



# Storytelling Guidelines



## Resource for Food Bank Supporters

This document outlines the ways our supporters may use food bank-generated stories and gather their own.

### SHARING STORIES DEVELOPED BY THE FOOD BANK

- **Grantors and donors** (such as corporate partners) may share stories they're mentioned in as long as they are within their granting period, or a year from their last donation date.
- **Community partners** (such as members of the media) may use stories the food bank's communication team shares with them.

Client content may only be used for three years after it was gathered. If you're unsure if a story is too old, please ask the food bank's communication team.

If a supporting organization wishes to share a client story or photo in a newsletter, brochure or other collateral materials, they may do so, as long as the integrity of the story is maintained. If they wish to modify the story, they must first consult with the food bank's communication team. Credit for stories and photos must be given to the food bank. Client photos may never be used in a prominent semi-permanent or permanent place (e.g. a billboard or truck wrap) unless allowed by the client and Feeding America West Michigan's communication team.

### GATHERING STORIES ON YOUR OWN

Feeding America West Michigan follows strict ethical storytelling guidelines (see Telling Stories with Respect info sheet) and encourages all supporters to follow these guidelines when gathering stories on their own. If you wish to take photos or video, please ensure all clients photographed and/or filmed have signed a release form. We use Feeding America national's release form. If you don't have your own release form, you may want to consider working with a lawyer to develop one.

At times, our supporters wish to film or go live on social media to raise awareness that a hunger-relief event is happening. This is allowed as long as it's clear to program participants that they aren't being filmed (unless they consent and sign a release form)—e.g. show the food and volunteers instead of setting up a phone and tripod to film a line of cars.

Food bank supporters must work with the food bank's communication team to collect stories of neighbors from our programs (namely the Mobile Pantry program and Gather 2 Grow) and we urge you to use caution and respect when visiting our partners' programs.

### Communication Contacts

Communication and Marketing Manager Molly Kooi, [MollyK@FeedWM.org](mailto:MollyK@FeedWM.org), 616.431.6980  
Content Specialist Kelly Reitsma, [KellyR@FeedWM.org](mailto:KellyR@FeedWM.org), 616.432.6961

*Feeding America West Michigan is an equal opportunity provider.*