

## FOOD PANTRY BEST PRACTICES

### CLIENT CHOICE

Clients are allowed to choose the items they want rather than being handed a pre-packed bag of food. Would you want someone else deciding what you and your family will eat?

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### CLIENTS RECEIVE AS MUCH FOOD AS NEEDED

Clients are trusted to take the amount of food they feel they need. For hard to supply items, the pantry may need to place limits based on family size.

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### CLIENTS VISIT AS OFTEN AS NEEDED

Clients are able to receive product from the pantry as often as needed. This could mean families visit the pantry as often as weekly. Once a month may not be sufficient.

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### NON-TRADITIONAL HOURS

The pantry is open some evenings or weekends so clients who work are better able to access services.

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### RESPECTFUL AND DIGNIFIED CLIENT INTAKE

Clients are asked a minimum number of questions in order to receive food. Residency, household size, special dietary needs and income level are all you may want to ask each year. Requesting food assistance is hard enough for clients – an intensive intake process can make it even harder.

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### USE OF FOODBANK PRODUCT

The pantry gets most of its inventory from Foodshare. This “stretches your dollar”. Donors can even put money directly into your Foodshare account and, therefore, provide more than if they purchased and gave you product directly.

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### HEALTHY FOODS

Fresh fruits and vegetables, meat and dairy products are available to clients. Remember, we are what we eat!

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR SERVICES

Clients are provided with information or services that will help them address the root causes of their need for food assistance. Information or services related to budgeting, employment, day care, housing, health care, food stamps, etc. may be required by clients.

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### COORDINATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

The pantry knows its neighbors and cooperates with other agencies in fighting hunger and poverty in its community. We can't do this work alone!

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### ADVOCACY AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

The pantry contacts local legislators and government officials and “spreads the word” amongst the public about fighting hunger and poverty in its community. Hours of operation, location and other pantry information is regularly and widely distributed.

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