



Agency Partner Manual

Guidelines and procedures for approved agency partners of Food Bank for the Heartland.

Contact:

Amy Gerhart

Director of Agency Relations

AGerhart@FoodBankHeartland.org

402-905-4817



Welcome to Food Bank for the Heartland!

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your commitment to providing food to the hungry. By being an agency partner of Food Bank for the Heartland, you are a partner in our mission to reduce hunger in Nebraska and western Iowa.

The purpose of this manual is to orient new agency partners, new staff and/or volunteers of existing agency partners to the policies and responsibilities of membership with Food Bank for the Heartland.

By becoming a member of our network, you are joining a successful partnership dedicated to reducing hunger in our community. Food Bank for the Heartland is a distribution center which distributes food in Nebraska and western Iowa.

If you have any questions or concerns about any of the policies in this manual, please feel free to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Amy Gerhart
Food Bank for the Heartland
10525 J Street
Omaha, NE 68127
AGerhart@FoodBankHeartland.org
402-905-4817

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About Food Bank for the Heartland

Vision:

A hunger free Nebraska and western Iowa

Mission:

To reduce hunger in Nebraska and western Iowa through community collaboration and making the best possible use of all available resources.

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 serve agency partners who distribute food to the area's men, women and children facing hunger on a daily basis. We are a distribution organization helping to move food from donors to agency partners. We serve a variety of agency 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 agency partners all fit into the big picture with the ultimate goal of serving clients in need.

Types of agency partners 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 agency partner that prepares, serves or delivers prepared meals or snacks to individuals in need.



Benefits of Membership

Being an agency partner of Food Bank for the Heartland offers many benefits.

- We are a partner to help you accomplish your mission of feeding the hungry.
- We offer a variety of food and household products.
- You have a choice of Pick-up or Delivery of product.
- You have access to our Agency Shopping Store.
- You can order products online.
- You are a member of a network working to reduce hunger in Nebraska and western Iowa.

Policy Do's and Don'ts

All agency partners will be required to adhere to the following policies:

Do's:

- Provide direct service to the hungry, low income, or underserved population
- Distribute food for use by the needy, ill, children and seniors
- Serve all clients as respected guests.
- Distribute food to clients free of charge with absolutely no conditions levied, implied, or exchanged.
- Refer clients to other programs or United Way (by 211) when they have a need you cannot meet.

Don'ts:

- Do not redistribute product to other non-profit entities 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
- Solicit donations of any kind from your clients
- Make it difficult or embarrassing for individuals who are seeking help

Accessing Products

Ordering Food

The Food Bank for the Heartland strives to offer a wide variety of quality food to our agency partners. There are three “categories” of food available to them.

Donated - Items donated through food drives and food manufacturers.

Purchased – These are items purchased directly from wholesalers and offered to our agency partners at cost plus handling fee.

USDA (Iowa & Nebraska) - Product received from The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and is offered at no cost to qualifying agency partners. The Food Bank distributes Iowa and Nebraska commodities.

*In a 30-day period, if you receive USDA product from Food Bank for the Heartland, you cannot also order it from another USDA provider. Agency partners are only allowed to order from one location or another.

Perishable items are also available at Food Bank for the Heartland. If you are interested in receiving bakery, produce or dairy products, those items can be added onto your order. These items are also available in our Agency Partner Store.

Placing Your Agency Order

Orders can be placed 8:00 am – 4:00pm.

An agency partner can place an order online:

Online: <http://www.foodbankheartland.org/agencies/current.aspx>

All orders are taken on a first come first serve basis. When orders are placed, a pick-up or delivery time will be arranged at that time. Food Bank for the Heartland requires a 2-day time frame from when the order is placed to when the order is available for pick up or delivery.

If you would like to utilize online ordering, please call to set up an appointment with a member of the Agency Relations staff.

Order Pick Up

Orders can be picked up by appointment between the hours of 8:00am and 3:30 pm.

When your scheduled date arrives, you should arrive at your scheduled time. All agency partners should check in with the Agency Store attendant when they arrive at Food Bank for the Heartland. Staff will help you load your product into your vehicle. If you are unable to make your appointment, please call us ASAP so we can arrange another pick-up time. Pick up times are scheduled for a ½ hour time slot. During this time, you may pick up and load your ordered items. Also, this is your designated time slot for shopping in the agency store. Agency partners are encouraged to bring two people to pick up their items (one to help load the product and one to shop in the store).

