



Gather 2 Grow – Policies & Procedures

Products available from Feeding America West Michigan have been purchased through private donations and grants to feed and aid people in need. It is each agency's responsibility to ensure the proper storage and distribution of these items. The following policies have been established to facilitate receipt, storage, and regulate distribution of the goods.

Any individual or agency that does not comply with the following policies and procedures could potentially lose services from Feeding America West Michigan. Any individual or agency involved in distributing products from Feeding America West Michigan wrongfully may face criminal prosecution.

Site Requirements

Agencies must provide a site that meets the following guidelines set by Feeding America West Michigan for Gather 2 Grow distributions:

- The site needs to have an educational component; i.e. – a library, school, etc.
- The host agency is responsible for ensuring the space is safe and free of hazards (trash, slip and fall hazards, etc.)
- Distributions may take place inside or outside, on-site or grab and go, or a hybrid model.
- A consistent weekly schedule of days/times of service that meals will be available; any changes to this schedule must be communicated to and approved by Feeding America West Michigan prior to taking effect.

Ordering Food

- Agency will submit orders through our online ordering system.
- An order should be submitted each time you want to order.
- At least 72 business hours' advance notice is required between date/time of order and date/time of pick up for agencies in Kent County. Agencies outside of Kent County should order at least a week in advance, if not before.
- Agencies are welcome to pick up their orders at the food bank warehouse, or we can ship it to the nearest depot near you. Please note, depots have limited space and operate on fixed schedules for delivery; planning is key.
- Agency pick up times are as follows:
 - Monday through Friday – 9am-12:00pm; 12:30pm-3:30pm
 - Address of Pick-Up - 3070 Shaffer Ave. SE, Kentwood, MI 49512

Storage

- Agency must have a designated and secure space to store food, including the ability to store the meal kits off the floor.
- Agency must have the ability to completely restrict access to the meals where they are stored
- Agency must ensure that only trained and approved staff have access to this space.
- Agencies are welcome to keep previously opened cases of food remaining at the end of the season. All unopened cases of food need to be returned to the food bank warehouse within 5 business days after the determined end date of summer service.

Food Usage and Distribution

- Products from Feeding America West Michigan are intended to serve those in need.



- Agencies will serve persons regardless of location of residency.
- Food and other products cannot be sold or used for fundraising by the agency or given to a person who intends to sell or barter the product.
- Gather 2 Grow distributions are not to be used to sell or market any products or services.
- Agencies must inspect all items before distributing/serving them and should withhold and report any product that appears unfit for consumption.
- Agencies must not discriminate against clients based on race, creed, national origin, religious affiliation, gender, sexual preference, age or ability. Any eligibility restrictions must be stated in the agency's Feeding America West Michigan application.
- Agencies may not receive any money, property, or services from clients in exchange for goods drawn from Feeding America West Michigan.
- Any adult over the age of 18 may receive a meal kit in emergency situations, but they should be reminded that this program is for a specific age range. These can be considered 'adult' meals on the daily count sheet.
- Only those properly trained for Gather 2 Grow by a Feeding America West Michigan representative should be working in the program or distributing the meals.
- Families are welcome to 'grab and go' and do not need to consume meals on-site.
- Kids are welcome to have an extra meal if they are still hungry, and these can be marked as 'second meals' on the daily count sheet.
- Parents and kids may take additional meals home for siblings that are not present. These should be accounted for on the daily meal count sheet as 'first meals.'
- Unopened, unused components of meals can be placed on a "Share Table." These items are fair game for any person in need of any age. No additional claiming is required.
- A maximum of two meal options should be offered on a given day.

Record Keeping/Publicity

- Agency must use all mandatory paperwork provided by Feeding America West Michigan including – daily count sheet, weekly count sheet, and promotional materials.
- Agency must report daily and weekly count sheets at the end of each week of service. These forms can be emailed to the Programs Coordinator.
- Agency will be responsible for tracking accurate inventory counts. Any method may be used to do this, but it should include:
 - Number of meals served each day
 - Number of total meals remaining each day
 - Number of each individual meal type remaining each day
 - Number of meals ordered, and date ordered/picked up
- All mandatory paperwork listed above should be kept on file for a minimum of 36 months, plus the current year.
- All signage provided by Feeding America West Michigan must be used. It can be retained year-round by the site to be used for another year. It must be returned if the site no longer wishes to participate.

Site Visits



- Agencies must permit, with or without an appointment, site visits to their food distribution program by Feeding America West Michigan. Such visits are designed to verify proper food handling, safety, and surveying of agency and clients.