

# FOOD BANK OF NORTHWEST LOUISIANA

## Agency Handbook



Our mission is to serve as the primary resource for  
fighting hunger in Northwest Louisiana

Dear Member Agency:

This handbook is to orient new and existing member agencies and their staff to general information, policies and procedures involved in being an agency of the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana.

Being a member of the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana means that you have joined in a partnership dedicated to stopping hunger and food waste in this community of seven parishes in northwest Louisiana. The Food Bank is a clearinghouse which distributes food to over 120 agencies.

The Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana was established in 1997 as a response to the need for a central location for receiving and warehousing donated grocery product. The Food Bank solicits product donations from food producers, processors, distributors and retailers. The food is collected, sorted, inspected, cleaned and stored until distribution to member agencies.

Our funding comes from participating agencies through the shared maintenance fees, donations from concerned individuals and corporations, grants from private foundations and corporations, United Way, and government contracts with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry.

We encourage the different facets of the community to network together to help the individual in need to access whatever aid is needed. Each member agency should make themselves aware of other agencies in their community to which a client can turn for help. To this end, we have several meetings each year so that we can disseminate information and in turn gain information from our agencies as to their programs and services.

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# FOOD BANK OF NORTHWEST LOUISIANA MEMBERSHIP

## GENERAL PRACTICES

The Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana has four types of agencies as members:

- PANTRY – provides emergency or supplemental food to needy people to prepare and eat in their home or wherever they choose. Usually a pantry provides enough food for a minimum of 3-4 days for an individual or a family.
- RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM – provides meals to registered clients for consumption on their premises. These agencies can be homeless shelters, rehabilitation programs, etc.
- SOUP KITCHEN – provides meals prepared on site to walk in clients
- DAY CARE – provides meals or snacks prepared on site to clients during a specified time period.

All Agencies of the Food Bank are required to sign an agreement/contract. It is expected that the Member Agency will adhere to and follow the regulations and rules in the contract and the guidelines for participation. The key personnel in the organization should be familiar with these regulations and guidelines. Failure to comply will mean the suspension of Food Bank membership. If there are any questions about these regulations, please contact the Food Bank Agency Relations Coordinator. If any key personnel changes are made w\within your organization, please notify the Food Bank immediately to update your contracts and contact information

Member Agencies can expect the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana to treat all members with dignity, respect, and fairness, as we ask you to treat your clients. The Food Bank will provide service with courtesy, be responsive to agency needs and problems, provide timely answers, and provide advance notice of food availability whenever possible.

## ANNUAL MONITORING VISIT

Each year a staff person from the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana will do an on site visit to update information and establish that proper records are being kept, food is being stored properly and that all documentation is in order. Please be flexible about the scheduling of these visits. The information gathered during these monitoring visits will be recorded on a standard form. This visit also allows the staff person to take time with your agency to learn about your program and answer any questions.

## ANNUAL MEETING

Part of the requirements of being a member of the Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana is to attend all required meetings. The Food Bank will host an annual agency meeting to address new policies, issues or concerns. This also provides an opportunity for the agencies to network and find out what others are doing or to share a good idea. One agency representative must be present for all required meetings.

## RECORD KEEPING

The Food Bank requires all Member Agencies to submit a monthly report (attachment A). The report is due at the Food Bank on the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month. The report can be mailed, faxed, e-mailed or hand delivered. Failure to submit your monthly report by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month will automatically place your agency on hold

As a member of the Food Bank you are required to keep certain records at the food distribution site:

- All client records for 3 years
- All Food Bank invoices for 3 years
- A current copy of the signed agreements
- Pest control records and receipts
- Current Health Department inspection/license, if appropriate

## FOOD BANK OPERATIONS PROCEDURES

### ORDERING PROCEDURE

You may receive your food list by fax, mail or e-mail. All go out on the last workday of the week as late as possible in order to give everyone the same opportunity to order the product.

You may place your order by phone, fax, or e-mail. We want to encourage you to place your order by fax or e-mail because of the accuracy. If you are faxing your order, please call for confirmation. Please limit phone orders to seven items or less.

