Safe Food Handling

Food safety is an important public health issue. Proper food handling measures must be implemented to ensure that product being distributed is safe. It is required that a minimum of one current member of your organization complete food safety training and submit record of training to FBFH.

To ensure food safety, the best practice is that all staff /volunteers that continuously work with the transportation, distribution or storage of any food(s) complete the food safety training and a record of completion is kept on file at the partner site. The food safety training can be located at <https://foodbankheartland.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Food-Safety-Power-Point.pdf> .

During your required site visit, FBFH staff will provide training to those who need it – if necessary.

In addition, more detailed information pertaining to food safety as well as the Food Keeper Brochure and USDA Food Safety Fact Sheet can be located at:

<https://foodbankheartland.org/network-partners> under the Food Safety Resources tab.

Distributing to Clients

Appropriate Use of Product

Food Bank for the Heartland purchases and the community donates food and household products with the expectation that it will assist people in need. The terms and conditions of the network partnership agreement describe, in detail, what constitutes appropriate use of the products your organization obtains from Food Bank for the Heartland. You are non-profit organizations or churches providing direct service to the hungry and should not redistribute product to other non-profits.

- Food and or products received from Food Bank for the Heartland can only be redistributed directly to clients of your pantry/meal provider program.
 - ***Items cannot be redistributed to other organizations.***
- Food must be used to serve an underprivileged or underserved population.
- Food must be used to serve the ill, needy, seniors, or infants.
- Food must be distributed to clients free of charge, with absolutely no conditions levied or implied.
- You may provide food to ill or needy volunteers and/or staff but it must be through the same process as your clients.

- You may not reward volunteers or staff for their labor with product obtained from Food Bank for the Heartland. Other methods of expressing appreciation must be used.
- You may prepare samples of food products for clients to consume or take home in order to become more familiar with them.
- Food and/or non-food items may not be used for fundraising, either as prepared food (such as spaghetti dinners or bake sales) or as prizes. These items also may not be used for your organization's events, such as church dinners, funerals or parties.

Client Eligibility Criteria

In order to best serve your community, Food Bank for the Heartland recommends serving any individual who is in need of assistance. Each pantry/meal provider, however, has the right to determine their own client eligibility criteria. Written documentation of your criteria and procedures that are used to determine whether a client meets them needs to be posted in a place where prospective clients have the opportunity to view the eligibility requirements prior to receiving services. We recommend criteria that do not present barriers to clients' capacity to receive food.

Note: If your organization is a USDA/TEFAP provider there are specific regulations of what documentation can and cannot be required at your pantry/meal provider. The USDA/TEFAP Handbook outlines these policies.

How Much to Distribute

The quantity of food to be provided to an individual or family is determined by each network partner. Periodically new organizations ask for help in determining reasonable quantities.

- In general, on-site feeding programs (or meal providers) serve one meal per person and then offer second helpings as resources allow.
- Food pantries typically base the amount of food provided on household size and how frequently clients are allowed to visit the pantry. For example, food pantries that restrict service to once per month will generally provide more food for each household than a pantry that allows clients to receive service once every two weeks. You should also take into consideration your clients' access to appropriate storage.

Client Choice – another pantry option

We encourage you to use client choice methods while distributing food. Clients are allowed to make choices on what products and how many they need, with limits generally based on household size. Client choice is focused on creating an atmosphere of dignity. This includes considering the service hours that are most conducive to your target population, ensuring the clients are respected by program volunteers and staff, and giving clients the option of choosing what food supplies are most needed by their families.

Client Choice Benefits

- Helps prevent waste. Pre-assembled grocery bags may contain items the client household is unfamiliar with, allergic to, unable to consume based on dietary restrictions, or able to get from other sources such as WIC. In these situations, the food pantry is using resources to obtain and distribute product that is neither helpful nor useful to their target population.
- Promotes dignity and self-reliance. Clients feel as though they are shopping, not getting a handout, because they have choices instead of a pre-assembled bag. Limits on products help clients practice budgeting.
- Frees up time for more service. Instead of using time having staff/volunteers pre-assemble bags, that time could be spent having the pantry open more hours.
- Promotes the human factor. Clients are given more attention and better customer service when staff/volunteers work directly with them. Volunteer retention may be higher as well when volunteers are able to see their direct impact on clients.

Client Privacy

We recommend that you have a privacy policy in place. This privacy policy should be available at any time to everyone in your organization and to your clients. Developing and implementing a strong privacy policy will help ensure the safety of your clients' personal information. Protecting this information is crucial to keeping it out of the hands of identity thieves. Identity theft is a crime that can create big problems for you and your clients because thieves steal personal information and use it without permission. These thieves can ruin credit, hurt reputations, and take all of a person's money. Becoming a victim of identity theft may lead to more need of assistance from charitable organizations because finances can be severely damaged.

We strongly recommend that you do not collect sensitive information such as Social Security numbers or driver's license numbers. We do not require this information for your quarterly reports. We suggest identifying your clients in your records with an assigned number or a letter combination. All client records should be kept confidential.

Client Privacy also includes sharing information with anyone that is not on a "need to know" basis. People accessing your pantry are looking to you for support. Assuring that their situational information, including the fact that they are even accessing food from you, is a critical component of distributing food with dignity and respect.

Tips for writing a privacy policy

- Always remember that you will be held to the standards set forth in your privacy policy.
- Be clear what you do with a client’s personal information, and give them the option to opt out of sharing it if appropriate.
- Collect only data that is necessary to provide services to your clients. We recommend not collecting sensitive information such as Social Security numbers.
- If you do choose to collect sensitive information, be clear to all parties involved about how you will protect it. You may be held liable if a client’s information is stolen because you did not protect it adequately.
- Include a confidentiality component for all volunteers.

Sample Privacy Agreement for Staff/Volunteers

I, _____, understand that protecting our clients’ personal information is important. I agree that I will keep all clients’ information confidential, and use it only for the purpose of assisting them to receive food.

I also understand that if I disclose any client’s information (including their name) without their permission, I may be asked to withdraw from volunteering and may also be held liable for the breach of privacy.

Name (print): _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Partner and Client Feedback

The Food Bank for the Heartland strives to put customer service first with all of our network partners. If you have any complaints or feedback about your experience while at or with the Food Bank for the Heartland, please contact the Assistant Director of Network Education & Compliance. They can be contacted at 402-905-4817.

We take all complaints and feedback seriously and will address them in a timely manner. All feedback is reviewed by our managers and leadership team. Feedback from you, our valued partners, has allowed us to change policies and practices to provide the highest level of customer service. No feedback is ever too small.

APPENDIX

TEMPERATURE LOG FOR REFRIGERATOR OR FREEZER

Refrigerators should be between 32F and 40F. Freezers should be at or below 0F.

NETWORK PARTNER NAME:

MONTH:

	REFRIGERATOR #							FREEZER #						
DATE	Temperature		Name/Initials			Temperature		Name/Initials						
1														
2														
3														
4														
5														
6														
7														
8														
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