Agency Store

The Agency Store is open Monday - Friday 8:00am - 3:30pm

Things to know about the Agency Store:

- For safety reasons, all shoppers in the store must be at least 16 years of age.
- All agencies have 30 minutes to shop in the Agency Store.
- Carts and boxes are available for your convenience.
- Products from our product list cannot be picked up through the store. If you need a case of a product, please order online or contact our office to place an order.
- Shoppers should not open sealed cases or boxes of food.
- Shoppers are only allowed to select product inside the store area. Agencies are not allowed to select product from the sorting room, on our dock or in the warehouse.
- Because we are in a warehouse environment, closed-toe shoes are required for shopper safety. Climbing on shelves or over pallets is not allowed while in our facility.
- Our goal is to provide a pleasant, clean, and safe environment for everyone who visits our facility. If you see something that presents an unsafe situation, please notify a member of the Food Bank for the Heartland staff immediately.

Loading

When picking up your product from Food Bank for the Heartland, we expect you will be able to pick up your entire order at once. Transportation and volunteers appropriate to the amount of product you are picking up are important to ensure a safe and smooth loading experience. Safety is important and is the priority of all staff and volunteers of Food Bank for the Heartland. We reserve the right to not load any vehicle if it is deemed to be unsafe or not roadworthy. We will not knowingly overload any vehicle beyond its capacity to operate safely.

Agency Relations Staff

While visiting Food Bank for the Heartland, if you need to speak with a member of our office staff, please check in with the receptionist.

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 402-331-1213.

Complaints

Please direct all complaints about your experience while at Food Bank for the Heartland to Amy Gerhart, Director of Agency Relations. We take all complaints seriously and will address them in a timely manner.

Delivery Information

Delivery Route Schedule

1 ST Tuesday	1 st Thursday	2 nd Tuesday- 2 nd Thurs.	2 nd Thursday	3 rd Tuesday- 3 rd Wed.	3 rd Thursday - 3 rd Friday	4 th Tues. - Thurs
Norfolk	Missouri Valley	Sidney	Shenandoah	Valentine	Overflow	Chadron
Columbus	Neola	Scottsbluff	Sidney	Bassett		Alliance
Neligh	Dunlap	Kimball	Malvern	Atkinson		Gordon
Albion	Atlantic	Gering	Glenwood	O'Neill		Rushville
Madison	Logan		Essex			Hay Springs
	Harlan		Villisca			White Clay
			Clarinda			
			Red Oak			

* For multiple day trips, we always go by the Tuesday. The agency relations staff will notify you if your order is being delivered on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday.

Delivery Fee Schedule

Local = within 30 miles of Omaha Greater Nebraska & Iowa = 30 miles or more from Omaha

Delivery	Weight	Cost
Local	under 1,000 pounds	\$30.00
Local	over 1,000 pounds	\$52.00
Local	over 2,500 pounds	\$90.00
Local	over 5,000 pounds	\$135.00
Local	over 7,500 pounds	\$225.00
Greater NE & IA	under 1,000 pounds	\$37.00
Greater NE & IA	over 1,000 pounds	\$60.00
Greater NE & IA	over 2,500 pounds	\$105.00
Greater NE & IA	over 5,000 pounds	\$157.00
Greater NE & IA	over 7,500 pounds	\$262.00

Handling Fees / Billing

As an agency partner of Food Bank for the Heartland, we ask that you utilize our services to the best of your ability and resources.

All agencies are required to order a minimum of 4,000 pounds per calendar year to maintain active membership.

Handling Fees/Shared Maintenance Fees

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 the product.

Billing/Accounting Procedures

When your agency partner representative picks up product from Food Bank for the Heartland they will be given a copy of the order which reflects the food they are picking up. A copy is signed for our records and a copy will be given to the agency. The order confirmation is required to be kept at the agency site where food is distributed. At the end of the month, invoices are sent to the agency's designated billing contact along with a detailed monthly statement. Payment can be made against the invoice or the monthly statement. If you can receive statements via email, please notify the Agency Relations department.

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 agency account.

Please ensure to include both the agency partner account number and the invoice number when submitting your payments.

Credit Limits

If you have a balance that exceeds your credit limit, or a balance over 60 days past due, a "hold" will automatically be placed on your account. A hold prevents further orders and appointments.

If you find that you need financial assistance or need to set up a credit account with Food Bank for the Heartland, please contact Amy Gerhart, Director of Agency Relations.

Food Safety

Safe Food Handling

Food Safety is an important public health issue. Agency partners must implement proper food handling measures to ensure that product being distributed is safe.

All agency partners are required to have one member of their agency complete Food Safety training. Please forward any certificates to Food Bank for the Heartland upon completion.