All orders are processed on a first come, first served basis including the faxed orders. Our fax machine records the time the fax is received and we use this to sequence the orders. Please be sure to indicate on the faxed order the agency name, name of the person ordering, the desired pickup date and the desired pickup time.

***If you are placing your order by phone, you must have your order form filled out prior to calling so the staff member taking the order can complete the process as quickly as possible.*** After giving your agency name, your name, and your pickup date and time, please state the line number and the amount. The person taking the order has the exact same form you have, so ordering in this manner is most efficient.

**You must allow 24 hours between the time the order is placed and the time you wish to pick up.**

**Effective September 1, 2009, all agencies will be required to have a minimum order of \$20.00 per Agency.**

## FOOD ORDER LIST

The weekly list contains a great deal of information. The list is grouped by like product. If you review the ITEM CODE column, you will notice that all the Beverages are grouped; all the CEREAL is grouped, etc. The different columns and their meanings follow.

STOR – how the product must be stored. DRY – no refrigeration required, CLR – must be stored in the refrigerator, FRZ – must be stored in the freezer

DESCRIPTION – this contains a very brief description of the case product including the count and the size of the individual packages (ex. FROSTED FLAKES 14/24.3 oz means that there are 14 boxes of frosted flakes that each contain 24.3 oz of cereal)

UNIT –the weight of one case of product

QTY. AVAIL. –the number of cases available at the time the list was produced

FEE/LB – the shared \*maintenance fee for each pound of product

TOTAL FEE – the total shared maintenance fee for one case of product

PRODUCT NUMBER – the number assigned by the Food Bank for inventory purposes

QUANTITY – space provided for you to write in the number of cases you wish to order for your agency

LINE – the line number is used to speed up the ordering process. Use this number when placing an order by phone.

## WAREHOUSE RULES

1. Pick-up times
  - A. Be on time – arrive at your scheduled pickup time
  - B. 8 – 12    1 – 2:30  
    Mon – Thursday    (No pickups between 12 – 1)  
    8 - 12    Friday        Excluding last Friday of the Month
2. **Orders must be placed 24 hours in advance.** In order to treat each agency with the respect you deserve, the warehouse staff will not be allowed to pull any additional product while you wait.
3. Invoices
  - A. All invoices must be signed before leaving.
  - B. Please bring an agency check or money order with you as payment is expected at time of pick-up unless specific arrangements have been made in advance.
  - C. All new agencies are automatically **C.O.D. (cash on delivery)** for the first six months of their membership.
  - D. Any amount over 60 days puts agency on C.O.D. status.
  - A. Delivery Fees are as follows:
    - \$31    In Town (Shreveport-Bossier area)
    - \$85    50 – 100 miles round trip
    - \$95    100+ miles round trip

Prices are subject to change

- 4 If you have any questions concerning product or pick-up, please ask someone in the warehouse. They will provide you with the most accurate information.
- 5 When you arrive at the Food Bank, please check in with one of the warehouse staff and let them know what agency you are with. Please do not go beyond counter area. The Food Bank is not responsible for loading or off loading of products.
- 6 **The agency is responsible for having adequate help to load their order. The Food Bank staff will bring it to the edge of the loading dock for you. When an agency requests assistance with the loading of an order, the Food Bank is not responsible for damages or problems that may occur during loading and off loading.**
- 7 **Check your order as it is being loaded against the invoice you received at the desk.** Make sure the order is accurate **BEFORE** you leave the dock area. Our warehouse staff does an excellent job of pulling orders; however, they occasionally make mistakes. It is your responsibility to check the order against the invoice as you load. Any discrepancies must be settled before you leave the dock area. Refunds will not be made once you have signed your invoice and left the premises.  
**Notify Driver of any discrepancies**
- 8 Invoices are to be paid prior to loading products
- 9 Please remind the warehouse staff if you have frozen or refrigerated items on your order.

