

SHARED HARVEST FOODBANK
Policies and Guidelines for Fresh Foods Level 2 Membership

This document is a statement of Shared Harvest Foodbanks' criteria for membership. It is intended for use by organizations interested in applying for Level 2 membership. Shared Harvest Foodbank reserves the right to add, alter or rescind any or all of these policies and guidelines as it deems necessary or as required by our national affiliate, Feeding America, the Ohio Association of Foodbanks or local, state or federal government.

GENERAL POLICIES

1. **TAX EXEMPT STATUS:** All organizations receiving Fresh Foods from Shared Harvest Foodbank must be federally tax exempt 501(c)3 organizations; or wholly owned by a 501(c)3 organization; or a 501(c)3 equivalent such as churches; or have an established 501(c)3 Separate Fund. Tax exempt corporate status must be qualified either in the state of Ohio or Indiana. Also, a copy of the 501 (c) 3 must be attached with the application. If the 501 (c) 3 is not in the name of your organization, the organization named in the 501 (c) 3 letter must provide a written statement on their letterhead that your organization is a member in good standing
2. **LOCATION:** All member organizations must provide services to and reside in Shared Harvest Foodbank's geographical service territory.
3. **ORIENTATION:** Each new member must attend an orientation session at the foodbank. Anytime a member agency has a staff change in the position which orders Fresh Foods from the foodbank or a new Director is hired, the new staff must attend an orientation session within 45 days of the hire date.

1. USE OF SUPPLIES RECEIVED FROM SHARED HARVEST FOODBANK

FOOD DISTRIBUTION: All Fresh Foods obtained from Shared Harvest Foodbank by its' membership must be distributed in accordance with the provisions under Section 170(e)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, which requires that the supplies be given to the needy, ill or infants at no charge to the ultimate recipient.

- A. ***THANK YOU BAGS FOR VOLUNTEERS:*** Members may not distribute Fresh Foods or other supplies to volunteers or workers as a gift for their labors.
- B. ***EMERGENCY FOOD FOR WORKERS/VOLUNTEERS:*** Members may provide Fresh Foods to workers or volunteers who meet the same eligibility criteria established for people requesting help.
- C. ***TASTING/TESTING:*** Members may use the Fresh Foods received from Shared Harvest to help determine best and alternate uses, provide samples to people accessing services, and familiarize volunteers/staff with different types of food so the uncommon foods actually get distributed.
- D. ***FUNDRAISING EVENTS:*** Fresh Foods received from Shared Harvest Foodbank may not be used in any fund raising activities, such as dinners or bake sales, or as "prizes". The Fresh Foods may be used in functions such as volunteer or donor recognition events as long as there are no charges to attend.
- E. ***DISASTER RELIEF:*** Fresh Foods may be used in local disaster relief efforts both for victim assistance and clean up, as well as volunteer consumption. If the disaster is beyond your organization's capabilities, contact Shared Harvest for further assistance.

2. DISPOSAL OF UNUSABLE SUPPLIES: If product received from Shared Harvest appears questionable, please call Shared Harvest immediately and speak with Sarah, Darrell or Tina to report your concerns. Please have the following information ready:

- a) Type of product – as listed on your invoice
- b) Date received from Shared Harvest – on invoice
- c) Reasons why you question the supplies viability

Based on this information, we will provide instructions for use, return or disposal of the product in question.

3. MEMBER ELIGIBILITY

A. *OPERATIONS:* Organizations must qualify under General Policies, and:

- a. Show demonstrated community support,
- b. In operation no less than six months unless in an underserved area,
- c. Meet all required local, state and federal laws regarding food preparation and/or distribution,
- d. Meet or exceed storage guidelines listed in Section 6,
- e. Be accessible to the public at least once per month
- f. Keep adequate records of people served,
- g. Provide monthly statistical reports, in a timely manner, to Shared Harvest. Statistical reports from member agencies are due the 15th of the month following the month to which the report pertains. Those agencies which fail to file reports by the 15th of the second month following the month to which the report pertains will be placed on hold until reports are brought up to date.
- h. Maintain active membership or participate in only one Foodbank,
- i. Allow Shared Harvest representatives reasonable access for site reviews.