Food Storage

Once food is received from Food Bank for the Heartland, it is generally stored by the agency partner for a period of time before it is distributed to people in need. The following food storage guidelines highlight practices that agency partners should follow but are not meant to be an inclusive list:

- The agency cannot store, prepare, or distribute product from FBFH at a location not authorized by FBFH.
- The agency cannot distribute or store product out of a person's home.
- Food must be stored in a clean storage area, free of dirt, bacteria, pests, and other contaminants.
- The storage area for non-perishable food should be stored at a temperature between 50 and 70 degrees.
- Product must be kept off the floor, at least six inches off the ground by utilizing shelving, tables or pallets.
- The storage area should be orderly and organized in a manner conducive to efficient distribution and product rotation.
- Agencies should practice First In First Out (FIFO) product rotation.
- Baby food and formula should NOT be distributed after the expiration date. All baby food and formula products stored that are beyond date of expiration should be discarded and not distributed to clients.
- All household products and cleaners should be stored in an area separate from food.

Refrigeration

To properly handle perishable and frozen items, agency partners must have adequate refrigeration equipment and utilize thermometers to ensure temperatures remain consistent.

- Refrigerators must be kept between 32 and 40 degrees.
- Freezer temperatures must be at 0 (zero) degrees or below.

All agency partners need to utilize a Temperature Log and check temperatures every day you are open to clients. See the Appendix for a sample log.

Sanitation

Keeping equipment and work surfaces clean and free of bacteria is critical for food safety. Cleaning and sanitizing practices should be utilized. All sinks used for hand washing need to have a hand washing poster posted nearby.

Pest Control

Pests carry germs and disease. Agency partners must take reasonable precautions to protect against pest infestation. Pest prevention and control programs may be maintained by agency partner staff, volunteers and/or a contracted source – whatever is determined as most appropriate by your organization.

Recommendations for Pest Prevention:

- The food storage area should be kept clean and free of debris, ensuring that all stored products are sealed properly.
- Inspect the food storage area every 30 days for signs of pest infestation. We recommend that you document findings on the Pest Control Report located in the Appendix.
- Poison free devices may be used in the storage area to ensure that area remains free of pests.

Recommendations for Pest Infestations

- Inspect the food storage area to determine the type of pest and the level of treatment needed to resolve the infestation. Take immediate action to treat the area accordingly.
- Food products should be removed from the storage area if there is a possibility of toxic pesticide exposure to stored products during treatment.
- Once evidence of pest infestation has been determined, inspect stored products to ensure that no damage has occurred. Discard any damaged products.

Distributing to Clients

Appropriate Use of Product

The community donates food and household products to Food Bank for the Heartland with the expectation that it will be utilized to assist people in need. Terms and conditions of agency partnership describe, in detail, what constitutes appropriate use of the products your organization obtains from Food Bank for the Heartland. Agency partners are non-profit organizations or churches providing direct service to the hungry and do not redistribute product to other non-profit entities.

- 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.
- Agency partners may provide food to ill or needy volunteers and/or staff through the same process as the organization' clients. This is not to be a regular supplement. Volunteers and staff in need on a regular basis must be referred to another organization for regular services.
- Agency partners may not "reward" volunteers for their labor with product obtained from Food Bank for the Heartland. Other methods of expressing appreciation to volunteers must be used.
- Agency partners 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.
- Food ordered from Food Bank for the Heartland can only be redistributed to clients. Do not redistribute to other organizations.

Client Eligibility Criteria

Food Bank for the Heartland allows the agency partners to determine their own client eligibility criteria. All agency partners must have written documentation of their criteria and outline the procedure that is used to determine whether a client meets that criteria. This information must be posted in a place where prospective clients have the opportunity to view the eligibility requirements prior to receiving services.

How Much to Distribute

The quantity of food to be provided to an individual or family is determined by the agency 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.

Client Choice – another pantry option

The concept of client choice is focused on creating an atmosphere of dignity for the client. 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 family.

Many food pantries follow the practice of pre-bagging groceries for clients. While this may be convenient for the agency partner, it does not take into account the special needs of each client that visits the pantry. 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 utilizing resources to obtain and distribute the product that is neither helpful nor useful to their target population. Since pre-bagged options generally contain similar items, the model assumes that food needs for every household are virtually the same, which is almost never true.

Distributing USDA Products

Income guidelines for distributing USDA commodities are as follows:

- Family of 1: \$1949
- Family of 2: \$2100
- Family of 3: \$2640
- Family of 4: \$3180
- Family of 5: \$3720
- Family of 6: \$4260
- For each additional household member add \$540.

Nebraska

To Distribute USDA Commodities in the State of Nebraska, agency partners need to contact Amy Gerhart, Director of Agency Relations. Agency partners in Nebraska are required to have a signed TEFAP USDA Contract on file.