## SAFE FOOD STORAGE

Keeping food fresh and wholesome requires attention to proper food safety rules at each stage of transportation, storage and preparation. Perishable products, such as meats and dairy products will begin to spoil quickly if they are not kept at the right temperature. This means storing and transporting at a temperature below 45 degrees. These products must be transferred quickly from vehicle to refrigerators or freezers. Prepared food to be served hot must be kept above 140 degrees until it is served and then quickly chilled for storage. Perishable foods kept at room temperature are in the danger zone.

Key points for food storage of all Food Bank products:

- Maintain a strong pest control program.
- Keep rice, beans, flour, etc in rodent proof bins.
- Store all food off the floor so pest control and cleaning can be done. The Food Bank has pallets for free if you need them.
- Store all cleaning supplies in a different area, separate from the food, never on a shelf over food.
- Organize your food stock by using a “First In, First Out” system of distribution.
- Maintain a clean and dry storage area whose temperature is between 45 and 85 degrees, the optimum being 70-75 degrees. The closer to optimum, the longer the food will maintain its quality.
- Keep a thermometer in your refrigerator/freezer and keep a log of temps every 48 hours.

**PLEASE RETURN ANY FOOD BANK FOOD THAT HAS BEEN HANDLED INCORRECTLY OR THAT HAS BEEN FOUND TO BE UNUSABLE. THE FOOD BANK MUST ACCOUNT FOR THE FOOD AND MUST TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITS DESTRUCTION.**

## **VIOLATIONS OF AGENCY MEMBERSHIP**

The Food Bank is required by the IRS, Feeding America, and the United States Department of Agriculture to enforce proper and legal product usage. Therefore, the following violations to your agency's membership agreement are strictly prohibited, and any violation may result in restriction or termination of membership.

- Exchanging any donated food or grocery product for money, property or services.
- Using any donated food or grocery product in a manner not related to the express purposes of your agency.
- Being delinquent in payment of shared maintenance contributions or any checks being return for non-sufficient funds.
- Storing or transporting any donated food or grocery product improperly.
- Stockpiling any donated food or grocery product.
- Inadequate record keeping.
- Any violation of any state or local statute, ordinance, code or regulation related to the handling or storage of food and grocery products.
- Termination or expiration of your 501(c)(3) tax exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service. This document must be current and on file at the Food Bank.
- Any discrimination in service delivery based on age, disability, gender, race, religion or political affiliation.
- All agencies must use (as the criteria to determine need for its clients) a reasonable standard percentage of the U.S. Poverty Income Guidelines.
- If an agency is inactive with the Food Bank for distribution of food products for more than a year - the Food Bank will terminate the membership. An agency wishing to regain active status must re-apply for agency membership.

## **PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING AGENCY VIOLATIONS**

The Food Bank will handle each agency violation as a reason for terminating agency membership. The purpose of our mission is to ensure that food products are available to the needy, through the responsible efforts of our agencies. The following procedures will be applied to any agency violation:

- Shipment of Food Bank product may be immediately suspended.
- An agency found to be in violation of any of these requirements shall be issued a written warning, addressing the issue of concern and the corrective action required.
- If the violation is not corrected within a reasonable amount of time, the agency shall be issued a second warning. This warning will reiterate the concerns and outline an appropriate timetable for compliance by the agency.

- If the agency fails to comply, the agency will be placed on hold status. Under hold status, an agency's may not utilize the Food Bank's services until falling into compliance with policies and procedures. Notification of hold status will be confirmed in writing. The Agency Relations Coordinator has authority to place member agencies on hold. The Executive Director shall be informed when any member agency is placed on hold.
- If compliance is not accomplished as determined by the allotted time the agency's membership will be terminated. Only the Executive Director has the authority to terminate a member agency. Upon termination, an agency will lose the privileges of a member agency for a minimum of six months. At the end of six months, an agency may reapply for membership as a new agency.

#### GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

- Any member agency may appeal the Executive Director's termination decision by sending written notice of appeal to the Board of Directors within 30 days of such notification. All decisions of the Board of Directors will be final.