

FOOD BANK OF DELAWARE
INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE HUNGER-RELIEF PARTNERS

In order to stock and distribute a variety of well-balanced foods; pantries must also run occasional food drives and purchase foods. When several congregations/sponsoring group support a single food closet, they frequently take turns providing funds and putting out a receptacle for food donations. Other food drive ideas include raffles, hunger walks, bake sales, or church suppers.

Content for food boxes- guides for food boxes should be posted in the pantry so that the boxes can be tailored to fit a family's size and needs, and pre-sorting the food is going to those who need it.

For safety's sake, store food six inches off the floor and away from the walls so pests won't have a place to hide and to protect the food from moisture. Segregate edible food items from non-food items. Check cans for dates, openings, leaks, bulges, rust and big dents, and when in doubt, discard suspicious items. Contact FBD for training in safe food handling- the Culinary School at the Food Bank of Delaware offers National Restaurant Association ServSafe® Certification classes/testing, Please contact our Culinary School Programs Manager at (302) 292-1305 ex 213 for more information.

CLIENTS AND REFERRALS

Food closets that are dependent on volunteer staff may want to have other agencies or churches to do all initial intake and referral work. In this instance, the closet needs only to obtain basic information about the clients and their food needs for record keeping and statistical purposes. Referring agencies should be kept up to date on the food closets procedures and hours of operation. In some communities, the lack of referring agencies may necessitate a pantry's accepting self-referrals, walk-in clients, and/or further screening referrals from other kinds of agencies. In that case, the closet must develop an intake procedure and determine who will be eligible, under what circumstances, and how frequently individuals can return for food.

It also becomes essential for the food closet to seek training for its volunteers in interviewing techniques, the use of intake forms and making referrals to other assistance agencies. (Because the goal of most food closets is to provide needy families with food for a short period of time, it is important that provisions be made to refer clients to other agencies for more permanent solutions to meet their needs.) The issue of personal safety should also be addressed in volunteer training sessions.

However it serves its clients, every food closet should keep records of whom, why and how many it serves. These figures will document the causes and extent of the local hunger problem and will be invaluable in gathering support. Coordinating with other food closets will minimize abuse by repeat users. Also it is vital that all closets send their tally/data sheet to the Food

Bank of Delaware by the 15th of every month. Tally sheets are issued once food closet operations begin.

FUNDS

Even an all-volunteer food closet housed in a church will have a few bills to pay. Food is expensive, and neither telephone nor utility companies have been known to donate their services to anyone. Many other businesses will, however, and many closets never have to buy office supplies and equipment or to pay for printing. The key to both raising money and getting donated services is simple; ASK! Talk up the food closet. Prepare a brief presentation that describes the people involved with the closet (steering committee members, volunteers and clients). Enthusiasm is infectious; tell people about the food closet and ask for their help. Today's "no" could be tomorrow's "yes", so don't give up.

Special events can be good money-raisers as long as they don't take more in the planning, staffing and staging than they add to the cash box. Food closets have made money holding bake sales, dances, raffles, auctions, potluck dinners and much more.

As ongoing sources of support, however, churches have no equal. A \$6,000 annual budget breaks down to \$500 per month. Five churches taking monthly collections of \$100 each could support a food closet.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Public relations might best be described as an organized and systematic way of keeping a community informed. Before people will volunteer or give money to any program, they have to know about it. Here are a few tips:

- Use statistics and anecdotes to bring the problem of hunger to life. Print brochures.
- Provide supporting churches and civic clubs with brief up-dates for their Sunday bulletins and/or newsletters.
- Cultivate the local media. Send regular public service announcements to the radio stations and local newspapers or when a special activity is planned.
- Start a mailing list of the names of supporters, volunteers, donors and contacts.
- Publish (type and copy) a monthly newsletter- nothing fancy or lengthy, just interesting and informative.
- Unless they prefer anonymity, thank everyone publicly for anything they do. This can be done in the newsletter or in some special cases, through the local press.
- Take pictures and put a slide show together.