Iowa

All agency partners in Iowa are allowed to access the Iowa USDA Commodities. If you would like additional information about the program, please contact:

Kim M. Jones, Program Manager
Financial Health and Work Supports
Food Assistance Unit
Hoover State Office Building
1305 E. Walnut
Des Moines, IA 50319-0114

APPENDIX

TEMPERATURE LOG FOR REFRIGERATOR OR FREEZER

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

AGENCY PARTNER

NAME:

MONTH:

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



10525 J Street Omaha, NE 68127
Phone: 402-331-1213
Web: www.FoodBankHeartland.org

Partnership Terms and Conditions Agreement

Date:

Agency Partner#:

Agency Partner Name:

Contact Name:

Mailing Address:

Distribution Address:

Terms and Conditions of Membership

This document is an agreement between _____ referred to as “agency” and Food Bank for the Heartland referred to as “FBFH”.

The Terms and Conditions of agency membership govern an agency’s membership in The Food Bank network. An agency must be willing and able to adhere to the Terms and Conditions in order to become a member and to maintain membership. The Terms and Conditions are designed to protect the interest of those who donate to our network and to ensure the integrity of the emergency food distribution network.

All information contained in the Agency Partner manual is part of Food Bank for the Heartland’s expectations for Terms and Conditions of Membership.

The following items are the criteria for being an Agency Partner of Food Bank for the Heartland. The Agency:

- Must provide food for an underprivileged or underserved population
- Must be a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization or qualify under the IRS Church Qualifier
- Will not sell, transfer, barter, or offer for sale the items supplied by FBFH in exchange for money, property, or services
- Will not use product from FBFH for personal use of agency staff or volunteers
- Will not store, prepare, or distribute product from FBFH at a location not authorized by FBFH
- Will not distribute or store product out of a person’s home
- Must have responsible personnel who are accountable for record keeping and inventory control
- Must keep records of food from FBFH at the site of distribution for a period of three years
- Must have proper and adequate physical storage space
- Must agree to distribute to individuals directly and not to another organization.
- Must operate regularly scheduled hours and be open at least twice a month for a minimum of two hours each time

- Must pass a site inspection prior to approval and once a year after that
- 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
- Must utilize sign-in sheets or another tracking system to keep track of the individuals served
- Must establish your own criteria for the individuals you serve; however, criteria must consistent and be posted at your pantry/feeding site
- Must adhere to food safety guidelines
- Must have one agency staff member or volunteer complete Food Safety Training
- Must order and distribute a minimum of 4,000 pounds per calendar year
- Must submit quarterly reports to Food Bank for the Heartland by the 15th of the month following each quarter

Agreement of Indemnity

- Food Bank for the Heartland and the original donor have specifically disclaimed any warranties or representations, expressed or implied, as to the purity of fitness for consumption of any or all donated items.
- Agency agrees to accept all items in “as is” condition
- Agency hereby releases the original donor and Food Bank for the Heartland from any liability resulting from the donated food/products and holds them harmless from any and all liabilities, claims, losses, causes of action, suites of law or iniquity, or any obligations in regard to the agency partner or the donated goods.

Non-compliance

If an agency does not comply with the Membership Terms and Conditions and the contents of the Agency Manual, Food Bank for the Heartland may interrupt service to the agency temporarily or suspend the agency entirely, depending upon the severity of the violation. We recognize that these consequences may adversely impact your clients. While our goal is to ensure that clients have access to the food they need, we must maintain the integrity of our network in order to ensure its long-term viability. Any actions taken to suspend or remove an agency for membership will receive written notification. Food Bank for the Heartland reserves the right to suspend or terminate any participating program/agency due to complaints of questionable activity or procedures.

The following list provides examples of a range of violations:

- Agency is delinquent in payment of the handling fees
- Proper records are not maintained at the program site
- Donated food or other products are improperly stored, refrigerated, or transported
- Donated food is used in a manner that is not consistent with membership guidelines
- Donated food or other products are exchanged for money, property, or services
- Donated food or other products are removed from the program site for private use by program staff or volunteers

Grievance Policy

If for any reason you are unsatisfied or have a grievance with Food Bank for the Heartland, please contact the following:

Amy Gerhart
Director of Agency Relations
AGerhart@FoodBankHeartland.org
402-905-4817

Susan Ogborn
President & CEO
SOgborn@FoodBankHeartland.org
402-905-4802

This agreement may be modified as deemed needed by Food Bank for the Heartland. Your agency’s authorized representative’s signature below indicates acceptance of this agreement between your agency and Food Bank for the Heartland.

Authorized Agency Representative, Print Name

Date

Authorized Agency Representative, Signature

Food Bank for the Heartland Authorized Signature: _____
Director of Agency Relations

Food Bank for the Heartland will provide a complete copy for your agency files.