

This guide provides detailed recommendations for implementing screening and reporting requirements associated with the TEFAP, CT-NAP, and FEMA government commodity programs. Partner agencies with questions not addressed by this guide should contact their Foodshare Agency Services Coordinator at (860) 286 – 9999.

ELIGIBILITY FORMS

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP):

In a pantry setting, recipients of TEFAP product must complete a household self-declaration of need form once per year. Eligibility for TEFAP product is income-based and is set at **235%** of the current Federal Poverty Level (FPL). If a household does not sign the TEFAP form, they cannot receive TEFAP product, although they may receive any non-government commodities the pantry may choose to provide. In a soup kitchen or shelter, recipients of meals do not need to sign the TEFAP form.

Connecticut Nutrition Assistance Program (CT-NAP):

In a pantry setting, attendees who are income-eligible for CT-NAP product should complete a household self-declaration of need form once per year, **even if the product is not offered through the pantry at every distribution**. Eligibility for CT-NAP product is set at **200%** of the current FPL. If a household does not sign the CT-NAP form, they cannot receive CT-NAP product. Such households may be eligible for TEFAP product should they complete the TEFAP form, and they may receive non-government commodities at the pantry's discretion.

In a soup kitchen or shelter, participants who are CT-NAP income-eligible should complete the form once a year. All participants may eat meals prepared with CT-NAP product regardless of whether they signed the form. Forms are used exclusively to capture information for reporting purposes.

The CT-NAP form collects more detailed demographic information than the TEFAP form, including how household members self-identify along broad racial/ethnic categories. Such information is required because CT-NAP is largely funded through the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program, which requires all recipients to provide this information. Should a household express reluctance in providing this information, please do not restrict access to service if they otherwise complete the eligibility form.

Both self-declaration of need forms are intended to screen *households* for eligibility. A "household" is defined as all the people who live together and buy and prepare food together (per Connecticut Department of Social Services' SNAP standards). It is probable that different adults from a single household will seek assistance from the agency over the course of a year. Agencies are asked to avoid collecting multiple forms from the same household, although some duplication in this regard is expected.

When considering administrative procedures to avoid duplicate forms (such as address verification), it is recommended that agencies strive to keep documentation barriers to service at a minimum. Currently, households

are **not required** to provide any documentation around identity, legal status, income, proof of address, or household composition, beyond signing the self-statements of need forms to access government commodities. You may ask for documentation from clients but it is entirely up to your discretion.

Note: There is currently no eligibility form needed for households receiving FEMA product.

Using the Forms:

TEFAP & CT-NAP forms are updated annually to reflect new (and generally increased) income-eligibility thresholds. Both will be made available to agencies before July 1 and should be used from July 1 through June 30 of the following year. Pantries may wish to make a double-sided copy of these documents, with the TEFAP form on one side and the CT-NAP form on the other. **Each eligible household should complete the appropriate form(s) only once per year.**

For reporting purposes described later, it is recommended that all signed CT-NAP forms be kept in quarterly folders according to the date the form was signed (i.e., July 1 – September 30 | October 1 – December 31 | January 1 – March 31 | April 1 – June 30). At least one year's worth of CT-NAP eligibility forms (and three years' worth of TEFAP eligibility forms) should be maintained in a secure location at the agency.

For pantries conducting renewals, the head of household should first attempt to complete the CT-NAP form, which has the most restrictive income thresholds at 200% FPL. If the household is able to sign the CT-NAP form, also have them complete the TEFAP form. **It is critical that a household eligible for CT-NAP also sign the TEFAP form**, should TEFAP product be offered. If a household is not eligible for CT-NAP, there is a small chance that they meet the eligibility requirements for TEFAP –have them complete the TEFAP form if this is the case. On intake at subsequent distributions within a year, only eligible households that have yet to sign the form need do so.

For soup kitchens and shelters conducting renewals, have all eligible attendees sign the CT-NAP form on the first meal following July 1 (if that is the start of the renewal year). At subsequent meals, only new, eligible attendees need sign the form.

QUARTERLY REPORTING

Reports should be submitted through Foodshare's online ordering website **within five days** following the end of each quarter. This narrow window is due to Foodshare's need to issue a network report for the State, which administers the government commodity programs. A reminder email will be sent to agency coordinators prior to the end of each quarter. Agencies will not be able to place online orders until statistics have been submitted.