Other Decisions You Will Need to Make

1. The geographical area your closet will serve: Where is there a local need? How far away are other food closets?
2. The number of families you will help monthly: What is realistic in terms of your resources? How much time do committee members have to volunteer?
3. Your referral policy: Can you accept referrals from other hunger-related groups? How many each month? What are other referral sources? Will you have enough food?
4. The criteria that will be used to determine who you serve: How often can someone receive assistance? Will you only help in emergencies or can you assist those with more chronic needs?
5. The method of distributing food: Will you distribute as need occurs or has regular distribution days? Do you want people to come to the food closet? Will you deliver to everyone or only to those without transportation?
6. Your hours of operations: Will there be certain times (for example, three mornings each week, or every afternoon) that someone in your group can be reached with requests to relay to those who distribute food? Will you have a designated distribution day?
7. The types of food you will provide: Will you only distribute dry and canned goods or can you include fresh and/or frozen items or non-foods? What do your facilities and budget allow?
8. If other local organizations will be encouraged to participate in your work: Can you benefit from more hands, more resources? Can you establish workable channels of communication? Can you focus on the work and not on differences?
9. By what means will the closet be maintained: Are food drives enough? Is there an existing fund or will one be established? Will you join the Food Bank of Delaware? Will you purchase any food? Will you seek donations from businesses?

Keeping Food Program Records

Record keeping is important so that you can document;

- How many people you are serving, who they are

- How often they need help
- How much food you are purchasing or receiving through donations
- The reasons for hunger in your area

This information can later be used when soliciting funding from donors and to report on the hunger situation throughout the state.

SCREENING RECIPIENT CLIENTS

Screening potential recipients is also an important part of your work. Unfortunately, you may run across an unscrupulous person occasionally. You should be ready to effectively deal with the problem and not be discouraged in your work.

Ask people for the following basic information:

- ❖ Name, address & phone number
- ❖ Number and ages of people in the household
- ❖ Usual source of income
- ❖ Unusual circumstances (i.e. broken stove or refrigerator)
- ❖ If anyone in the household is handicapped or disabled
- ❖ Public assistance programs from which they receive help
- ❖ If special dietary needs are required by any family member
- ❖ The reason they are without food resources
- ❖ If they have been helped previously
- ❖ When their next financial assistance arrives
- ❖ The source of their referral to you

This information can be taken over the phone or in person. If you have criteria limiting eligibility, it is better if you tell people they are ineligible before they come in to pick up food. Check their identification to verify walk-in people. Refer to the SAMPLE INTAKE FORM for a guideline in compiling your initial information on the client.

PERMANENT CARD FILES

Basic permanent information can be recorded on an index card and arranged alphabetically in a file box. Record on the card the assistance provided and the date. Although documenting your program is important, peoples' names and specific information about their lives and problem should be confidential and accessible only to appropriate people. Refer to SAMPLE CLIENT PERMANENT RECORD CARD as a guide.

INVENTORY RECORDS

It is also important that you keep a simple inventory record so that you can keep up with monies spent in supplying your food closet as well as pounds distributed to the needy. Documenting your history will give you a foundation and guideline for future efforts. Refer to the INVENTORY TRACKING RECORD sample form.



Sample Intake Form

Please provide ID for Head of Household at time of Pick up

Full Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone # : _____

Of people in Household: _____ # of Adults _____ # of children _____

Age of Adults: M _____ F _____ M _____ F _____ M _____ F _____

Age of Children: M _____ F _____ M _____ F _____ M _____ F _____

Is anyone in the family pregnant? _____ Disabled? _____

Handicapped? _____

Does the client have cooking and refrigeration facilities? _____

Does the client have transportation? _____

Household Income Information :

Wages _____ Unemployment _____

SSI (Social Security) _____ OASDI (SS Disability) _____

Public Assistance _____ Other _____

Monthly Food Stamps _____

If other please explain: _____

COMMENTS: _____ NO SHOW _____ CANCEL _____ NOT SERVED _____ WHY?

Agency approval _____ Date _____

Dates of service _____, _____, _____, _____

Dates of service _____, _____, _____, _____

Dates of service _____, _____, _____, _____

Operating a Food Program

Malnutrition and hunger go hand in hand. Encourage the collection of wholesome foods as opposed to highly processed, expensive foods. Also encourage the collection of foods low in sugar or salt and high in nutrients or vitamins.