B. *PRIORITIZATION OF SERVICES:* Shared Harvest's primary purpose is to provide food and grocery supplies to food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters that serve the needy, ill or infants. Youth programs, camps, day care centers, senior citizens centers, residential programs and similar organizations must develop a method to determine that the benefit of supplies obtained from Shared Harvest primarily serves the needy, ill or infants. Please provide copies of the procedure and its' findings to Shared Harvest Foodbank.

C. *HOME BASED SERVICES:* Associations of foster care homes or adoptive homes are not eligible for membership.

D. *COMPREHENSIVE CARE PROGRAMS:* Residential or on site comprehensive care programs that charge a fee for service (such as substance abuse programs and halfway houses), with meals being a part of that service, may become members of Shared Harvest, providing they are licensed and/or certified by the necessary governing municipality or state and otherwise qualify.

E. *MUNICIPAL PROGRAMS:* Programs which are 100% tax supported or operated by a branch of government are considered municipal programs and are not eligible for membership.

4. CLIENT ELIGIBILITY

A. *FOOD DISTRIBUTION GUIDELINES:* Generally, people accessing your services should have incomes which fall at or below 200% of the poverty guidelines as established by the federal

government annually. Shared Harvest will provide copies of these guidelines. Your organization should determine its policies and procedures for food distribution and post these procedures in a visible location within your organization. Please provide copies of your policies, procedures and case forms to Shared Harvest Foodbank upon application and when there is a change if you are already a member.

- B. *CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE:* Will not refuse services to any person requesting help on the grounds 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.
- C. *LABOR DISPUTES:* Members may provide assistance to persons affected by labor disputes if the organizations normal standards of determining need are met.

5. STORAGE REQUIREMENTS

Remember, we are here to help people through a food crisis, not store food! In order to maintain the integrity of the food you distribute to people in need, below are the requirements for storage. A good rule of thumb: When in doubt about the safety of food – throw it out! Remember, if you wouldn't serve it to your family; don't expect anyone else to either.

A. STRUCTURE

1. The food storage facility should be temperature controlled, with adequate ventilation. Allowable temperature variance is 35 to 85 degrees.
2. The structure should be secure, with locks in good working order and, if necessary, windows with security glass or grillwork.
3. All walls and floors should be washable, in good repair and have non-toxic food service approved paint or sealer applied, with no cracked, chipped, scaling, peeling or torn areas.
4. Food storage areas should be separate from interviewing areas.
5. A pest control program should be performed regularly. Where evidence of infestation occurs, a commercial pest control company must be engaged.

B. DRY STORAGE

1. All surfaces should be of a non-porous, washable material, and be washed with an USDA approved disinfectant at least quarterly, and as needed during the interim.
2. No product can be stored directly on the floor. If supply exceeds shelving capacity, excess can be stored on pallets, but must be at least 6" from all walls.
3. Thermometers must be present in all dry storage areas.
4. Dry food storage should be of adequate size to allow for easy stock rotation and inventory.
5. All non-food products must be stored separately from food products. At a minimum, all non-food products should be stored on lower shelves and never above food products.

C. REFRIGERATED & FROZEN STORAGE

1. Refrigerators should maintain temperatures not exceeding 45 degrees. Freezers should maintain 0 or less degrees.
2. Thermometers must be present in all refrigerators and freezers.
3. All refrigerators and freezers should be defrosted and cleaned with an USDA approved disinfectant at least quarterly, and as needed in the interim.

4. Refrigerators and freezers should be large enough to allow for easy stock rotation and inventory.

6. VIOLATIONS OF POLICIES:

- A. *TERMINATION:* A member is subject to immediate termination from participation in Shared Harvest if they are found to be in egregious violation of any of these policies or the agency agreement. A member so affected will be notified in writing of the reasons for termination.
- B. *GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE:* Any member terminated believing they have been unjustly treated, may request a grievance hearing within 10 working days from the date of the notice of such action. The Executive Director of Shared Harvest will conduct the hearing; with the Agency Relations Director, two representatives of the affected member and the Agency Representative on the Board of Trustees of Shared Harvest. The Executive Director will detail the results of the meeting in writing, to all those present at the meeting.

If you have any questions, please call Sarah, Darrell or Tina at 1.800.352.3663