

FOOD BANK

OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

TOGETHER, WE END HUNGER

Agency & Program Membership Requirements for College & University Food Pantries

Criteria for Agency Membership

To be eligible for membership, agencies must...

1. ...Be duly organized as one of the following types of organizations:
 - a. A public institution of higher education as established under MGL Part I, Title II, Chapter 15A.
 - b. A private non-profit, charitable organization with 501(c)(3) status, classified as a Public Charity and authorized to grant degrees by the Board of Higher Education or the Massachusetts Legislature.

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). In preparation for external audits, the Food Bank staff periodically reviews the IRS list of Non-Profit Organizations (Publication 78) and the Automatic Revocation of Exemption List. If an agency is found to have their 501(c)(3) status revoked, their membership with the Food Bank will be terminated until evidence from the IRS of reinstatement is provided. For more information, see: www.irs.gov/charities.

2. ...Provide service within The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts' service area (Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, or Hampshire County).
3. ...Have been incorporated at least 6 months prior to membership with The Food Bank.
4. ...Be legally, fiscally, and programmatically responsible for the feeding programs it sponsors.

Criteria for Program Membership

To be eligible for membership, programs must...

- ...Be sponsored by an authorized (current or new) Food Bank agency (see above) – agencies with overdue balances may NOT sponsor new Food Bank programs.
- ...Be located in and provide service to clients in The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts' service area (Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, or Hampshire County).
- ...Have regular access to email, internet capacity, and the ability to open PDF attachments.
- ...Have technological capacity to utilize web-based online ordering and reporting system.
- ...Have a food budget adequate for food distribution program.
- ...Have legal and insured access to a non-residential space for feeding program.
- ... Have adequate on-site storage and refrigeration space (if the program will be ordering and storing cold-storage items) for feeding program. Food/products may not be stored off-site without prior inspection and approval.
- ...Have program staff with appropriate Food Safety training certificate. Grocery distribution programs are required to have at least one volunteer or staff member with a ServSafe Food Handler certificate or equivalent certification from a recognized food safety training entity.

Supporting Documentation

Prior to Food Bank membership, agencies and programs must provide the documents listed below. In addition, new member programs must have a physical inspection of the feeding program location and/or food storage facility completed by a Food Bank Agency Relations staff member prior to membership. Any person receiving food for member programs must be authorized by the sponsoring agency.

New Food Bank Agencies must submit:

- ALL ORGANIZATIONS:
 1. Completed Agency Application for Food Bank Membership
 2. List of current Board Members, including addresses and phone numbers
 3. Copy of the Massachusetts Department of Revenue Certificate of Exemption (MASS-DOR ST-2). If you have questions about your state tax exempt status, you may contact:
*Massachusetts Department of Revenue
Customer Service Bureau
Non Profit Tax Exempt Office
617-887-6367
www.mass.gov/DOR*
 4. Signed Membership Agreement (provided by the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts) indicating sponsored programs and food types in which they may participate. (Must be updated annually and with each new sponsored program.)
- PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION: Must be listed in MGL Chapter 15A, Section 5. No further documentation is needed,
- PRIVATE/INDEPENDENT HIGHER EDUCATION INSTUTIONS:
 1. A letter from the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education confirming that the institution is authorized to grant degrees by the Board of Higher Education or the Massachusetts Legislature.
 2. A copy of the institution's IRS Letter of Determination showing that the organization is as private non-profit, charitable organization with 501(c)(3) status, classified as a Public Charity (NOT a Private Foundation).
 3. Copy of educational institution's Articles of Incorporation (*Organization must be incorporated for at least 6 months*)

New Food Bank Programs must submit:

- Completed Program Application for Food Bank membership, signed by the program manager AND the President of the sponsoring educational institution
- Member Program Contact Form, noting program contacts and authorized shoppers
- Documentation of capacity to distribute food (program budget, if any, and system for obtaining and reporting required monthly statistics).
- Annual membership fee (must be paid by check from sponsoring agency; The Food Bank does not accept cash, money orders, or personal checks)
- Documentation of food safety training
- Working Out the Details worksheet, to be completed during a visit to another Food Bank member program. (Required for brand new programs that are not currently operational; optional but recommended for established programs or those joining under an existing Food Bank agency.)
- Other verifications/documents may be requested

Program Classifications:

Programs sponsored by colleges and universities are only eligible for membership as Campus Pantries. We classify these as a type of "Emergency Feeding Program," meaning that the primary purpose of the program is to provide emergency food assistance to anyone on campus who is in need. This includes students, as well as faculty and staff. Campus Pantries may have separate processes and procedures for serving faculty and staff than for serving students.

Campus Pantries are only eligible to receive food from the Massachusetts Emergency Food Assistance Program (MEFAP) or from our Buy-In program (foods purchased at wholesale prices and made available to member agencies at a small markup). Campus pantries may not access donated foods, USDA foods, or foods purchased with grant funds.

Membership requirements

- Food Bank food/products may not be exchanged for money, property, or service.
- Food Bank food/products may not be exchanged for participation in a religious service.
- Food Bank food/products may not be shared with other agencies or programs (including internal programs).
- Food Bank food/products may not be used for any purpose other than distribution to students, faculty, or staff in need of food assistance.
- Food Bank food/products may not be used for agency/program events, such as volunteer recognition events, annual meetings, etc.
- Food Bank foods/products may not be stockpiled. All food/products must be distributed within 60 days of pickup from Food Bank; perishables must be distributed within a safe, reasonable timeframe for clients' use.
- The program must have a visible sign advertising the program, including hours, to the public.
- The program must notify Food Bank of and adhere to posted distribution hours.
- Food Bank food/products may not be distributed outside of posted hours, except in cases of emergency need.
- Storage facilities must be clean and regularly inspected for pests.
- Food and products from The Food Bank must be stored safely and securely and be locked when not in use by the feeding program.
- Food must be stored:
 - 6" off the floor
 - 2" from the wall
 - In a cool, clean, and dry place
 - Separate from cleaning products and toxic products
- Refrigerators must be kept between 34°F and 40°F (Perishable food that is stored outside of this temperature range will be discarded immediately).
- Freezers must be kept at or below 0°F.
- All programs must place an order from The Food Bank at least once every 6 months.
- All programs must submit monthly services reports/statistics, regardless of service provision (reports must be submitted even when food was not ordered, or program was closed).
- All financial accounts must be kept current with The Food Bank; overdue accounts will result in program suspension and/or inactivation.
- Each program must have at least one active staff member/volunteer certified in safe food handling
- All programs must notify The Food Bank of changes to the primary contact, authorized shoppers, or Food Safety contact.
- All programs must maintain accurate records of food distribution and must keep all Food Bank invoices on file for three years plus the current fiscal year.

Please note that fulfilling agency and program criteria do not automate Food Bank membership. Limitations in food supply and administrative capacity may, at times, require The Food Bank to suspend or limit acceptance of new member programs.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.