

Feeding America West Michigan exists to ensure safe food is available to the hungry in our community. The following policies and procedures exist to ensure this purpose.

### **Receiving and Paying for Product**

- Current inventory of product can be found through the agency online account. The inventory is “live,” meaning products are added when they arrive at the warehouse and removed when an order is completed.
- Agencies will receive a confirmation email when they place an order online.
- All rules and standards of conduct must be observed when visiting our warehouse. These rules are posted in the warehouse and can be found on our website.
- The agency is responsible for verifying that all products listed on the invoice have been received, **before** signing the invoice. If there is a discrepancy, notify staff immediately.
- All product (food or otherwise) must be weighed and entered on the invoice. This includes items that are free (e.g. plants, water, etc).
- A copy of the invoice will be provided to the agency representative receiving the product. This copy serves as the agency’s bill. The invoice is also available through the online account, under the “My Doc” tab.
- **Invoices must be paid within 30 days for the agency to remain in good standing. After 90 days, a late fee will be assessed.**
- Payment must be made by the agency and must contain a copy of the invoice or clearly identify the invoice number. **No personal checks or credit cards can be accepted.** Under no circumstance may a government entity make a payment.
- A credit limit is set for every new agency. This may be adjusted based on payment history and agency compliance with policies and procedures.
- Spoiled or damaged product must be returned to the warehouse for evaluation. A credit may be applied to the agency account after staff has evaluated the product.
- Agencies using delivery or depot services must be in good financial standing for shipment to occur.
- Each agency must order a minimum of 1,000 pounds of product within a calendar year. Mobile Food Pantry accounts are required to host 4 distributions in a calendar year.

### **Food Use and Product Storage**

- Product received **must be stored only in** areas approved by the Agency Relations department. No product can be stored offsite or distributed to an unapproved agency.
- Food must be stored at least 4 to 6 inches off the floor, away from chemicals, and in a clean environment free from odors, insect or rodent infestation, and damp conditions. A posted cleaning schedule is highly recommended.
- Agencies must take the necessary steps to prevent pilferage or theft of food by storing food in a locked area. All refrigerators and freezers must be locked if located outside the pantry storage area.
- Agencies must transport, store, prepare (in the case of on-site programs) and distribute product in a safe manner. Agencies may not repack food unless the agency utilizes a licensed kitchen. Eggs may never be repacked due to inspection regulations. Community meals require a licensed kitchen with ServSafe Food Service Manager or equivalent course work for the cook or staff preparing the food.
- A weekly temperature log must be kept for every refrigerator and freezer to ensure safe storage of food. (0° F or less for freezers, and 40° F or less for refrigerators).

## Product Usage and Distribution

- Products obtained from Feeding America West Michigan **must** go only to people in need. The IRS defines a "needy" person is one who "lacks the necessities of life, involving physical, mental, or emotional well-being, as a result of poverty or temporary distress." Reg. 1.170A-4A(b)(2)(ii)(D).
- Product must be given away for free. There can be no restrictions on receiving product (e.g. prayer, volunteering, payment, etc). Food and other products cannot be sold or used for fundraising by the agency, or given to a needy person who has the intention of selling or bartering the product.
- Selling product to anyone is a direct violation of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code Section 170(e)(3). It is considered theft of US Government property to sell USDA commodities.
- Product may only be used for the program identified in the agency file. Product **may not** be used for community-wide events (food is only for those in need) or restricted events (e.g. church, volunteer, board meetings, etc).
- An agency may serve a specific demographic. The target demographic must be defined on the agency application and may include protected classes as defined by the government (e.g. seniors, veterans, women, children, etc). If the agency wishes to change the target demographic, the agency application must be amended and approved prior to any change in service.
- Agencies affiliated with religious organizations may **never** use products during services, dinner, mission trips or other such programs. These agencies must be open to the public at least one day a month when there is no programmatic religious activity occurring in the facility.
- Agencies must inspect all items before distributing/serving them, and must withhold any product that appears unfit for consumption.
- Agencies are encouraged to use or distribute food within 90 days of receipt.
- Items obtained through the Food Bank may not be given to volunteers as snacks, rewards or in any way to thank volunteers.
- Agencies may not solicit donations or payment for food or other products acquired from the Food Bank. An unsolicited donation from a client should be given anonymously.
- If necessary, staff members of on-site meal programs may eat food with their clients or residents. Under no other circumstance may staff, non-clients, or non-residents be allowed to consume food from the agency.

## Record Keeping, Site Visits and Information Disclosure

- Agencies must keep a record of clients served. These records must be kept for at least 3 years. Records should include: the client's name, dates served, address including zip code, telephone number (if any), family size, and the reason for food assistance. Contact information may **only** be used for recall purposes. If a person is homeless put N/A for address.
- Agencies must permit, with or without an appointment, site visits by Feeding America West Michigan staff. Site visits are designed to verify proper product storage, handling, and distribution, as stated in these policies and procedures.
- Agencies serving the public will allow site address, phone number and hours of operation to be displayed at [FeedWM.org](http://FeedWM.org).

*\*Agency representative should initial both sides of this document to verify items have been read.*