As CT-NAP has the most comprehensive reporting requirements of the three government commodity programs, for agencies receiving CT-NAP and either TEFAP and/or FEMA, **only demographic statistics for the CT-NAP program are needed**. Agencies need to submit CT-NAP demographic tallies for new households served during the quarter as well as a total "meal" count. Agencies receiving only TEFAP and/or FEMA product need only report a quarterly total "meal" count.

Agencies should log into the Foodshare online ordering website and click on the "Statistics" tab. The statistics view is determined by each agency's mix of participation in the three commodity programs.

TEFAP and/or FEMA Only:

The screenshot shows a web application interface with a navigation bar containing 'Home', 'Orders', 'Agency Pickup', 'Grants', 'Statistics', and 'My Docs'. The 'Statistics' tab is active. Below the navigation bar is the 'Enter Statistics' form. The form includes fields for 'Effective Date: Month:' and 'Year:', both marked as 'Required' with dropdown arrows. A 'Meals:' field is also marked as 'Required'. A 'Comments:' field contains the text 'Not required—if comment needed, please contact Agency Services Coordinator ASAP'. Below the form is a table header with columns 'Category', 'Quantity', and 'Comment'. A red box highlights the header fields with the text 'No need to enter any data for these header fields (in fact, there is no option to enter data in this area)!'. A 'Submit Statistics' button is located at the bottom right. A red callout box points to the 'Month:' dropdown with the text: 'When submitting quarterly reports, select "3" for quarter of January - March, "6" for quarter of April - June, "9" for quarter of July - September, or "12" for quarter of September - December'.

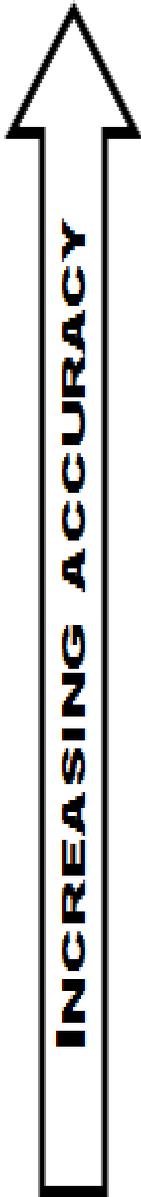
What are “Meals”?

For an agency providing prepared meals, such as a soup kitchen or shelter, the quarterly meal count is fairly straightforward. The agency should add up all meals provided throughout the quarter. Meal counts should include “seconds” and “meals-to-go”. Snacks that are provided in addition to a meal should be counted as half a meal.

For pantries, quarterly “meals” represent the TOTAL pounds of product distributed by the pantry divided by 1.2 pounds per meal. **ALL product distributed** (including non-food items, Foodshare non-government commodities, product acquired from sources other than Foodshare, etc.) should be included in this total.

The term “meals” is a carryover from when TEFAP product was provided exclusively to congregate meal programs; the USDA maintained this metric when the program was expanded to include pantries. Due to this misnomer, some pantries have attempted to provide all items needed to make a meal – this is neither necessary nor advisable.

Practical Ways to Calculate Pantry Meals:



Weighing all product provided to clients:

Use a scale to weigh how much assistance each household receives at each distribution. Add up all pounds provided during the quarter.

$$\text{Meals} = \text{Total pounds distributed} \div 1.2$$

pro Allows the pantry to know how much assistance each household receives

con Adds time to the distribution process

Counting Bags:

Count the number of bags each household receives at each distribution. Determine an “average bag weight”. Add up the number of bags provided during the quarter.

$$\text{Meals} = \text{Total bags distributed} \times \text{average bag weight} \div 1.2$$

pro Counting bags is fairly unobtrusive from a client perspective

con Average bag weight can vary greatly, especially at a client choice pantry

note Please do not provide a “standard” bag or box just to make reporting easier!

Using Foodshare Invoices:

Add up pounds received from Foodshare during the past quarter. Estimate what percentage of all product distributed was acquired from Foodshare (%Foodshare).

$$\text{Meals} = \text{Total invoiced pounds} \div \% \text{Foodshare} \div 1.2$$

For example, if you received 20,000 pounds from Foodshare and that represents about 50% of all the product distributed (i.e., the other half came from local donations, store purchases, etc.), then quarterly meals = $20,000 \text{ lbs} \div .5 \div 1.2 = 33,333$ meals.

pro Calculations based on readily available information

pro Adds no extra time to distributions or to recordkeeping

note Assumes no product carryover from prior quarter, nor remaining in inventory