The following suggestions for stocking a food closet may be useful as a guide for preparing emergency food boxes. Most closets post this type of information for the benefit of their volunteers.

Packaging sizes and styles should be specific to the client population. Would you need to stock pop-top or tab-tops cans? Are most clients' single, elderly persons, families, or transients with no cooking facilities? Consider, too, that some non-food items are necessary but expensive to your clients.

How to Determine What Groceries to Distribute

The questions you ask the person requesting help will be a good source of information for determining his or her food needs.

- Size and composition of family. How many people are in the household? Teenagers eat more than small children do.
- Special dietary needs. Diabetics should not have sugar-laden food. Elderly people may need some soft foods.
- Living situation of person needing help. Is refrigeration available? Are cooking facilities working? Is the person mentally challenged and only capable of preparing very simple meals?
- Logistics. Will the person be walking, traveling by bus or by car? How much can he or she carry?

The kinds and amounts of food that you distribute will vary with your food supply. Make an effort to provide well-balanced meals. Some groups include an information sheet suggesting recipes and menus that could be made from certain food items. For instance, creamed soup, rice and tuna together with a can of green beans could make a nice casserole. FBD also provides recipe ideas through "Nutrition Corner" of FBD website, meal boxes and menus.

Additionally www.allrecipes.com, www.recipes.com and www.epicurious.com offers user friendly tools to locate recipes.

Always follow the guideline of: “FIRST IN FIRST OUT” when storing and distributing

Foods that are good sources of protein are important to have on hand. These include not only meat, eggs and fish (which generally are perishable), but also dried beans, peas and lentils. You can get a protein value equivalent to that of meat by combining grain products with peanut butter, peas, beans and lentils.

The best guideline is your own knowledge of meal planning and grocery shopping. Use your good common sense!

Supplemental nutrients can be received from produce products. The Food Bank of Delaware offers free produce through Shopper’s Choice and deliveries. There is a 6 cent a pound charge for delivery and no income requirements for recipients to meet. Produce distribution can be open to the public. Your agency may place flyers in the meal boxes of recipients as a means of advertising the produce program.

Suggested Foods to Stock in Food Closets

The following is a suggested guideline for the types of food to keep on hand in a food closet:

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| Cereals (hot & cold) | Canned meats or stews |
| Coffee & Tea | Milk (dried or evaporated) |
| Cooking oils or solid shortening | Pancake mix |
| Cornmeal or cornbread mix | Pasta (macaroni, spaghetti, etc.) |
| Crackers | Peanut Butter |
| Diet foods (low in sugar and salt) | Potatoes (fresh, canned or instant) |
| Dried beans, Peas or Lentils | Pork & Beans |
| Flour | Rice |
| Fruits (canned or dehydrated) | Salt & Sugar |
| Honey, syrup or jelly | Soups (canned or dehydrated) |
| 100% Juices (canned or dehydrated) | Spaghetti Sauce or Tomato Sauce |
| Mayonnaise, mustard or catsup | Tuna or canned chicken |
| Canned veggies | |

If refrigeration or freezer space is available, you can add:

Bread
Cheese
Eggs
Margarine

Fresh fruits
Fresh veggies
Frozen juices
Meats, poultry or fish

Always follow the guideline of: "FIRST IN FIRST OUT" when storing and distributing

Suggested Non-foods to Stock in Food Closets

Soap and Shampoo
Toothpaste and Denture Cleanser
Toilet paper
Paper Towels and Napkins

Diapers and Sanitary napkins
Detergent & Cleaning supplies
Foil or Film wrap

Have plenty of grocery bags on hand and some boxes. Bags with handles are better for people who will need to carry them for a distance.

The Food Bank of Delaware offers Purchase product and Donated meal boxes. These boxes come already prepared (great volunteer time saver – FBD does the work for you) and when supplemented by dairy and produce, they may provide nine total meals.

Preparing Emergency Food Boxes/Bags

When preparing for distribution, remember to keep in mind cases of product can be opened to provide food for additional families (i.e. bulk packing or case packing of produce).

The following is a suggested guideline for the amount of food to distribute from one person up to four people for a need of three days, using different food choices to show the variety of foods it is possible to use. Also, you should consider each family's specific needs such as baby diapers, special diet foods, etc.